

# BabyGym in Pollsmoor Prison

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As it goes with blessing, one usually receives more than you give! This is the case, too, with the prison moms and babies. To date I have finished two BabyGym Firm Foundations workshops, with a total of ten moms and babies in Pollsmoor Prison.

Right from the start of the BabyGym program these moms are very open and eager to learn. They, like all moms, want to give their children a good start to life, maybe better than what they had themselves. Every week brings lots of new questions and feedback about last week's "homework".

It is painfully obvious who the moms are that work with their babies and do the BabyGym exercises on a regular basis, but it is also obvious, although few, who don't. Some of them are petrified of forming a bond with their baby, as they would have to part ways as soon as baby reaches the age of two years. It is however clear that those babies, who do have the benefit of a mommy who does BabyGym® with them, have improved in leaps and bounds.

Some notable improvements have been:

- overcoming Tactile Issues
- overcoming Emotional Issues
- overcoming Social Interaction Anxieties
- reaching overdue Milestones
- Improved Balance, Gross Motor and Fine Motor Skills.

Another positive spin-off of the weekly interaction during the BabyGym classes is the improved relations among the offenders. This was noted by the Case Officer, who accompanies me during every lesson. She takes part very actively and is learning a lot herself.

After the Case Officer sat in on the 2<sup>nd</sup> "Near Senses – lesson", she told me that she would try and get permission to take the babies outside for a short while every week, as she realises how important it is for them to move and have real life experiences! Isn't that wonderful!

The prison's Social Worker recently also become involved in the work of BabyGym there – and has asked me to note any problems concerning the babies, for her to action.

Thank you, BabyGym! May I have the privilege to work in the prison for a very long time to come.

Soli Deo Gloria!

Unfortunately two requests, to take a camera in, have been denied. I would have loved to be able to attach a couple of photos!