

# STORIES FROM THE INSIDE

A half-hour documentary directed, filmed and edited  
by the inmates of the Youth Unit, Port Phillip Prison



A **STUDY GUIDE** BY PAULETTE GITTINS



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'I NEVER THOUGHT I'D END UP HERE ...'

A SHARK ISLAND PRODUCTIONS FILM

# STORIES FROM THE INSIDE

*Stories from the Inside* is a philanthropic initiative. Shark Island Productions, Igniting Change, The Caledonia Foundation, Virgin Unite and a group of other philanthropic partners have all contributed towards the funding of the film and its education, outreach and community engagement program.

<http://www.storiesfromtheinside.com.au>

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# INTRODUCTION

**“Line up on that side of the yellow line. State your full name and CRN.”** (Prison Official)

**\*CRN:** CRIMINAL RECORD NUMBER.

This, after a short bus ride, is the way life behind bars begins for all young offenders at Port Phillip Prison, Victoria. Life in prison is the focus of *Stories from the Inside*, a 2013 documentary about a group of young inmates in this maximum security facility. Made in conjunction with the award-winning documentary team at Shark Island Productions, together with the not for profit organisation Igniting Change, this documentary was made possible by unprecedented access to the inmates of the Youth Unit at G4S Port Phillip Prison, and is filmed, edited and directed by a group of prisoners inside the Youth Unit.

*I was trying to remain calm and take it all in my stride ... I thought it can't be that bad ...* (Oscar)

As we will see, it *can* be. As we are introduced to the environment of the maximum security prison, seen through the eyes of a young inmate who has just been admitted. The camera journeys with him to close in on rows of identical cells, barred windows, locked doors, locked gates. Simultaneously we hear a series of different voices telling us how terrified, how isolated, how lonely everyone feels on first entering this place.

*The only real silence you get is at night when the lights go off ...* (Bruce)

The prison operates on a rigid, impersonal set of rules that control every aspect of an inmate's life. From the initial removal of ordinary clothes and the regulation strip-search to the head-count taking place four times a day, every day, individuality is extinguished and life is controlled in every way by officers. Everyone must conform.

All the inmates in this documentary are first-time offenders aged between eighteen and twenty-five. These young men have been motivated to tell their stories, to reveal the crimes that led to their imprisonment, the dangerous choices and mistakes they made as their criminal behavior escalated, landing them eventually in jail, and the conse-

quences of their actions on themselves, their families and their victims.

*All day you're surrounded by people you don't want to be around. It's just ... constant ... shit ...* (Bruce)

We will, as viewers, require some tolerance of the use of swearing and references to violent behaviour in this documentary. Expletives are beeped in the narrative and the young men who tell their stories often recount episodes of brutality.

Bruce, Luke, Oscar, Darren, Zac and Karl are six young inmates serving sentences of up to six years. Taking us on their life's journey to where they now reside in jail, we will see how it is the inflexible insistence on conformity, the lack of privacy, the sense of rejection by family, friends and the world at large that are the heaviest burdens to bear. The disgust Bruce feels at the individuals he must interact with is another grimly striking feature; Luke is still bewildered, almost incredulous, that he has actually been locked up; Zac is the one who focuses intensively on the damage and grief he has caused his victims; Oscar feels trapped: All are regretful, horrified and contrite over the emotional damage they have caused their families and victims.

The camera functions as an 'eye', recording the minutiae of daily life, the focus on locking and unlocking, the frequent interaction between prison officers and inmates, the rigorous routine, the tedium of every aspect of daily life, the ever-present sense of being shut in.

By the film's conclusion, the six inmates are moved to deliver a message to their audience, an on-screen declaration of responsibility for their actions:

*We would like to acknowledge the victims, not only of our crimes, but all victims of crime, and we hope that our participation in this film does not cause any further pain, grief or hardship.*

There's no doubt that these young men have lost a great deal – their youth, and their self-respect and that of their loved ones – and now face a world which will have little sympathy with ex-convicts, for now that is how they will be forever defined.

This confronting and hard-hitting documentary has been made with the intention of warning any young person against making the same errors of judgement and irresponsibility these young men now recognise they have made.

# STATEMENTS FROM FOUR OF THE INMATES IN THE FILM

## OSCAR

This idea of making a documentary film came about when I was in my first year of my sentence. Myself and some of the other guys were talking about how we could make an impact on the youth primarily between the ages of 16–25. I had heard a lot from victims of crime and wanted to give us a voice because we are all teetering on the edge of criminality with our high-risk lifestyles. One example of this was when I was at school, there was a woman who came over from Canada and told us the story of how her sister was killed in a car accident by a drink-driver. The majority of the school and especially me found that it was too far removed from our life and culture. This is why we wanted to educate and raise awareness of how our crimes have a greater impact on not only us but cause a ripple effect that can have huge consequences throughout society.

We really wanted to achieve maximum exposure for the film. We wanted to reach out to other young people starting out in their early adult life, to educate them about what can happen if you make the wrong choices. It only takes a moment of stupidity to ruin your life or someone else's. We wanted to convey how bland and regimented daily life is in prison and how mentally taxing it is on a young person's mind. Personally I also used the filming of the documentary as a tool for rehabilitation and to repair my soul. I found that talking about my crime in such detail made me more comfortable within myself and made me realise that some remarkable things can come from adversities.

The process of making the film was a very long, arduous task, and at times very confronting. It brought back many memories that I had tried to forget. I found myself in a terrible situation the night of my crime and didn't want to unearth those feelings of being trapped and helpless again. We wanted it to be our project so the entire film has been shot and edited by the boys. This came with some complications; in order for it to look professional we had to have a crash-course in filmmaking. Without the help of Shark Island Productions none of this would have been possible. The entire process has taken several years, we have had many problems with content and receiving approval from the higher powers. We wanted to keep it raw and real without any sugar-coating or outside involvement.



## DARREN

I want to write about a program I am doing in the Youth Unit at Port Phillip Prison called Stories From The Inside Program. This program is about a few of the guys and I who got together and were filmed telling our stories. I did this program because I am doing a while in jail, and I thought by contributing to something like this I could help other young people avoid going through what I have been through – by stopping and thinking about the consequences of their actions.

In the process of making this film you really get to understand the effect your actions have on those around you and those closest to you. Plus it feels good to do something that could help other young people. I hope that when young guys watch my story and other stories like it, then it might make them think twice before doing something that could change their lives forever. Even if it only helps one person then it has achieved what I hoped it would.

Thanks for watching *Stories From The Inside*.



## LUKE

I am currently serving a sentence in the Youth Unit at Port Phillip Prison. The reason why I've decided to help the Stories from the Inside Program is to give something back to the community, to help others in similar need, to prevent kids coming to jail and also to help myself change. The more I tell myself this isn't a life, the more I practice it, the more it sticks in my head. Mainly the reason I have got involved in this program is for me and my family; I want to prove to my family and myself that I can change and that I want to change my life for the better. If I can change and show people then there is hope for anyone who wants it. Mainly I want to help kids not come to jail and make the same mistakes I did. It also helps me understand where I went wrong and what I can do to change this from happening again. It helped me realise the potential risks and also how I want my life to be.

When I first started to get involved in this program I got a lot of satisfaction knowing that even though it is hard and you don't think anything is going to change and that you feel like you're living in hell, and nothing's going your way, it

does get better and better; you have to keep trying and trying, but the more you try it gets easier as you go. So what I'm trying to say is I've got a lot out of helping with Stories from the Inside even though it has taken a while and a lot of things have happened since we started it. It's made me have a long hard think about my life and the people I care about. I hope a lot of young people like me get a lot out of the film and it helps them realise there are more important things in their lives, like I did.

I hope after people watch *Stories From the Inside* they will think about how easy it is to come to jail and that jail is not a nice place to be. At least when people walk away after watching the film they will have more of a grasp of what might be and that this deters young people from doing crime or making silly mistakes. If more young people think about their actions before they make rash decisions then it will make it safer for people in their community. I hope this achieves so much greatness in making the world a better place for everyone to feel safe, secure and at peace in their community. I think this will achieve a lot; I hope it does anyway. I hope the statistics drop a lot in youth crime across Australia.

## ZAC

I would like to say a few things about the role I have played in the Stories From The Inside Program here at Penhyn Unit, Port Phillip Prison. Firstly I would like to thank Anne Hooker for giving me this opportunity to share my story, and Jaque from Shark Island Productions for all the hard work he has done along the way.

*Stories From The Inside* is a documentary filmed here in the Port Phillip Prison Youth Unit. The project was put together a few years ago; the aim of this film is to share our stories and our views on offending and the impacts on all parties involved. I was a bit wary about whether I should take part in this film, but then I thought if I can help at least one young person to learn from my mistakes it would mean a lot to me, and I am sure it would mean a lot to my victim. Thanks for your time and attention, enjoy the film.



# A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO PORT PHILLIP PRISON

Located at Truganina, 21km west of Melbourne's Central Business District in the Shire of Melton, Victoria, Port Phillip Prison is Victoria's largest prison, able to accommodate up to 934 prisoners. This is a maximum security prison for men, privately operated on behalf of the Government of Victoria by G4S Australia Pty Ltd. Construction began in 1994 and was completed in 1996. Originally called Port Phillip Correctional Centre, the facility was the third privately operated prison to open in Victoria. It received its first prisoners on 10 September 1997.

The prison consists of thirteen accommodation units, including a Youth Unit generally for young adult inmates aged eighteen to twenty-five. All cells within the units have a shower, hand basin, toilet, desk, chair, television, kettle, storage shelves, intercom and bed. The prison operates a twenty-bed inpatient hospital unit. (For more information view *The Youth Unit* short film at <http://www.storiesfromtheinside.com.au>.)

Sentenced prisoners are obliged to wear prison clothing, which is issued to them on entry. Prisoners' own clothing and other items taken from them at admission are held by the prison authorities. The regulations provide that storage of clothing and personal effects can in certain instances be refused, due either to the nature and quantity of the items, including those that are difficult to store, being too large, or for health reasons. There are specific requirements in respect of property that must be followed. Items stored must be returned at the time of the prisoner's release. Items prisoners can receive from visitors are also heavily restricted, for example there are regulations about clothing and the amount of money for using payphones and canteen in the prison; see <http://www.corrections.vic.gov.au/utility/publications+manuals+and+statistics/port+phillip+prison+visitor+information>

## WHAT EXACTLY IS 'MAXIMUM SECURITY?'

Maximum security – the toughest classification in the Australian prison system. With prison a last resort in the judicial system, young offenders have often committed crimes for which they have been given community-based dispositions and thus may have extensive offending histories before they are ultimately sent to prison. The Youth Unit inmates are incarcerated in Port Phillip because of the crimes they have committed – murder, attempted murder, assault, manslaughter, arson, drug trafficking, armed robbery. Many have involved a level of extreme violence, often committed under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

The six inmates in the film tell us of the many illegal or dangerous activities they engaged in prior to the action that finally sent them to jail: 'Everything went up a notch,' as Karl succinctly sums up the escalation of his crimes. The six inmates are all, for the first time, in an adult prison; they are incarcerated in Port Phillip because of the serious crimes they have committed.

## Statement from Anne Hooker, Youth Development Officer, Port Phillip Prison



By working with Jaque Fisher and as a team, participants have the potential to improve self-confidence, teamwork and leadership skills. An additional aim of the Stories from the Inside Program is that participants develop personal attributes such as enthusiasm, commitment, honesty and integrity, motivation, positive self-esteem and adaptability. The provision of working with a director and mentors from the community sends a strong message to the prisoners that people in the community care about them and are interested in assisting them to make positive changes in their life. This has been vital for young offenders to then take on a positive attitude to their long term rehabilitation.

In 2011 a group of young prisoners approached me to discuss their concern that young people make decisions that are not well thought out and have dire consequences for everyone involved. They were considering the impact of their own offending, especially on their victims, families and friends. They were concerned that although there have been educational programs previously on offer in schools, there did not appear to be an effective tool to make young people stop and think about the consequences of their actions. Therefore, the young men sought permission to make a documentary that could be shown in schools.

The Stories From the Inside Program gave these young offenders the opportunity to learn and master the process of filmmaking and editing, and the encouragement and support to tell their own stories.

They have learnt important life skills such as:

- Communication and interpersonal skills
- Listening skills
- Social skills
- Organisational skills i.e. to work independently or within a group
- Personal development through public or individual performance
- Improved motor skills

This program came about because a few young men wanted to make a difference. These young men demonstrated great powers of insight, intelligence, understanding and decision-making. They wanted their time in prison to have some meaning, more than just 'doin' time', more than punishment. They demonstrated qualities far beyond their years, impressive qualities that combined to make them responsible, caring young men.

With the approval from G4S, Port Phillip Prison and Corrections Victoria, we set about an undertaking of enormous proportions. Igniting Change were the catalyst of this venture by connecting us with Virgin Unite, the award-winning team from Shark Island Productions and The Caledonia Foundation. We owe a huge debt of thanks to the teams at Igniting Change, Virgin Unite, The Caledonia Foundation and Shark Island Productions for their many, many hours of time, financial backing, and support for this program.

This program is about giving back to the community in a profound way. It is very important for these young men not to underestimate themselves at a time like the present, when they could be capable of so much. The importance of forgiveness can never be underestimated. Forgiveness becomes divine when it is offered in direct response to

an action that has brought harm and hurt to the person who now has the option to bestow mercy. This program enabled these young men to look at their situation from all aspects, and really consider their actions and the effects of those actions on everyone involved in their lives and who crossed paths with them.

As I sit at my desk I wonder how many more young men will walk through the doors having made mindless decisions that will affect so many people. As I listen to these young men, read the paper and watch the news and see the faces of the people who care about you and love you, I hope that each and every one of you will understand the effort, hard work and commitment that has gone into the making of this film. I am in awe of these young men for having the courage and determination to understand the importance of this film and to ensure that other young men and women do not make the same mistakes they have made and end up hurting people and coming to prison.

We have spent several years working on this project, and many prisoners and all of the staff in Penhyn have been involved. We would like to thank all of those young men and all of the staff, supervisors and management for their support and assistance with this project. Those people who know me understand that I am passionate about this unit, these young men, Port Phillip Prison and the program. You may be surprised to see these young men and myself with a slightly negative tone in this film. However, you need to watch the film in the context of deterrence. The sole purpose of this film is to stop young people making poor decisions and coming to prison.

We hope you learn something from this film, and that no other young men will make a foolish decision that will devastate innocent lives.

*For statements from the filmmakers visit <<http://www.storiesfromtheinside.com.au>>.*

# SYNOPSIS

Interestingly, *Stories from the Inside* does not commence with the traditional screen titles introducing us to cast and crew, but with a shaky, hand-held camera's-eye view of the inside of the prison bus taking young offenders to the Port Phillip Youth Unit. An almost black interior and a square of white light coming through a scratched perspex window – that's all we are going to see, and all we will hear is the juddering and humming of the bus engine. This is quite possibly a subconscious symbol of the trapped state the young men will perpetually live in from now on. A disembodied young male voice speaks to us of the dimensions of the bus: 'probably 1.5 metres by 1 metre.' The truth is now obvious to us all: this bus is a mobile prison cell. In fact, until the opening titles are on-screen, we will only see the feet of prisoners who are directed everywhere, the backs of prison officers who give instructions, long shots of individuals filmed from a distance to make their features unclear, bland, colourless exteriors and interiors of buildings, grounds bounded by high metal fences topped with razor wire. This is the soulless and dehumanising world of prison life, where individuals are identified by a CRN and orders are given in detached, monotonous tones – 'step forward ... head down the path ... step into the strip room ...' – and offenders are treated with authoritative, administrative and anonymous routine. This in itself is what our six young men will tell us is the most toxic aspect of life on the inside. The disembodied voices of the young people we have yet to meet reflect on their initial responses to their first days in prison:

*You check in all your casual clothes, you say goodbye to them ... I put my back against the wall the first night ... I was pretty scared ... I was shitting meself ...*

The film's title *Stories from the Inside* is now superimposed against a long shot of the prison perimeter – grass stretching to a high, razor-wire-topped fence and the concrete wall beyond. The lone figure walking in front of this fence serves as a symbol of the isolation and restriction that all our young prisoners insist they feel, locked into this impersonal, tightly constrained environment.

## Loss of Control

Anne Hooker, Port Phillip Prison's Youth Development Officer in the Youth Unit, addresses the camera and crystallises for us the protocols for all offenders incarcerated here:

*From the moment you are put into prison ... everything about your life is controlled by officers – when to eat, when to sleep, when to go to your cell, when to go to a program, when to go to work, when to go to a visit, when to go to outpatients – and you have no control whatsoever in relation to any of those things.*

The camera unrelentingly reinforces the sense of control over prisoners' lives with repetitive images of locking cell doors, zooming in on locks and keys, scenes of staircases and second-storey balconies where surveillance is the norm. On-screen statements tell us that inmates are locked into their cells between 7.40pm until 8.10am and that no mobile phones or personal computers are permitted inside the prison – basic freedoms on the outside, absolutely denied on the inside.

## Accepting responsibility

This is seen as one of the many steps towards the rehabilitation of a criminal. It appears that the six interviewees are slowly acknowledging their involvement in the decisions that put them in prison, accepting that they, and no one else, are to blame for what they have done. Reflecting on this crucial element in prisoner psychology, Anne Hooker observes:

*The young men in this Unit have done the wrong thing; they have made serious mistakes that at the time they probably didn't think were mistakes, but the consequences of those mistakes for everybody involved – but especially their victims – can be horrific. So these young men need to understand that their actions have created fear and trepidation and horror in their victims ...*

It is notably Zac, a newly installed inmate, who will echo Anne's words from the first moment we see him on screen, in his cell, recounting the spur-of-the-moment act that ruined the lives of several people:

*Some little kid's lost their mum, their nan, some poor bloke's lost his wife ... a lady's lost her life, just for me bein' stupid for five or ten minutes, it just ... eats you up inside ...*

Anne continues:

*Sometimes these young men accept responsibility for their actions immediately after it happens; for some of these young men it may take a process, weeks or months or years. For some of them, they may not get there at all.*

Crime and Consequence: a series of 'mini-autobiographies'.

And now we will be able to match faces – albeit pixellated ones – to those voices who spoke to us at the start of this documentary. Bruce, Luke, Oscar, Zac, Karl and Darren – each relates and reflects upon his life history and finally his crime and the regret he feels for the serious mistakes he has made. The camera moves from prisoner to prisoner, presenting a 'mini-autobiography' of each, so that we can compare and contrast each young man's childhood, family, former lifestyle and the escalation of his behavior into criminal activity.





**Name:** Zac  
**Charge:** Culpable Driving  
**Maximum penalty:** Twenty years

*I jumped in the ute ... I was seventeen and I didn't have a licence ... I took out my phone to record the speedo to impress my friends ... by the time I seen the highway, I didn't think, I just slammed on the brakes and I ended up T-boning this car ...* – Zac

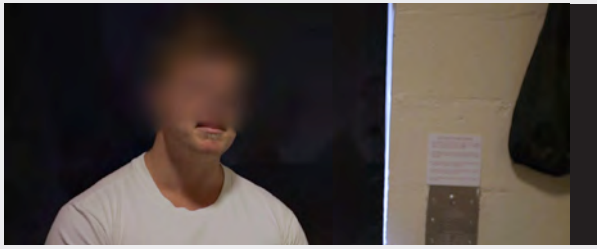
We see Zac's body language, slumped over and mournful, as he recalls a childhood seemingly filled with ongoing domestic violence, who 'thought it was normal getting bashed up by your dad (and) waking up in the middle of the night hearing your mum getting bashed by your dad ... I don't really want to talk about it, it hurts too much ...'

Audiences may feel he is reflecting that the environment in which he grew up had some influence upon his reckless behaviour. His tone indicates strongly how appalled he is at the actions that lead to his injuries and arrest, which he describes for us in detail:

*... they ... ended up cutting me out of the ute (and) took me to the Royal Melbourne Hospital ... a policewoman come in and she said 'I hope you know the thing you've done is very serious and you'll be going to jail ...'*

Zac had crashed into a car and killed a woman who, with her husband, was on the way to a family gathering. Poignantly, Zac recalls that the day he was released from hospital 'was Mother's Day' and that he wrote to the family of his victim, acknowledging that he was 'the worst person in the world' and did not expect 'forgiveness or mercy'. Zac refers to the Victim Impact Statement of the family, acknowledging 'that's when it really sunk in...'

We will hear more of Victim Impact Statements in the course of this study guide.



**Name:** Bruce  
**Charge:** Threats to Kill  
**Maximum penalty:** Ten years

*I started damaging his house ... made a couple of Molotov cocktails and lit his garage up with those ... I started getting arrested after that ...* – Bruce

Bruce comes across as a young man focused on 'filling out my day with tasks and jobs ... so the day structures itself into some sort of system that I can follow to pass the time'. Like all our six prisoners, Bruce has attempted to personalise his cell with pictures on the walls and personal items on shelves.

*The worst thing is not being able to go where you can be in silence ... all day you're surrounded by people you don't want to be around ...'*

Perhaps Bruce's preoccupation with organising his routine is connected to some of the personality traits he reflects on. He speaks of his 'obsession with body image ... from around age fourteen ... how good (constant exercise) felt'

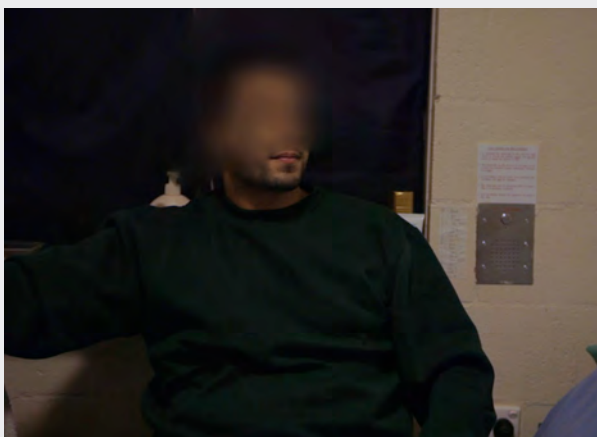
and how he organised a daily routine of press-ups and exercise, becoming fanatical about bodybuilding, to the extent of taking anabolic steroids, spending large sums buying these. He describes the effect of these chemicals on his system:

*... the aggression and rage I got from them (was) almost addictive ... (they) made me feel good, made me feel powerful and every time my girlfriend would tell me (to stop) I'd dismiss it and say 'no, I'm not big enough yet ...'*

When the camera returns to hear the next episode of his history, he will be telling us how his chemically-deranged behaviour led him to commit serious crime. Threatened with the loss of his girlfriend to another man, he engaged in threatening behaviour to him, carrying a weapon to assault him with, stalking him:

*In the middle of the night I would go to his house and hover around ... they always used to stay up late and smoke bongs ... one time I chased him with my tomahawk ... damaging his house ... I made a couple of Molotov cocktails ... I started getting arrested after I did that. Then came an Intervention Order, and I was threatened with two years jail ... I started to speak to my girlfriend again, but she wouldn't speak to me ...*

We have now heard the full extent of Bruce's crimes, which range from being in possession of banned substances to threatening behaviour and, ultimately, arson. And what we have also heard is a version of how people's behavior can commence with a poor choice, escalating as a result into worse choices, and finally, into action so unacceptable that a prison sentence is mandatory.

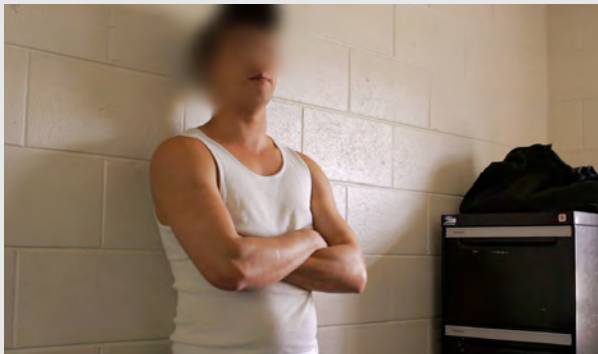


**Name:** Karl  
**Charge:** Serious Assault  
**Maximum penalty:** Fifteen years

*All this ego, all this testosterone ... I didn't know how to take it out of me, so I started to take it out on people ...* – Karl

Like Bruce, Karl's monologue also begins in adolescence with erratic and reckless behaviour when he 'started weekly fighting ... weekly brawls in the city ...' Karl attempts to mitigate his violent conduct by insisting his violence was 'not on innocent people, obviously ... I've never bashed an innocent person, but people who were looking for trouble ...' And, as with Bruce, Karl's conduct 'moved up' to worse action, 'to a few burgs (burglaries), small car thefts, trafficking ... and everything stepped up a notch'. By this time, Karl 'moved up from fists to bottles to knives to guns ...'

Reflecting on his crimes, Karl speaks of how he has 'lost' his family, how he has 'lost their trust as well' and how 'no amount of money is worth the tears of your mother and father ...'



**Name:** Luke  
**Charge:** Theft  
**Maximum penalty:** Ten years

*In the back of your mind if you're doing illegal stuff you've always got that conscious that the police would come around and actually in the end they did...* – Luke

From our first introduction to him, Luke – unlike Bruce, Karl and Zac – reflects intensively on the personal consequences of his prison sentence, telling us that ‘most nights I would cry every night ... just ‘cause of how much I miss my son and there's nothing I can do ...’; and of course, like all those we have heard speak, he too was an adolescent indulging in fighting and in dangerous, provocative action:

*me and a couple of mates ... driving around, looking for things to steal ... we'd seen a truck, loaded with forty-two tonnes of copper wire and we thought one big job and we won't have to do all these little ones ...*

Luke is a veteran of ‘small jobs’, in other words, ‘petty crime’ and, like Bruce and Karl, was taking drugs: ‘smoking speed and stuff ...’

Luke is the first of these offenders to see his actions as a warning to other youths to take note of:

*The ones that bully people, the ones that fight, the ones that are troublemakers, they might not know it yet but their shell is cracking slowly ... when I was young I used to fight and take drugs; it's fun at the time, but it's not fun for what you put your family through and what you put yourself through ...*

Still focusing on those consequences, Luke is also the first of our six young offenders to consider what life post-prison will mean for him. His future, he thinks, is a bleak one because of the discrimination he will suffer as a result of his record:

*If I go for a job when I get out and there's me and another guy ... because I've got a criminal record, the other guy will get the job, I reckon.*



**Name:** Oscar  
**Charge:** Culpable Driving  
**Maximum penalty:** Twenty years

*About a minute from my house I was going too fast around the corner, ran off the road and struck a pedestrian ... I was arrested at the scene, had a breath test and I blew over (the limit).* – Oscar

It is Oscar, the next character to introduce himself to us, who perhaps doesn't fit into the background of all those we have already met. He declares himself ‘just sort of ... from an upper-middle-class society, been to a private school, had a good education. I was very trusting of the world; I loved life, really ...’

The camera moves to the cell wall, covered with photographs of friends, gatherings of family at parties and celebrations, reinforcing Oscar's love of company and ‘hanging around with my childhood mates’.

Oscar speaks of his crime, which began with ‘getting a lift home with a mate’ because he was over the 0.5 alcohol limit. He took charge of his own vehicle anyway and was ‘going too fast ... and struck a pedestrian ... I was absolutely distraught ...’

Accepting responsibility on the spot, as is required by law, he called 000 and an ambulance and tried CPR.

We see him reflecting, like Karl, on the consequences of his actions:

*When I did see my cell, I sat down and I was, like, oh, shit, is this really it, is this where I'm going to be living for the next four years? Prison being such a mundane and boring place, you've got a lot of hours to spare, to think about what you've done ... I love my family and my friends so much, and you're so isolated ...’*

Oscar never saw himself as a candidate for prison before the accident.

*Prison for me was somewhere criminals went. Five years ago, if I'd been asked ‘Did you think you'd be in a maximum security prison doing gym-training with an ex juice-head?’ I'd say I'd probably have more chance of dying in a freak accident than actually coming to prison ...*



**Name:** Darren  
**Charge:** Serious Assault  
**Maximum penalty:** Fifteen years

Darren has already told us how he was 'kicked out for good' and 'estranged from my family' after threatening his sister, once again recalling an adolescence of unruly and thoughtless behaviour. He recalls what is possibly the worst part of a violent crime he committed, terrorising a victim which took place 'over three hours ... but it all seemed like a blur,' threatening 'to bury you in the backyard' if he did not reveal where a cache of drugs was hidden in the house. And Darren, too, now realises the consequences of his prison sentence:

*I grabbed him and we dragged him into the lounge room ... and tied him up with the extension cord and we threatened him ... we collected up some stuff and we were just going up the street with our hands full of shit and then all of a sudden we see this black Commodore flying down the road and two cops jumped out and pulled their guns on us ..."*

– Darren

*One thing that did bother me about jail – after the first few months, my friends stopped contacting me ... stopped writing letters, stopped visiting. I shouldn't have neglected my family – even when I'd hated them, I loved them to bits ...*

The documentary concludes with Zac who, on reflection, links the consequences of his actions to the suffering and grief of his victims, and now understands what it is like to lose a loved one. On listening to the Victim Impact Statement read aloud to him in court, he relates to the family's experience by aligning it with his own. He, too, is a parent of a three-year-old daughter whom he has 'lost' and will not see again for some time.

And finally, *Stories From The Inside* closes with an image typical of the prison in which it is set: a door slams shut.

# CINEMATIC DEVICES

As we have already noted, the camera functions as an 'eye' recording the tedious and oppressive nature of prison life. Close-ups, long shots, tracking shots, all accentuate the atmosphere of confinement and routine. The faces of the young men are pixellated in order to protect their identity and minimise the chance of additional stress to their victims; occasionally, we will see a close-up of the eyes of the young men, but never a full-face shot. The interviews were filmed on two cameras to cut between the mid-shot and close-up; the filmmakers felt that much emotion could still be conveyed through the subjects' eyes. Sound effects are minimal, aside from the voices of the offenders, with a particular emphasis on the silence of the prison at night; a faint electrical buzzing from security lights enhances yet again that sense of surveillance, even when all prisoners are locked in for the night. The filmmakers have made a conscious choice not to include a music soundtrack – but there is, in fact a soundtrack of a kind: the buzz of fluorescent lighting in the silence of the nights, the clang and thump of prison doors as they are locked, the persistent interruptions of loudspeakers directing prisoners to and from their daily routines,

shouting of prisoners and the sighing of the wind across the empty fields that ring the prison, accentuating the sense of alienation and isolation.

The style of filming – 'hand-held camera' – is therefore very simple; the camera 'crew' – our six young offenders – are only rudimentary filmmakers, but the strength of *Stories from the Inside* is the simplicity of its storytelling. The unadorned, bland environment is clearly telling us that this is a place where individuality is oppressed for the sake of conformity.

## CURRICULUM RELEVANCE

*Stories from the Inside* is a suitable text for students from Year 10 to Year 12 level in subjects such as English/EAL, Legal Studies, Media Studies, Civics and Citizenship, and Psychology.

Year 10 English and Literature – Links to the National Curriculum –

**This documentary links in a number of ways to specific study areas of the National Curriculum for Year 10 students:**

Through this documentary students can learn how language use can have inclusive and exclusive social effects, and can empower or disempower people (ACELA1564)

They can compare and evaluate a range of representations of individuals and groups in different historical, social and cultural contexts (ACELT1639)

They can evaluate the social, moral and ethical positions represented in texts (ACELT1812)

In examining literature, they can compare and evaluate how 'voice' as a literary device can be used in a range of different types of texts, and evoke particular emotional responses (ACELT1643)

In Texts in Context, students are able to analyse and evaluate how people, cultures, places, events, objects and concepts are represented in texts, including media texts, through language, structural and/or visual choices (ACELY1749)

In the Interacting with others component, students can identify and explore the purposes and effects of different text structures and language features of spoken texts, and use this knowledge to create purposeful texts that inform, persuade and engage (ACELY1750)

In the Interpreting, analysing, evaluating component, students can identify and analyse implicit or explicit values, beliefs and assumptions in texts and how these are influenced by purposes and likely audiences (ACELY1752)

*Stories from the Inside* addresses all these criteria for Year 10 English and Literature, and may serve as a complementary text when studying classics such as *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* (Alexander Solzhenitsyn) or more contemporary texts such as Stephen King's *Rita Hayworth and The Shawshank Redemption*.



## VCE ENGLISH/EAL UNITS 1&2

### Area of Study 2: Creating and Presenting

In all four Units of VCE English/EAL, this Area of Study involves focus on a given 'Context': a particular theme or concept that invites students to explore and examine how certain ideas and arguments have emerged and developed in modern society. The study of various texts enables students to develop a broad understanding of the Context.

A particular Context often studied at Unit 1 and 2 level is 'Justice' or 'The Nature of Justice'. This documentary applies most appropriately to this Context.

## VCE LEGAL STUDIES UNIT 1: CRIMINAL LAW IN ACTION

The law influences all aspects of society – at home, at work and in the wider community. Laws are used by society to preserve social cohesion, and to ensure the protection of people from harm and from the infringements of their rights. These laws can be grouped according to their source and whether they are criminal or civil in nature.

Students examine the need for laws in society. They investigate the key features of criminal law, how it is enforced and adjudicated and possible outcomes and impacts of crime. Through a consideration of contemporary cases and issues, students learn about different types of crimes and explore rights and responsibilities under criminal law. They explore the main features and operations of criminal courts and consider the effectiveness of the criminal justice system in achieving justice.

### Area of Study 1: Law in Society

On completion of this Unit the student should be able to explain the need for effective laws and describe the main sources and types of law in society.

### Area of Study 2: Criminal Law

Criminal law regulates conduct in society in order to protect the community, as well as sanction those who commit crimes. Students develop an appreciation of the importance of criminal law by investigating its principles, types of crimes and their enforcement, and possible outcomes. Students consider a range of illustrative criminal cases to assist them in their understanding of different categories of crime and the related defences ... Throughout this area of study students apply principles of criminal law to relevant cases and issues.

*Stories from the Inside* functions as an exemplary text for students commencing their Legal Studies course, providing an intensive exploration of life for young offenders in maximum security, the harshest penalty for criminal offences in Australia. Students can explore the range of criminal offences that lead to this particular incarceration, the socio-economic, educational, cultural and psychological range of circumstances that lead to such sentencing.

## VCE MEDIA STUDIES – PARTICULARLY UNIT 1

### Area of Study 1

Media Studies involves exploring, interpreting and responding to texts in a variety of media and forms.

The Study Design of all four Units focuses on how media influences and shapes the way people 'perceive themselves and others, and (plays) a crucial role in the creation and exchange of personal, social, cultural, national and global identities'. *Stories from the Inside* slots in most appropriately into Area of Study 1 as a text to analyse in this broad exploration of the role of media. 'An analysis of structure and features ... audience reception ... contribution to and impact on society' are further focuses of this



Area of Study and this documentary is eminently suitable for these analyses. Very specifically, this first Area of Study requires an examination of media 'representations and how such representations depict, for example, events, people, places, organisations and ideas'. Key knowledge involves 'examining representations of values ... related to gender, age, ethnicity, culture and socio-economic status'.

## CIVICS AND CITIZENSHIP

Civics and Citizenship focuses on the development of skills and behaviours involved in interactions with the community and in engagement with organisations and groups. Students think critically about their own values and those of organisations and groups across a range of settings, and explore the diversity of society. *Stories from the Inside* speaks clearly to the notions of values and responsibilities, encouraging audiences to consider the appropriateness of laws and consequences of breaking those laws. Civics and citizenship ... also supports the development of skills, values and attitudes that are necessary for effective, informed and reflective participation in Australia's democracy. *Stories from the Inside* functions as a social document on the consequences of conduct that put at risk the security and harmony of Australian society.

## VCE PSYCHOLOGY – UNITS 1&2

### Rationale

Psychology is the scientific study of mental processes and behaviour in humans. Biological, behavioural, cognitive and socio-cultural perspectives inform the way psychologists approach their research into the human condition. In the VCE study of Psychology, students explore complex human behaviours and thought processes. They develop empathetic understandings and an understanding of mental health issues in society. Students are given the opportunity to apply psychological principles to everyday situations such as workplace and social relations. Psychology provides students with a sophisticated framework for understanding the complex interactions between biological, behavioural, cognitive and sociocultural factors that

influence thought, emotions and behaviour. The study assists students to further develop effective language skills for communication, and numeracy skills for research, data analysis and other applications. In addition, students develop a range of broader skills including those of problem solving, critical evaluation and the application of processes of scientific inquiry.

### Unit 1: Introduction to Psychology

In this Unit, students are introduced to the development of psychology from its philosophical beginnings to a scientific study of the human mind and behaviour. Students explore the scope of psychology, its specialist disciplines such as neuropsychology, cognitive, social and human developmental psychology, and its fields of application. Students consider influences on perception and human behaviour from biological, behavioural, cognitive and sociocultural perspectives. In this aspect of the course, *Stories from the Inside* is well placed to offer students an extensive exploration of the perspectives the young offenders bring to both their past lives and their current circumstances.

### Unit 2: Self and Others

A person's attitudes and behaviours affect the way they view themselves and the way they relate to others. Understanding what influences the formation of attitudes of individuals and behaviours of groups can inform and contribute to explanations of individual aggression or altruism, the positive and negative power of peer pressure and responses to group behaviour. The young men who speak to us in *Stories from the Inside* have much to say about the influences on their attitudes and behaviour.

Differences between individuals can also be ascribed to differences in intelligence and personality, but conceptions of intelligence and personality and their methods of assessment are contested. Differences between individuals, groups and cultures can be analysed in varied ways through different psychological perspectives informed by both classic and contemporary theories. This text may operate most appropriately as a means of such analyses.

# STORIES FROM THE INSIDE

## KEY ORGANISATION AND PERSONNEL

**Shark Island Productions** <<http://www.sharkisland.com.au>>

Shark Island Productions is an award-winning documentary production company based in Sydney whose credits include *The Oasis* (Ian Darling & Sascha Ettinger-Epstein, 2008), *Polly and Me* (Ian Darling, 2009) and *Paul Kelly – Stories of Me* (2012). Shark Island creates extensive education, outreach and community engagement campaigns, and builds strategic partnerships with foundations, philanthropists and not-for-profit organisations to raise awareness and make a significant social impact. Shark Island has produced *Stories from the Inside* and established a training program for the young men to shoot, edit and direct the film, and created the outreach campaign to bring the film to the education sector.

IAN DARLING     Producer  
MARY MACRAE     Producer  
JAQUE FISHER     Director (together with the inmates)  
SALLY FRYER     Consulting Editor  
PAUL CHARLIER     Sound Post Production / Music

**Igniting Change** <<http://www.ignitingchange.org.au>>

Igniting Change (formerly Pilotlight Australia, based in Melbourne) is a purposely tiny charity sparking ideas, alliances and resources for social change. They are passionate about giving a voice to people who often don't have one, and creating a bridge between people who need help and those in a position to give it. Igniting Change has financially supported many new initiatives in Port Phillip Prison's Youth Unit including Doin' Time, Toll Second Step and Stories From The Inside Program.

**Igniting Change**     Executive Producer

JANE TEWSON  
JESS GOMO  
JACKIE POLONSKI

## G4S – Port Phillip Prison

<<http://www.corrections.vic.gov.au/home/prison/port+phillip+prison.shtml>>

<<http://www.au.g4s.com/what-we-do/ppp.aspx>>

Port Phillip Prison is Victoria's largest prison, able to accommodate up to 934 prisoners. This is a maximum security prison for men, privately operated on behalf of the Government of Victoria by G4S Australia Pty Ltd; it includes

the Youth Unit, especially programed for first offenders with the view to reducing recidivism.

Anne Hooker and the team have developed a number of programs designed to give the young men opportunities to change their behavior, learn new skills, develop self-esteem and give them a greater chance of an independent life when they leave prison. Some of these initiatives include Doin' Time, a T-shirt printing and embroidery business, Toll Second Step, a training post-release supported employment program, and *Stories From The Inside*, a documentary made by the inmates.

DENNIS ROACH

Director of Custodial Services, G4S, Port Phillip Prison

IAN THOMAS

General Manager, Port Phillip Prison

ALFIE OLIVA

Clinical and Integration Services Manager, G4S, Port Phillip Prison

ANNE HOOKER

Youth Development Officer, G4S, Port Phillip Prison.

## A PHILANTHROPIC INITIATIVE

*Stories From The Inside* is a philanthropic initiative. Shark Island Productions, Igniting Change, The Caledonia Foundation, Virgin Unite and a group of other philanthropic partners have all contributed towards the funding of the film and its education, outreach and community engagement program.

The film, study guide, website and an additional short film *The Youth Unit* are made available as a free online resource to all secondary schools in Australia at <<http://www.storiesfromtheinside.com.au>>. This site also provides additional information about the film and links to other inmate programs.

The DVD can be bought through the Youth Unit initiative Doin' Time, with proceeds then donated by the inmates to the charities of their choice. <<http://www.servingtime.org>>

*As part of a small business education program, our aim is to develop our personal skills, to not only to reduce the risk of reoffending, but also assist us in becoming positive and productive members of the community.*





# SHORT FILM THE YOUTH UNIT

In making *Stories From The Inside*, a short film about the unit was also made, providing more background to how the unit operates.

You can watch it online at  
<<http://www.storiesfromtheinside.com.au>>

## Background info on the Youth Unit:

Within Port Phillip Prison, the Youth Unit is also known as the Penhyn Unit. It currently caters for thirty-five prisoners at any one time aged between eighteen and twenty-five years. All prisoners are housed in single cells.

The aim of the Youth Unit is to reduce the risk of suicide and self-harm by addressing the unique developmental and environmental needs of young offenders (eighteen to twenty-five years). G4S recognises if young offenders spend a lot of time with adult offenders, there is increased risk of failing to successfully develop their own self identity. In the unit the opportunities for positive behaviour and identity development are maximised, and the incidence of self-harming behaviour is minimised.

Port Phillip Prison and the Director of the Youth Unit, Anne Hooker have developed a number of programs designed to give the young men opportunities to change their behaviour, learn new skills, develop self-esteem and give them a greater chance of an independent life when they leave

prison. Some of these initiatives include Doin' Time, a T-shirt printing and embroidery business, Toll Second Step, a training post-release supported employment program, and *Stories from The Inside*, a documentary made by the inmates. Since 2005 these programs have been made possible by the generous support of Igniting Change, a not-for-profit organisation, together with philanthropic and corporate partners.

## The goals of the Youth Unit are:

- To reduce the risk of suicide and self-harm within the population of young offenders
- To identify factors contributing to offending behaviour
- To provide a positive and supportive environment where meaningful change can occur
- To enhance the young person's ability to effectively manage his life without reoffending

## ACTIVITY 1: BEFORE VIEWING THIS DOCUMENTARY:

Carefully review the following data:

### PRISON IN AUSTRALIA: THE FACTS.

Australia's imprisonment rate has nearly doubled in the last thirty years (AIC 2011). According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), as of 30 June 2012, the national imprisonment rate was 168 in 100,000 adult population. According to the Report on Government Services (ROGS), 2013, the rate of prisoners who were released in 2009–10 and returned to prison by 2011–12 nationally was 39.3 per cent.

People from disadvantaged backgrounds with physical and intellectual disabilities and mental health problems are significantly overrepresented in the prison population. The national imprisonment rate per 100,000 Indigenous adults in 2011–12 was 1749.7. If you are shocked by this statistic, you shouldn't be. The disproportionate presence of Indigenous people in the criminal justice system has been a major issue throughout Australia's history. The uncomfortable truth was first brought to light in 1991 with the *Royal Commission on Aboriginal Deaths in Custody*, which claimed that Indigenous

Australians were twenty-seven times more likely to go to prison than non-Indigenous Australians.

In terms of age, recidivism is highest among young offenders. A young person leaving prison today is more likely than not to reoffend and return to prison. Young Indigenous people have higher retention rates in prison than at school.

The 2012 Productivity Commission Report to Government, Corrective Services, states keeping a prisoner in the adult prison system costs over \$100,000 per year, yet less than 12 per cent on average of state and territory correction budgets are spent on rehabilitation. Less than 40 per cent of prisoners participate in education (ABS 2013) and most leave with no prospects of employment.

There is consensus among many within and connected to the prison system that policy change on a national scale is needed to change the outcomes for young offenders so they desist from crime rather than remain costly, alienated recidivists.

### WHAT KIND OF PEOPLE GO TO PRISON IN AUSTRALIA TODAY?

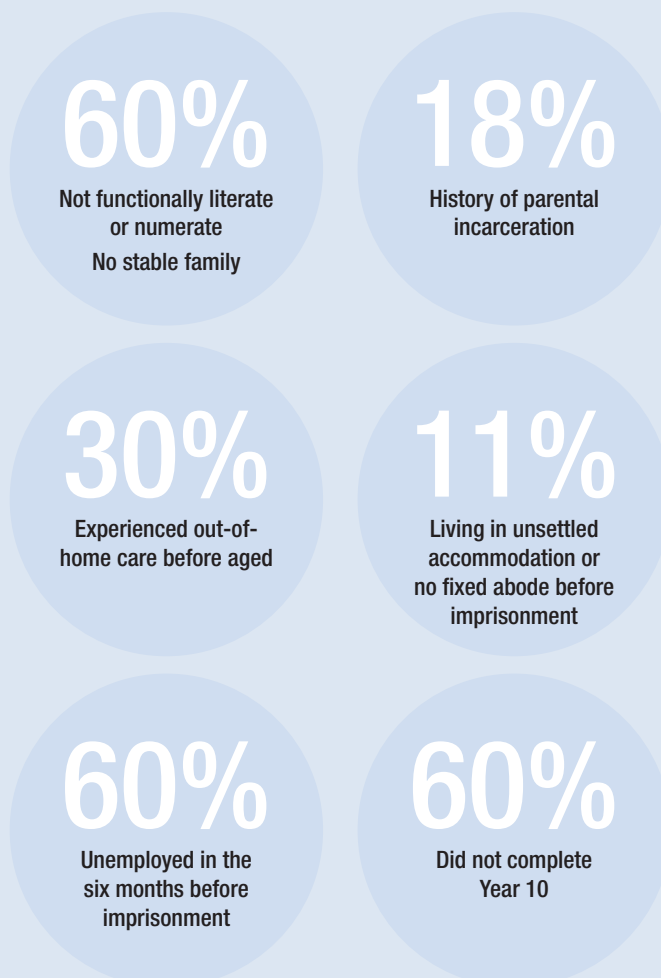
Here is a 'snapshot' of the circumstances that may precipitate a prison sentence:

#### Family, education and living

- People in prison, on the whole, come from and go back to highly disadvantaged areas – in New South Wales, 30 per cent of the people in prison come from just four postcodes and most others from just ten.
- Family dysfunction, out-of-home care, abuse, neglect and tenuous social connections contribute to low levels of education, limited chances of employment, drug and alcohol abuse, poor health and social isolation.

**In NSW, 30% of people in prison come from just four postcodes and most others from ten. In Victoria 25% of prisoners come from 2% of postcodes**

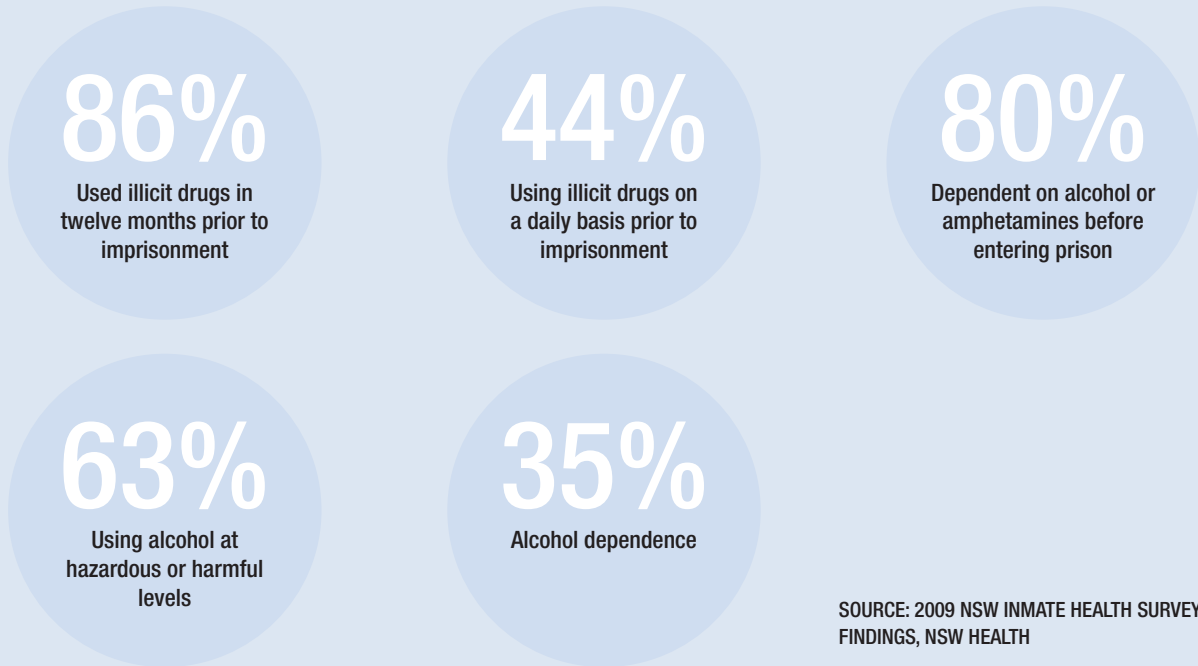
FIGURE 1: THIS SPELLS OUT EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, AND A FAMILY SNAPSHOT



## Drug and alcohol use

Before entering prison, up to 80 per cent of inmates are estimated to be dependent on some form of drug or alcohol. Organised crime supports the trafficking of illegal drugs both outside and inside prisons. Anecdotal evidence from prisoners and lawyers suggests that the small-time dealers, who may be drug-dependent themselves, swell the prison population, while the leaders of organised crime syndicates run complicated systems to avoid detection. While there is a correlation between drug use and imprisonment, drug use is usually a symptom of underlying social and economic disadvantage. When asked about the need for legal support for people who are drug and alcohol dependent, one former prisoner said, 'it's not about the drugs, it's about being poor'.

FIGURE 2 – DRUG AND ALCOHOL SNAPSHOT.



SOURCE: 2009 NSW INMATE HEALTH SURVEY: KEY FINDINGS, NSW HEALTH

## Mental Health

High rates of mental ill health, mental impairment and disability are found in prisons. A correlation has been found between the disbanding of mental health institutions over the last thirty years and the rise in prison numbers.

In the two weeks following release, the relative risk of death from all causes for some groups in prison is seventeen times higher than in the general population. The main causes of these deaths are associated with drug and alcohol abuse.

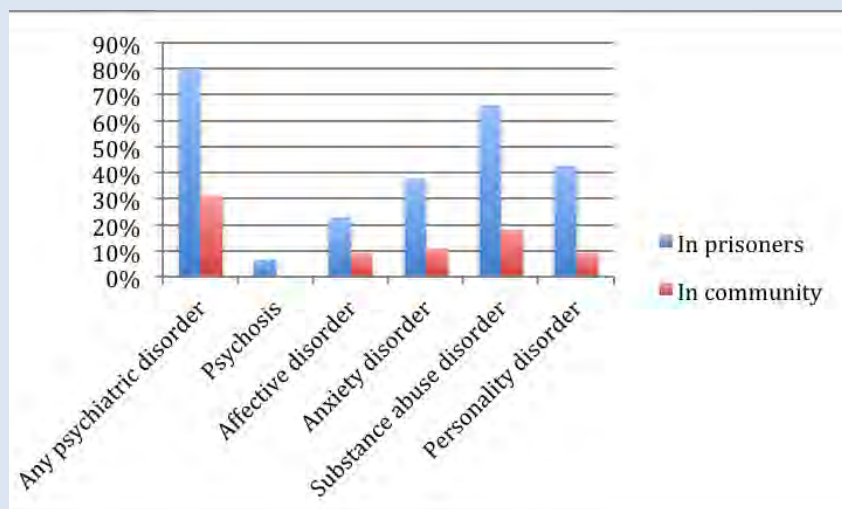


FIGURE 3 – COMPARATIVE PREVALENCE OF PSYCHIATRIC DISORDERS OF PEOPLE IN PRISON AND IN THE COMMUNITY (NSW)



## VICTIM IMPACT STATEMENTS & THE VICTIMS' CHARTER.

### What is The Victims' Charter?

The Victims' Charter is a 2006 Act of Parliament that sets out principles on how the criminal justice system and victim service agencies should respond to victims of crime. As a result of the Victims' Charter, you can expect to be treated with courtesy, respect and dignity by the police, the Office of Public Prosecutions and victim support services at all times. As a result of the Victims' Charter, Victim Impact Statements are now a right under the law. To access detailed information regarding this Charter, you may look up <[https://assets.justice.vic.gov.au/voc/resources/6244c30c-f74c-477e-a253-6c181e77f41a/victims\\_charter\\_act\\_2006.pdf](https://assets.justice.vic.gov.au/voc/resources/6244c30c-f74c-477e-a253-6c181e77f41a/victims_charter_act_2006.pdf)>

As we know, Zac is the only offender in our film who refers to a Victim Impact Statement read out to him in court.

Here are some frequently asked questions and answers about Victim Impact Statements:

#### 1. What is a Victim Impact Statement?

A Victim Impact Statement explains how a crime has affected a victim. It includes issues such as:

- financial loss
- physical injury
- property damage or loss
- emotional trauma suffered as a direct result of the crime.

If a person is found guilty, a Victim Impact Statement can be taken into account by the court in deciding the penalty.

#### 2. Is a Victim Impact Statement compulsory?

Victim Impact Statements are voluntary: if you don't want to make one, you don't have to. If you do make a statement, copies are given to the magistrate, the prosecution and the accused or their lawyer.

#### 3. Who can make a Victim Impact Statement?

Any victim of any crime can make a VIS. You are a victim of crime if you are physically injured or suffer emotional problems, loss or damage because of a crime. This includes any grief, distress or trauma that a crime causes.

You don't need to be the primary victim (the person who the crime was committed against) to make a VIS. Family members, and sometimes friends, can also be victims of crime and can make a VIS.

#### 4. When is a Victim Impact Statement used?

A VIS is used by the court at a plea hearing. The plea hearing is when the prosecution and defence lawyers provide information to the judge or magistrate to assist them to make their sentencing decision.


A plea hearing happens after someone is found guilty or pleads guilty, but before they are sentenced. Your VIS needs to be provided to the prosecutor before a plea hearing. The timeframes for when a plea hearing occurs differ in each case. Speak to the police informant, OPP solicitor or your victim or witness assistance worker if you are thinking about making a VIS so you can complete your VIS in time.

*The Sentencing Act of 1991* sets out the purposes of sentencing, and what the sentencing magistrate must consider when imposing a sentence. This Act now includes 'the impact of the offence on the victim and the victim's personal circumstances'.

To find more on this Act, the following two documents will assist:

<<http://www.lawhandbook.org.au/handbook/ch03s05s01.php>>

<<http://www.victimsofcrime.vic.gov.au/home/going+to+court/victim+impact+statements/>>



The following is a genuine Victim Impact Statement from the mother of a young woman who was killed by her partner in 2008:

*My name is (name) and I am so very proud to say that I am the mother of (name). The tragic events that have lead me to stand before you today and read this statement have by far been the most difficult and painful that myself and my family have ever had to find the strength to endure. The tragic and needless loss of my daughter devastated us all, and still does to this very day. I don't even know where to begin to express the pain I hold in my heart. There's not one single day that goes by that I don't have a thought of my daughter, and these precious memories are all that's left to me now, that, and a plaque. What once was an amazing and beautiful, loving and gentle young woman is now and forever more just ashes that lie in the cold, dark ground.*

*When (name) was taken from me a part of me also died that night with her; to wake up every day and have to face yet another day without (name) is still such a struggle for me, my family, and all who knew and loved her. To have my child (my little girl) taken from me and her family at such a young and tender age under such tragic circumstances is something I've been forced to live with against my will. I could tell you about (name) as a child or (name) as a teenager or even as a young woman, and all the happy, memorable and magical times I have had with my daughter over twenty-two years, but you still wouldn't know her. To you she was just another young woman caught up in an undesirable domestic situation that led to her death case file number whatever. But to me and her family and the one hundred or so people that made the effort and took the time from their jobs and busy lives to attend her funeral to pay their respects and say goodbye, she was a bright light, a warmth, a happy, charismatic extremely lovable, funny and deeply caring human being. For which all our lives now will be the poorer for having lost her.*

*And all because of you (name of perpetrator). Your cowardly act of RAGE, AGGRESSION, OBSESSION, and STUPIDITY will forever more be the legacy which you have to live with and we pray that it will haunt you as it does us for the rest of your life. I will never feel the comfort of knowing that (name) is in a healthy, loving, happy relationship, nor will I ever have the joy of seeing her wedding day, or watch with pride as my little mul-ligan (as I used to call her) blossoms into what I am sure would have been an amazing, mature woman. At only twenty-two she was an inspiration to me and to many. When I thought my life was going badly and that I deserved more than what I had, she was always there to listen. Never did she complain about how little she had or how she wasn't getting a fair go. To (name) her family and their happiness and wellbeing meant everything when in truth all the poor kid owned could have fitted in a suitcase; she never had much and yet she was always happy. Which always brought me back to the reality of how lucky I really was. And how rich I was for having this little girl in my life.*

*And in closing I would like to say DEATH IS NOTHING ELSE BUT GOING HOME TO GOD, THE BOND OF LOVE WILL BE UNBROKEN FOR ALL ETERNITY.*

*SINCERELY (name).*

# POST VIEWING ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY: (all levels, Years 10–12, all subject areas)

## COMPILING A 'WORD BANK'

Look up the following words and construct a coherent, accurate definition:

recidivism  
 deterrent  
 rehabilitation/  
 rehabilitate  
 Indigenous  
 consensus  
 desist  
 prevalence  
 constraint  
 protocols  
 mandatory  
 felony, felonies  
 philanthropy

ACTIVITY: (Year 10 English/Literature)

## Listening/comprehending

(1) Fill in the following chart with the information required:

INMATE'S NAME	PRE-PRISON LIFE	CRIME(S)	CURRENT EXPERIENCE OF PRISON

(2) Questions:

1. Can you recognize a pattern to the lives of these young men?
2. To which statistical groups in Figures 1 and 2 of the data on pages 24 and 25 do each of these young men conform?



## ACTIVITY: Year 10 English/Legal Studies/ Civics and Citizenship

### CLASS DISCUSSION TOPICS:

What circumstances might be involved in a released criminal returning to criminal activities? In considering this topic, it may be useful to look up the following website: <<http://www.nobars.org.au>>.

Given the data on pages 7–9 and the young men's own stories, which of the six do you think might *not* reoffend?

Which young offender do you feel sympathy for and why?

Whom do you feel the *least* sympathy for and why?

## ACTIVITY: Years 10-11 English, Legal Studies, Media Studies

### Research:

Find answers to the following questions:

1. What is the role of the Coroner?
2. What does the term 'custodial sentence' mean?
3. What is a 'suspended sentence'?
4. What is parole?

## ACTIVITIES: VCE Legal Studies

### (1) Research Project (individual/partner/ group work options)

Using the following websites and a selection from the end-notes to this study guide, write a report on the conditions behind the high number of Indigenous Australians in our prisons:

<http://www.creativespirits.info/aboriginalculture/law/aboriginal-prison-rates>

[http://www.actnow.com.au/Issues/Indigenous\\_Australians\\_in\\_prison.aspx](http://www.actnow.com.au/Issues/Indigenous_Australians_in_prison.aspx)

[http://www.aic.gov.au/crime\\_types/in\\_focus/indigenousjustice.html](http://www.aic.gov.au/crime_types/in_focus/indigenousjustice.html)

### (2) Discussion paper on Victim Impact Statements

VIS are now an accepted feature of the criminal justice systems of all Australian states as well as many countries including New Zealand, Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom. Yet their presentation during sentencing hearings continues to be controversial. Why is this so?

Your task is:

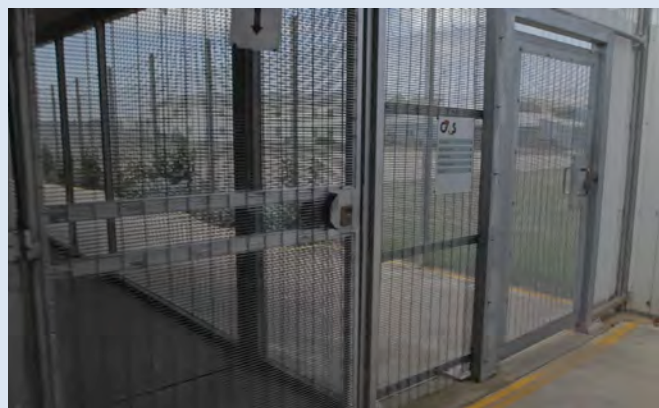
- to research the arguments for and against the use of VIS in criminal proceedings, and the reasoning behind these arguments. Material that will be of use in your research is:

<http://njca.anu.edu.au/Professional%20Development/programs%20by%20year/2006/Sentencing%20Conference/Sen%20conf%20papers%202006/Garkawe.pdf>

- to provide a response to the question: What does a VIS achieve? Consider the following documents in your answer:

<http://www.watchmn.org/files/media/executive%20summary.pdf>

<http://aic.gov.au/documents/D/7/C/%7BD7C35340-B6A7-45AF-96F3-7B497D7A3692%7Dt33.pdf>





## ACTIVITY: English/Media Studies.

### Comparative Writing/Cinematic devices

Look at the YouTube documentary *Lockdown Oz*.

This is a National Geographic Australia film about the most hardcore offenders currently in prison in Australia, incarcerated in Casuarina Maximum Security Prison. This film has been made with a highly professional team of filmmakers.

<http://youtube.com/watch?v=iTDGESXnye0>

(1) Write a short comparative piece on:

- the differences and similarities in the maintenance of both prisons
- the outlook of prisoners in both prisons
- the approach taken by the prison officers in each institution

(2) Write a short comparative essay on the differing filming styles employed by both the Port Phillip filmmakers and the National Geographic team. Be sure to focus, in both prisons, on the cinematic devices that enhance the sense of incarceration, overcrowding, surveillance and danger.

## ACTIVITY: CLASS DISCUSSION TOPICS:

### Looking at our own behaviour:

- What is common assault? Does a person have to be injured for an assault charge to be laid?

- What is the range of penalties if charged with common assault?
- What is the charge of affray? Is it more serious than assault?
- What circumstances could lead to the charge of accessory to a crime?
- What is Group Offending? Brainstorm some situations where a young person may be charged as a principal or accessory to a crime where they may not think they have any culpability.
- What is 'rolling'? Is this a serious offence?
- It is illegal to carry a weapon or knife for the purposes of self defence? If a weapon or knife was used in a scuffle or fight, what charges can be laid against you?
- What is provocation? Is it a defence against assault?

### Knowing your rights:

- What are the basic rights of a person in custody in your state?
- What is a police interview?
- What does the phrase 'custodian time limits' refer to?



# ENDNOTES & REFERENCES

## 1. Stories from the Inside

<http://www.storiesfromtheinside.com.au>

**2. Information on Port Phillip Prison:** <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Port\\_Phillip\\_Prison](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Port_Phillip_Prison)> and a short online film clip 'Port Phillip Prison adds 180 new beds.': <<http://media.smh.com.au/news/national-news/life-in-victorias-largest-prison-3823820.html>>

**3. Information on regulations regarding sentenced prisoners:** From *The Law Handbook: Your Practical Guide to the Law in Victoria* (section: 'The Prison System' by Richard Edney Barrister) on <<http://www.lawhandbook.org.au/handbook/ch04s05s05.php>>

## 4. Further documentation available to students may be found at the following addresses:

<<http://www.justicehealth.nsw.gov.au/about-us/publications/2009-ihs-report.pdf>>  
<<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/4517.0>>  
<<http://www.nobars.org.au>>

### Justice Systems:

<<http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/sentencing/>>  
<<http://www.correctiveservices.nsw.gov.au/information/legislation/intensive-correction-order/>>  
<<http://www.correctiveservices.nsw.gov.au/offender-management/offender-management-in-custody/>>  
<<http://www.correctiveservices.wa.gov.au/youth-justice/default.aspx>>  
<<http://www.corrections.sa.gov.au/sa-prisons>>  
<<http://www.cs.act.gov.au>>  
<<http://www.correctionalservices.nt.gov.au/Pages/default.aspx>>  
<<http://www.correctiveservices.qld.gov.au>>  
<[http://www.correctiveservices.qld.gov.au/Resources/Myths\\_and\\_FAQs/index.shtml](http://www.correctiveservices.qld.gov.au/Resources/Myths_and_FAQs/index.shtml)>

### Drink Driving:

<<http://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/Home/SafetyAndRules/RoadRules/Penalties/DrinkDrivingPenalties.htm>>  
<<http://www.police.wa.gov.au/Traffic/Drinkdriving/Penalties/tabid/989/Default.aspx>>  
<<http://www.sa.gov.au/subject/Transport,+travel+and+motoring/Motoring/Drivers+and+licences/Driving+offences+and+penalties/Driving+laws,+offences+and+penalties>>  
<<http://www.transport.nt.gov.au/mvr/alcohol-ignition-locks>>  
<<http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au/usingroads/penalties/alcoholanddrugs.html>>  
<<http://www.police.act.gov.au/roads-and-traffic/drink-driving.aspx#penalties>>  
<<http://www.qld.gov.au/transport/safety/road-safety/drink-driving/penalties/index.html>>

### Steroids:

<[http://www0.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/drugandalcohol/anabolic\\_steroids.html](http://www0.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/drugandalcohol/anabolic_steroids.html)>

### Australasian Legal Information Institute:

<<http://www.austlii.edu.au>>

## 5. Imprisonment statistics:

(1) Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) Australian Crime Facts and Figures, 2011. Chapter 6: Corrections.

(2) ABS Prisoners in Australia, 2012, prior imprisonment.

(3) Article: 'Who returns to prison? Patterns of recidivism among prisoners released from custody in Victoria in 2002-3'; corrections research paper, Series 01, 2007.

(4) Productivity Commission, Report to Government, Corrective Services 2012.

(5) ABS 6302.0 Average weekly earnings, Australia, 2012

(6) Heseltine et al, Prison-based correctional offender rehabilitation programs: the 2009 national picture in Australia, AIC reports, Research and Public Policy Series 122.

## 6. Indigenous imprisonment information:

<http://www.creativespirits.info/aboriginalculture/law/aboriginal-prison-rates>  
[http://www.aic.gov.au/crime\\_types/in\\_focus/indigenousjustice.html](http://www.aic.gov.au/crime_types/in_focus/indigenousjustice.html)  
[http://www.actnow.com.au/Issues/Indigenous\\_Australians\\_in\\_prison.aspx](http://www.actnow.com.au/Issues/Indigenous_Australians_in_prison.aspx)

## 7. Data on prison populations:

(1) No Bars, About Criminal justice clients, <http://www.nobars.org.au>

(2) Baldry, E; The Booming Industry: Australian prisons, School of Social Sciences and International Studies, University of New South Wales

(3) 2009 NSW Inmate health survey: Key findings, NSW Health

(4) White, P and Whiteford, H; Prisons mental health institutions of the 21st century? Medical Journal of Australia Vol, 185 No 6 Sept 2006.

(5) Conversations with workers, prisoners, ex-prisoners.

## 8. VCE Legal Studies Study Design:

<http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Documents/vce/legalstudies/legalstudiesd-2011.pdf>



**9. VCE Psychology Study Design:**

<http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/vce/studies/psychology/psychunit1-2.html>

**10. Civics and Citizenship links to Year 10 curriculum:**

[http://www.civicsandcitizenship.edu.au/cce/about\\_civics\\_and\\_citizenship\\_education9625html](http://www.civicsandcitizenship.edu.au/cce/about_civics_and_citizenship_education9625html)

**11. Media Studies links to VCE Study Design:**

<http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Pages/vce/studies/media/mediaindex.aspx>

Downloadable PDF: <<http://12mediagrangewikispaces.com/file/view/media-sd-2012.pdf/278713004/media-sd-2012.pdf>>

**12. Victim Impact Statements information:**

<http://www.victimsofcrime.vic.gov.au/home/going+to+court/victim+impact+statements/>

<http://www.lawhandbook.org.au/handbook/ch03s05s01.php>

<http://www.legallaid.vic.gov.au/find-legal-answers/victims-of-crime/victim-impact-statements>

<http://njca.anu.edu.au/Professional%20Development/programs%20by%20year/2006/Sentencing%20Conference/Sen%20conf%20papers%202006/Garkawe.pdf>

<http://www.watchmn.org/files/media/executive%20summary.pdf>

<http://aic.gov.au/documents/D/7/C/%7BD7C35340-B6A7-45AF-96F3-7B497D7A3692%7Dt%33.pdf>

**13. The Victims Charter:**

[https://assets.justice.vic.gov.au/voc/resources/6244c30c-f74c-477e-a253-6c181e77f41a/victims\\_charter\\_act\\_2006.pdf](https://assets.justice.vic.gov.au/voc/resources/6244c30c-f74c-477e-a253-6c181e77f41a/victims_charter_act_2006.pdf)



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