

morning tears newsletter

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Editorial

44 million

The academic world has helped Morning Tears fine-tune its statistics. The results are unfortunately astonishing. The problem that Morning Tears addresses is far bigger than we had thought. There are at least **44 million children** in the world who have a parent in prison. The real number is likely significantly higher because these numbers are based on official governmental statistics, which often underreport prisoner numbers.

That means that **44 million children** face psychological and emotional problems that are often overwhelming. The arrest of a parent brings fear, confusion and panic. Before and during the trial children feel anxiety and frustration. At the moment of sentencing there is hopelessness and helplessness. Upon imprisonment the child experiences abandonment, stigma and resentment. At the time and after the release, children have ambivalent feelings. Moreover, if the conviction is linked with domestic violence, the degree to which all of these hurtful feelings prove traumatic often multiplies. Additionally, the developmental and behavioral consequences of a parents' imprisonment are too many to describe.

But there's more bad news. The number of children who have a parent in prison is quickly growing in pace with the overall global increase of the prison population. Another 6 million children may join the group by 2016.

Morning Tears is a growing organization, but a growing number of **44 million** children facing such pain is beyond the service capacity of any organization. More than ever, we call upon other organizations, academics, politicians and individuals to embrace our children and to associate with us. Contact us to find out how you can help.

Koen Sevenants,
Morning Tears General Director
koen.sevenants@morningtears.org



News

Morning Tears to set up a project in Kyrgyzstan

The incarcerated population is growing in 71% of the countries. Consequently, more children are thrown aside when their parents go to prison. So Morning Tears wants to develop projects in new countries.

Research is the first step to begin a project in a new country. If this first investigation shows Morning Tears projects would be relevant and feasible in a specific country, then the next step will be an exploratory mission to that country by a Morning Tears team. The research will examine:

- Social and cultural context
- Relevance of Morning Tears program activity in terms of the size of the target group
- Impact of parents' incarceration on children
- Existing policies and programs
- Challenges for international NGOs

Such has been completed in Kyrgyzstan in recent months, showing that:

- Kyrgyzstan has been through myriad changes the recent months. The future is highly uncertain. The government and economy are very unstable. The country had 19% inflation in 2010 and food prices have continued rising.
- Poverty has decreased nearly twofold since 2000, but the situation is still not as it should be. The global *2009 Human Development Report* ranks Kyrgyzstan 120th, with a Human Development Index rating of 0.710, pointing to regional and urban/rural disparities as well as inequalities between men and women.
- 6% of children are not registered at birth.
- Domestic violence is widespread. More than 40 percent of murders committed in Kyrgyzstan are the result of domestic disputes.



- 4% of the population in orphanages are children of convicts, according to the Prison Fellowship International organization's estimates
- Like in China, children of convicts are strongly stigmatized and are often regarded and treated as criminals themselves.
- There are no existing government programs to assist children whose parents are in prison. If nobody takes in the child after the parents' incarceration, he/she goes to an orphanage. Unfortunately some end up in the street. One child we learned of ended up in a juvenile institute.
- There is no structural organization for children's visits of their parents in prison.

The report concludes the establishment of a Morning Tears program in Kyrgyzstan is both relevant and feasible, as the government is willing to cooperate and welcomes NGOs.

The following step will be an exploratory mission by Morning Tears staff in the coming weeks.



Latest news from Morning Tears Netherlands!

The latest news in the Netherlands is about the 'Twoys mission' and Indonesia. The Twoys (an enthusiastic group of 'Twitter boys') are still raising money to get their tickets to Beijing. We told you about them in a previous Voluntear. They want to do something special for the children of Morning Tears. The plan is to show the children they really believe in and support them. The Twoys want to come to China and visit the Coming Home Project for eight days. Then, they will 'build' the children's dream. Along with the children, they will have the lead in the program. It will be documented on film. They want to show the children that it's important to hold on to their dreams and never stop believing. The photographs will be printed and be donated to the Coming Home Project.

The board of the Netherlands' Morning Tears met with Mr. Koen Sevenants and Miss Ange Moray about a new contract country to start a Morning Tears project – Indonesia. The board in the Netherlands is now doing research to determine what projects are already there. In the coming months, we'll try to contact organizations with which we can cooperate and develop a plan to start a Morning Tears project in Indonesia.

Morning Tears Alliance's board meeting

The 3rd board meeting of the Morning Tears Alliance was held on March 21 in Leuven, Belgium.

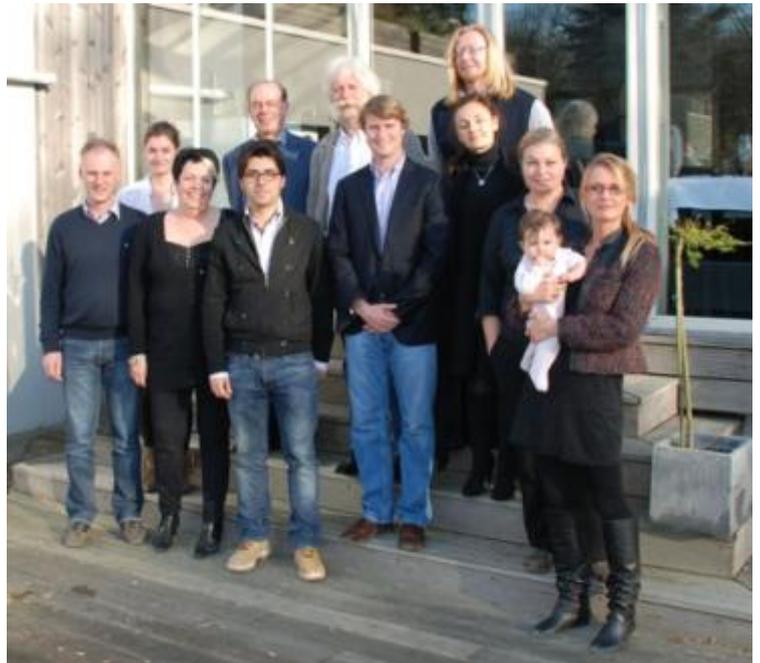
The Morning Tears Alliance is a nonprofit organization that brings together organizations that have the goal of improving the lives of children whose parents are in prison. The Morning Tears Alliance is created to propel the growth of a worldwide movement to address the fast-growing number of children of convicts.

The alliance's board is composed of representatives of Morning Tears organizations around the world (Belgium, China, Denmark, France, Italy, Spain, The Netherlands and the United States) and advisors.

This meeting allows Morning Tears organizations around the world to exchange their actual experiences and information about their projects, and to make strategic decisions for Morning Tears' future. It works toward Morning Tears; ambitious goals for the development and implementation of projects in new countries.

The main topics reviewed during the meetings were:

- Morning Tears China's 2011-2015 strategy
- 2010 financial reports
- Communication strategy
- Reviewing of the Morning Tears Charter





Dragonfly Anniversary

Dragonfly at Shanghai Racquet Club hosted its anniversary party in support Morning Tears. It was a cozy night with free pampering ala manicures and shoulder massages, a great lucky draw, and canapés and drinks. All proceeds went to Morning Tears.



First aid training at the Coming Home Project in Zhengzhou

Through the courtesy of Shanghai United Family Hospital, Dr. Ko and Nurse Li provided 20 staff members and caregivers at the Coming Home project in Henan province's Zhengzhou and staffers from the Child Protection Center with first aid and CPR training.

First aid and CPR training are important to anyone working with children. The Morning Tears staff and caregivers enjoyed learning these important lessons.



The experts showed CPR methods

Morning Tears, Kou Wei, the caregivers and our children say thank you to Dr. Ko Liu Ying and Yun Jiao Li for giving us all the opportunity to learn more about first aid and to be able to do the right thing in case of an emergency.

Ilona D. Volken
Office Manager, Shanghai



Morning Tears' strategy

In the previous newsletters, we explained Morning Tears uses research-based minimum standards for child-care and protection. In our standards, we differentiate seven quality areas, namely: planning for care, protective care, personal care, health, environment and safety, caregivers, management and administration. Here, we will discuss the sixth quality area: caregivers. We have four standards for this quality area. Here we discuss standards three and four.

Standard 6.3: Caregivers and staff deployment ensures quality childcare and protection

- *A sufficient number of caregivers exists in the program to meet needs and objectives*
- *Where children require special or individual care due to young age, disability, distress or medical needs and the organization of caregivers allows them to meet those needs.*
- *Consideration is given to the sex of caregivers where intimate personal care tasks are needed.*
- *When organizing caregivers within a team or pairing them to undertake a task, consideration is given to their different skills and abilities.*
- *Ancillary. Medical or security personnel should not be used as substitute childcare providers, nor should they be included in calculations of child-to-caregiver ratios.*
- *With children younger than 5, the child-caregiver ratio should be 1:1 or 1:2*
- *A group size of 9-14 children has been found to be ideal for the development of social skills with peers and adults, but the ratio should not exceed 1:5 for children with special needs due to disability, distress, etc.*

Why is this important?

- Ensuring that there are enough caregivers to provide individual attention to certain children is an important element in quality childcare.
- Staff-child ratios vary according to the number of children, their gender, special needs and age. Smaller children and those with special needs benefit from smaller ratios and closer attention. This also allows for the development of a trusting relationship between child and caregiver.
- Nighttime can be a particularly upsetting and unsettling time for children in institutional care. Particular needs can often be more pronounced, obvious and urgent during this time. The program should enable caregivers, rather than merely deploy security personnel, to be available.

Standard 6.4: Professional development and training should be available for staff and caregivers

A program should be committed to training its staff and caregivers on order to be able to carry out the complex task of working with and looking after orphaned and vulnerable children. Training is viewed as a valuable part of the program.

Why is this important?

- Even the best caregivers require some form of basic training to make sense of the children's behavior and the social issues they face. Some children bring specific challenges to the caregivers, such as children with disabilities, those who have been abused or abandoned, etc. Such issues need to be explored and appropriate skills to deal with those issues further developed.
- Well-organized caregiver exchange programs serve as an example of useful professional development tools.
- To be effective, such programs need to include management as well as basic workers.

In the next issue, we discuss quality area No 7: management and administration.



It Could Have Been Different

The story of Liu Ming

Parental imprisonment is more than temporarily pain and confusion. It inhibits much of the realization of the potential that children have. The story of Liu Ming below is representative of many children.

Little Liu Ming's school grades were excellent and everything about her promised a great future. It was nearly the end of her second year in primary school when her father was imprisoned. Her mother could not afford to raise her. She was sent to our children's village in middle of the school year. One year later, her mother came back, and they went to live to city. Liu Ming went to a new school, made new friends and got new books. But her mother left again. So she returned to the school near the children's village. She had to repeat a school year. When her mother returned the second time, they again moved to the city but to another school this time. Half a year later, Liu Ming moved to the capital, Beijing, where her mother could find better job opportunities. Liu Ming went to another new school, but because of the new books, she had to repeat another school year. She was in her last year of primary school when her father was released from prison. The whole family moved to South-China in the middle of the school year. Her school grades dropped but then improved. However, the increase in her scores was not enough to pass the entrance exam to enter a middle school of reasonable quality. Paying the middle school could compensate for exam scores if they were just a little too low. But unfortunately money was something the parents did not have. She had no choice to enter a middle school of very poor quality, where physical punishments are a daily routine. At age 15, she did not pass the high school entrance exam.

Morning Tears creates training materials

Following on with its goal to help and assist any children in need, Morning Tears has been invited to assist the National Training Center, under direct supervision of the National Ministry of Civil Affairs, in the development of training materials and plans for people who work in childcare institutions. The National Training Center is set up in the Zhengzhou Child Protection Center (Henan province), which is the official model project for caring for and assisting at-risk children, including street children, in China.

The National Training Center's purpose is to train all staff working in the state-run Children Protection Centers throughout all of China. To this end, a workshop started last February under the supervision of the Zhengzhou Child Protection Center's director and of a Morning Tears training specialist. A needs survey is being conducted through interviews and questionnaires distributed among several Child Protection Centers in China to increase the training modules proposal's relevance. Morning Tears will also provide a guidebook on writing training materials and trainees reading documents to provide future trainers with general baselines and direction. Meetings will be organized with experts and developers to construct the final National Training Curriculum. Training should start at the beginning of 2012, and the curriculum will be assessed and updated.

Morning Tears needs volunteers to contribute to the National Training Curriculum. We are searching for:

- 4 psychologists or educationalists, who will participate in writing the curriculum, trainee reading materials and assessment tools from the analysis to the implementation phase (urgent).
- 1 layout specialist and 1 audio-visual specialist, who will provide training documents based on the baseline project.

If you have these skills and want to become involved in this cause, please send your résumé to marie.garcia@morningtears.org.cn.



Coming Home Project – Henan

What happened in the last three months (January to March)

- An 8-year-old boy arrived at the project.
- We had birthday party for five children. Every kid received the gift they dreamed of.
- We celebrated Chinese New Year with children in project and arranged many activities for children. In accordance with Chinese tradition, every child received new clothes, a Lunar New Year's gift and lucky money.
- Morning Tear's Shanghai group came to visit our project and brought gifts for children.
- Members of the Zhengzhou education bureau and woman's federation visited the project.
- We have been working on a standard review.
- We have been working on developing training materials, creating questionnaires and organizing a baseline study.
- We have been working on new construction to enable us to receive more children.
- We have been working on a general plan to set up a new and larger Ai Tong Yuan on the land given by the local government.
- We have been continuing the casework and group work for children in the project.
- We have continued organizing regular meetings with the entire staff every two weeks.
- We have organized regular professional meetings about children's issues with the entire every two weeks.
- We took the children for outings during the May Day holiday.
- We took the children to visit their parents during the May Day holiday.

To come

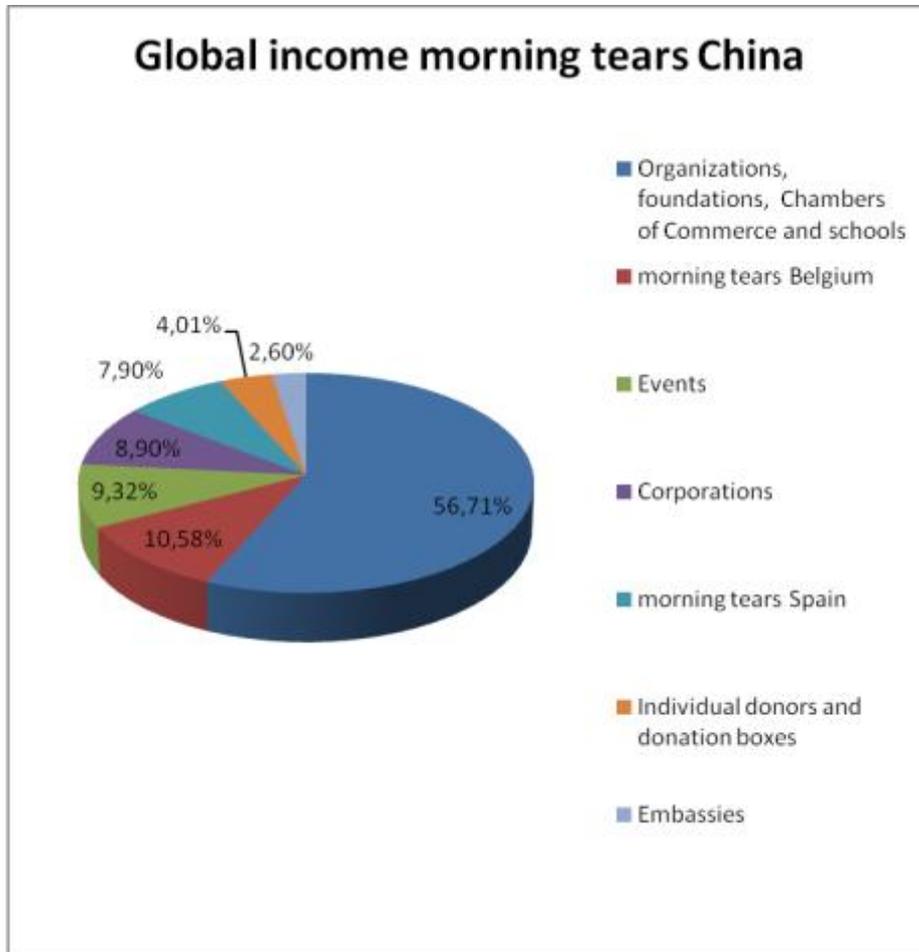
- Work on protection standards for assisting children of convicts.
- Work on baseline study for developing training materials for staffers of children protection centers.
- Work on the new building.
- Work on the general plan and design of the new Coming Home Project.
- We will continue our casework and complete the children's files.
- We will organize birthday parties for the children.





Financial Barometer

Below is an overview of Morning Tears China's 2010 finances



In 2010, a total of 1,714,268.75 RMB was raised in China. More than 56% of our funds came from private organizations, foundations, chambers of commerce and schools.

These institutions are very sensitive to our work, and the problems and needs of the children of convicts. We continue our awareness-raising activities with them.

The contributions coming from companies are a little less than 10% of the total. Morning Tears' Beijing and Shanghai offices are working on creating long-term partnerships with CSR (corporate social responsibility) departments.

On the 1,714,268.75 RMB rose in China, more than 1,489,000 RMB was spent directly on the

projects for Morning Tears children.



59.61% of our expenses were allocated to the Coming Home project in Zhengzhou, Henan. The other expenses were divided among the Xi'an and San Yuan children's villages, and family reunification programs.



Relevant Actuality

Important initiatives in securing the rights and needs for children of prisoners in Denmark

There are usually around 4,000 Danish children whose father or mother is in prison, and around 3 percent of all Danish children have experienced parental imprisonment. The effects on these children are often devastating. Nevertheless, their rights and challenges have remained forgotten for many years.

To change that, two meetings were held at the Danish Institute for Human Rights (DIHR) in 2006. Present at these meetings were representatives of the Danish Prison Service, the police and the social authorities, along with children's NGOs, relatives of inmates, and former and current prisoners. All parties met each other eye-to-eye, on neutral ground and with the same rights and speaking time. The topic was children of inmates and the idea was to have an informal discussion about what could possibly be done to help these children.

On the basis of the dialogue established during those meetings and the ideas generated, a research project was conceived, and supported by the Egmont Foundation. From the outset, the purpose of the project was to create change through a combination of research, dialogue, advocacy and awareness raising.

Source: www.humanrights.dk

New research in Australia

Vulnerable Families: A Study the Impact of Parental Offending and Incarceration on Children's Developmental Outcomes

Estimates indicate that 4.3% of Australian children will be affected by parental incarceration in their lifetime. Prisoners' children experience a concentration of risk factors, including parent-child separation, enduring traumatic stress, poverty and poor parenting practices, placing them at risk of negative outcomes, such as juvenile offenses. The extent to which incarceration exerts an effect on children over and above parental criminality, however, remains unknown. The *Vulnerable Families* research project addresses this question and will be the first in Australia to examine the effects over time of parental incarceration on children's developmental outcomes. Findings will provide an evidence base for targeting support and intervention programs for families.

Source: www.griffith.edu.au





morning tears Belgium

BNP Paribas Fortis

Account No: 001-4495454-65

IBAN: BE 18001449545465

BIC/SWIFT: GEBABEBB

morning tears Netherlands

ABN Amro

Account No: 45.75.13.764

Stichting Morning Tears Nederland

IBAN: NL81ABNA0457513764

BIC/SWIFT: ABNANL2A

morning tears Spain

La Caixa d'Estalvis i Pensions

Account No: 2100.0233.99.0200332319

IBAN: ES28 21000233990200332319

BIC/SWIFT: CAIXAESBXXX

morning tears Denmark

Danske Bank

Account No: 10490189 Reg. Nr. 1551

IBAN: DK14 3000 0010 4901 89

BIC/SWIFT: DABADKKK

morning tears China

Bank of China, Beijing Branch [中行北京分行]

No.8 Ya Bao Lu, Beijing, China [中北京雅宝路 8]

Account No: 4160300-0188-026239-0

Beneficiary: Guo Zhi Hong (郭志弘)

BIC/SWIFT: BKCHCNBJ110

morning tears rebuilds the world for children who have lost their own world.

morning tears rebuilds the world for children who have suffered or are suffering heavy emotional pain.

We focus particularly on:

- children whose parents are in prison;
- children whose parents have been sentenced to death;
- children who have been abused or neglected;
- orphans;
- children who haven't been registered at birth, and thus have no rights;
- street children.

morning tears has been operating since 1999 on an informal basis without legal structure. However, in March 2005 **morning tears** became a formal non-profit organization registered under Belgian Law. Currently, **morning tears** has offices in Belgium, Spain, The Netherlands, Denmark, France, Italy, Russia, the USA and China.

morning tears is run mainly by volunteers. These volunteers are mostly professionals from the social sector or development aid workers, although we also have journalists and engineers in our group.

The running costs of **morning tears** are kept very low, so that donations can go almost entirely to the children in need.