

'food for thought' Distraction Pack



In its report "Life in Prisons: Living Conditions (2017)", HMIP reported that:

"Prisoners will sometimes spend a lot of time in their cells due to limited access to association or work; this may hinder their ability to cope with day-to-day prison life, leaving them vulnerable. It is therefore important that they have sufficient mental stimulation available to them during periods of lock-up – a lack of which can lead to prisoners experiencing extreme stress, anger and frustration".



RECOOP has been working with older prisoners and ex-offenders for over ten years and recognises the importance of keeping active, both physically and mentally.

With that in mind, **'food for thought'**, a distraction pack, was developed. The packs include quizzes, word searches, Sudoku, brain teasers, health information, poetry, interesting facts about the world, art appreciation and much more.



Originally introduced for use in prisons, their reach has become far wider. Courts in England & Wales and Police Custody Suites are now subscribing to the monthly pack, recognising the impact they have on filling time constructively. Elements of the packs are also being distributed to British prisoners around the globe.

Education at HMP Lewes commented:

"My learners on HMP 3A (third age) are over 55. We use parts of the packs in class sometimes to begin a debate - for example there was a fabulous article on bees that sparked a mini-project.

Often learners will ask for the Sudoku or word searches. I regularly pass on the documents to two other tutors who work in Healthcare and on the Dependence Wing who say that their learners really enjoy the packs.

I find them to be to the point and difficult enough to provide interest and to stretch. I use some of the Sudoku, word searches and the number puzzles from the packs to give out during MEAs - initial tests, when men first come into the prison and it takes the edge off the exams and keeps people gainfully occupied."



Produced on a monthly basis, the packs are sent direct to those who subscribe via email, so that printing and distribution can be arranged well in advance of the beginning of each month.

For further information please contact: info@recoop.org.uk