

Youth Justice
National Development
Team

2012-
2013



Youth Justice National Development Team Annual Report

Fiona Dyer

National Development Team

April 2013

Annual Report

April 2012 – March 2013

Youth Justice National Development Team

Created in 2010, the Youth Justice National Development Team (NDT) provides active practice support to practitioners and managers across Scotland involved in the delivery of Youth Justice services. The NDT is funded by Scottish Government in respect of dissemination of best practice, evidence and research linked to the youth justice agenda. Based within the Criminal Justice Development Centre for Scotland, the NDT is connected with all of Scotland's local authority areas and supports practitioners and managers, ranging from early and effective intervention through to challenging and complex cases. Priority areas of work for the team are established with key stakeholders including the Scottish Government and the National Youth Justice Advisory Group (NYJAG). These will be directed towards the Scottish Government's overarching objectives as outlined in the up-date to *Preventing Offending by Young People – A Framework for Action*, and the ethos of the Whole System Approach which is that many young people could and should be diverted from statutory measures, prosecution and custody through early intervention and robust community alternatives.

Priority areas include:

- Prevention, Early and Effective Intervention
- Managing High Risk
- Girls and Women
- Victims and Community Confidence
- Planning Performance Improvement
- Family Work
- Reintegration / Transitions
- Whole System Approach

Mission

The mission of the NDT is to engage with practitioners and managers from a wide range of backgrounds, who work with children and young people involved in offending behaviour, to support, maintain and further develop youth justice practice. Thereby, making a real and lasting difference to outcomes and practice in youth justice by collaborating to generate knowledge and expertise.

Vision

The vision of the team is:

'Excellence in Youth Justice: Creating a Fair and Safe Scotland'

A Partnership Approach

The NDT is part of Scotland's Youth Justice Partnership, connecting local and national agencies working together to prevent offending and reduce reoffending for all young people under 18. The Partnership is leading the implementation of a Whole System Approach that engages all partners who work with young people under 18 involved in offending behaviour, to meet their needs and manage any risks they present.

Stakeholders

The primary beneficiaries of the work of the NDT include practitioners and managers responsible for providing services to young people. The aim is to increase the knowledge and expertise of existing specialists, but, equally importantly, the work of the NDT will assist to disseminate this to the wider practice community through enhanced knowledge and shared practice experience with the view of impacting directly on practice in the field.

The National Development Champions Groups, Practice Development Groups, NYJAG and regional networks and conferences are an essential part of the communication strategy to engage with a wide range of stakeholders. This strategy enables policy information to pass from government to practitioners and information on good practice and associated challenges to pass from practitioners to government.

Youth Justice National Development Team Objectives

During the past year, the NDT has been working to the following objectives:

- Support, maintain and further develop youth justice practice in line with the Scottish Government's framework for action through knowledge transfer and exchange, research and development activities;
- To act as a secretariat and/or chair, and lead on actions within the action plans of the National Development Champions Groups, consisting of Early and Effective Interventions, Reintegration and Transitions, Managing High Risk Young People, Vulnerable Girls and Young Women;
- To chair and support priority Practice Development Groups, focusing on prevention/early and effective intervention, transitions from secure accommodation to detention, high risk young people involved in sexually harmful and violent behaviour; and vulnerable girls and young women at risk of or involved in offending behaviour. These activities draw their remit from the National Development Champions Groups;
- To provide, practice advice, master classes and consultancy to Scottish local authorities and other partners;
- Administer and run a two day Youth Justice Practitioner Conference;
- To administer and run a minimum of 12 national network conferences and events promoting research led (best) practice, across Scotland.

Achievements

Youth Justice Practice Guidance/Fact Sheets/Briefing Papers/Research

Practice Guidance

The Youth Justice Practice Guidance, which was published in 2012, has been re-drafted in line with Scottish Government priorities and three new chapters; working with vulnerable girls and young women, transitions for 16 & 17 year olds, and young people in residential childcare have been added to the guidance .

Fact Sheets

To further support the development of practice within youth justice, weekly fact sheets were published between January and March 2013. A total of 12 fact sheets, covering a range of topics, were produced and sent out weekly to all practitioners on the Criminal Justice Development Centre (CJDC)'s contact list. Comments from stakeholders have been very positive and include:

“These fact sheets are very helpful. It would be good if other workstreams produced fact sheets similar to these....Much appreciated”.

“Could you please just pass on to all who are involved in producing the fact sheets that I really appreciate them”.

“This is a real bonus so the more of these Fact sheets we get the better. Would you send me everything you produce please.”

“Great idea!!! simple and easy to use - will make sure this is sent to all appropriate services and will keep a folder for future reference.”

“My team think these are useful, just the right length for going over at weekly team meetings and then we save them to look over again when they are relevant to a particular case situation. Thank you”

Briefing Papers

The NDT has published 2 briefing papers to highlight the most up-to-date research on specific topics which includes:

- Risk Management and Young People in Scotland
- Taking Stock of Alternatives to Secure Accommodation or Custody for Girls and Young Women in Scotland

Research

The NDT has also been involved in other pieces of research including:

'Taking Stock', a small scale scoping study of existing knowledge about girls and young women at risk of secure care or custody and ways in which earlier intervention strategies and alternatives to secure care and accommodation could be developed specific to their needs

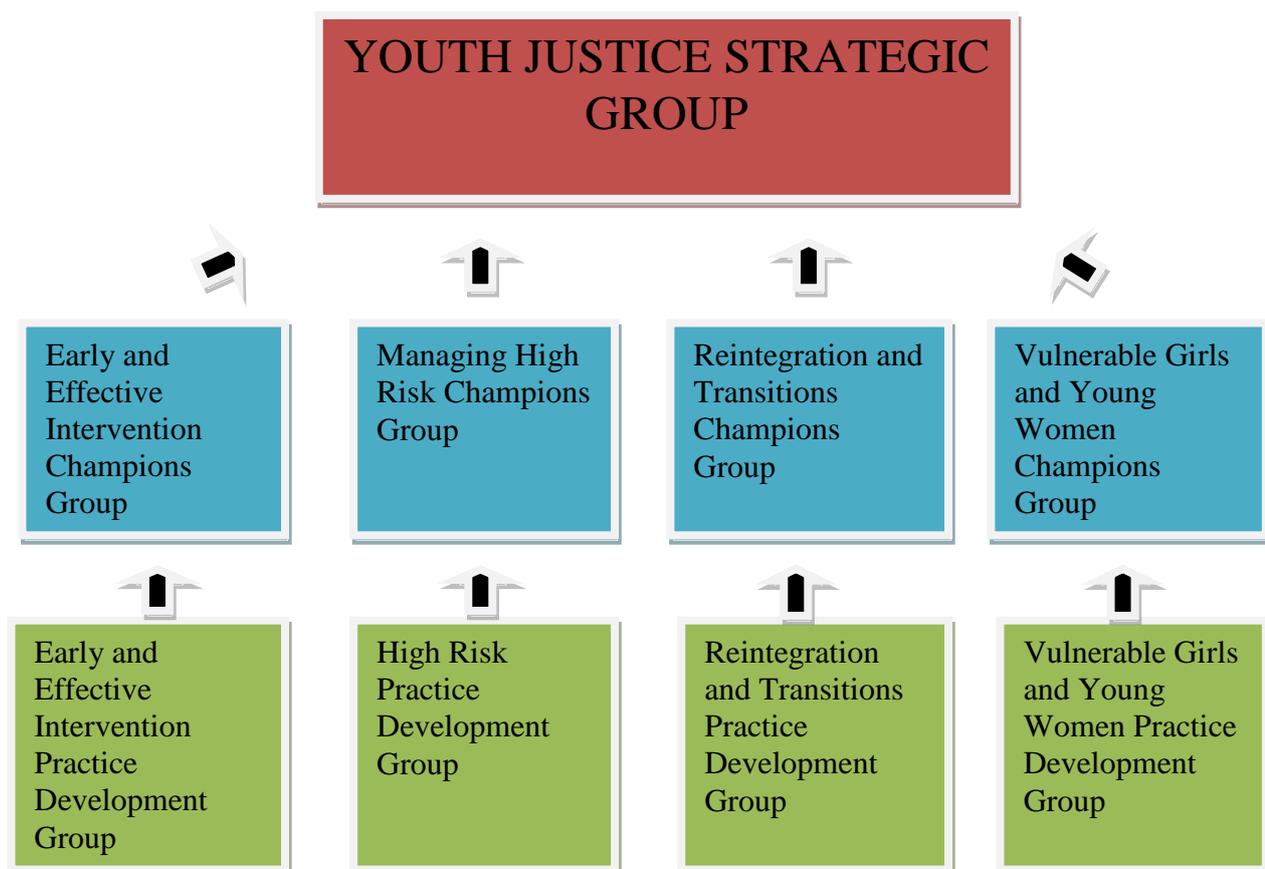
Early and Effective Intervention (EEI) Multi Agency Processes - Report for EEI Champions Group and EEI Practice Development Group.

Both papers are published on our website.

Research in relation to operational issues in risk management in Scotland led to the briefing paper and the creation of a working group to produce a template for risk management meetings. Research into under 18s subject to MAPPA arrangements has led to recommendations for joint chairs training.

Champions/Practice Development Groups

The NDT supports three Champions Groups and chairs a fourth. All groups report to the Scottish Government Strategic Group, which the NDT is a member. The team also administers and runs national Practice Development Groups to further support the work of the Champions Groups. During the past year, the groups have all reformed; the Reintegration and Transitions Whole System Approach meeting and Vulnerable Girls and Young Women Practice Development Group developed into Champions Groups. The CHIPS group also extended its remit to cover violence and became the High Risk Practice Development group and the Early and Effective Intervention group extended its remit to look at 16 and 17 year olds when changes in practice/policy were made as part of the Whole System Approach.





Within the different groups, various pieces of work have been taken forward by the members of the NDT and several papers have been produced and briefing papers published as highlighted above.

Managing High Risk

The role of the Managing High Risk Champions Group involves evaluating, promoting and disseminating best practice in respect of effective interventions for children and young people who pose a high risk to others through violent behaviour and young people who display sexually harmful behaviour. This has involved the NDT scoping who these young people are, identifying the services that best meet their needs and gaps in service provision.

To address some aspect of service provision, the NDT has facilitated the roll out of the Safer Lives model, a programme for working with young people who display sexually harmful behaviour grounded in best practice with this client group. As part of this project, the NDT over the last 12 months has recruited a new group of trainers and also facilitated further training on the application of the model with young people with attachment and trauma related issues. The year ahead will see the evaluation of the programme.

The NDT is also exploring the creation of a 'high risk clinic' to meet the gap in service provision.

The work of this Champions Group has also led the NDT to organise and facilitate a risk seminar, with various professional from local authorities, third sector providers and Scottish Government. The outcome of this included the NDT, with partners, writing guidelines for risk management meetings for young people in Scotland. This will also eventually lead to training for chairs of risk management meetings. To address the current gap in data that is recorded and reported for young people who present a high risk, a data meeting was held with relevant professionals, which agreed to include this data within Whole System Approach reporting.

The CJDC has run the CHIPS group for the last 10 years, a group for practitioners who work with young people who display sexually harmful behaviour. This group has been chaired by the NDT who presented at the National NOTA conference on the work of the group.

Early & Effective Intervention

The Early and Effective Intervention group aims to:

- Develop an evidence base around what works in early and effective intervention for children and young people between 8 and 17 years at risk of developing a pattern of offending behaviour by developing practice standards
- Review and disseminate the research and evidence base for single and multi-agency EEI in respect of offending behaviour in the context of meeting the wider developmental needs of the child

- Contribute to promoting and strengthening effective multi agency interventions and practice with young people who are at risk of moving from Children's to Adult Criminal Justice processes aged 15 and under, or as 16 and 17 year olds

EI Practice is developed through a Practice Development Group and practice seminars.

The NDT supports the work to meet these aims and has co-facilitated several practice seminars to look at best practice and standards of practice within EI.

Vulnerable Girls & Young Women

The Vulnerable Girls and Young Women's Champions Group was established to address the needs of girls and young women who offend or who have been identified as being at "high risk" of offending, and in recognition of the importance of female issues across all of the strands of the Framework for Action. The group leads on the promotion, dissemination and evaluation of best practice approaches for girls and young women whose behaviour has led or is leading towards involvement in youth justice systems.

The group commissioned a small scale scoping study, 'Taking Stock', which provides a synthesis of existing knowledge about girls and young women at risk of secure care or custody and ways in which earlier intervention strategies and alternatives to secure care and accommodation could be developed specific to their needs. The study confirmed some of the current issues affecting this group, which the Champions Group, with the support of the NDT is addressing:

- Lack of Scottish research materials, specifically, trajectories into secure care, outcomes from secure care and alternatives and a lack of longitudinal or qualitative studies
- Availability and accuracy of data including secure care decision making and use of alternatives
- Concerns around the move to mixed gender in the secure estate and lack of gender specific approaches to care and interventions
- Quality and availability of support when moving on from secure care
- Lack of credible direct alternatives to secure care or custody
- Approaches in assessing risks and needs resulting in lower thresholds for girls in admission to secure care
- Lack of services and support regarding mental health and its manifestations
- Lack of support regarding alcohol and drugs misuse
- Lack of safe and sustainable accommodation options.

Reintegration and Transitions

The focus of the work of the Reintegration and Transitions Champions Group is to improve the reintegration and transitions process for young people under 18 in secure care and custody, as they move into and between establishments and on their return to the community. The aim is to do this through improving planning, service provision and partnership working with all agencies and professionals involved in the process.

Protocols under the Whole System Approach have been introduced whereby all young people under 18 admitted to secure care and custody must have a review within 72 hours, where the young persons single plan is shared and plans are made for their release or move from the establishment they are in. It is also an expectation that the lead professional meets or arranges for the young person to be met by their family or professional organisation when they are released from custody.

To ensure the young person's needs are met, mapping exercise of services in the secure estate and prison is being undertaken by the NDT. A protocol has also been agreed with the secure providers and Scottish Prison Service to improve the transitions process for young people moving into custody. This is being monitored by the Practice Development Group.

Network Events and Conferences

Purpose of the events run by the NDT include:

- To bring together practitioners who have an interest in Youth Justice across specialist and generic practice;
- To promote best practice, exchange knowledge and share information;
- To encourage delegates to share materials and knowledge at a local level and cascade knowledge and information;
- To enable the NDT to connect with practitioners, make new links and develop existing links, to identify trends and themes;
- To share practice knowledge and experience with the wider Youth Justice community via the Youth Justice Partnership (NYJAG, Centre and NDT, Scottish Government Youth Justice Team and other national partners).

During the past year, the NDT has run the following network events, training and conferences:

- *Working with 16 & 17 year olds who offend*
- *Communicating with Young People who Offend: A Skills Based Approach*
- *New Technology, Child Protection and Offending: Challenges and Solutions – a national conference*
- *Early and Effective Intervention Practitioners Event*
- *Impact and Solutions: Domestic Abuse, Young People and Youth Justice*
- *2012 National Youth Justice Conference: 'best so far'*
- *Planning for 2013 National Youth Justice Conference*
- *Risk Management Seminar*

- *Safer Lives training for trainers*
- *Strengthening Group Work Practice and Developing National Standards training*
- *Under the Radar training for residential and social work staff*
- *Strengthening Group Work Through Evidence-Based Group Work and International Standards Seminar*

Feedback from training and events included:

“I just wanted to say thank you for the training, it was excellent. I really do feel refreshed and revitalised about the work that I do and want to share the knowledge and skills with my colleagues. I think with all the new paperwork and Government initiatives we forget some of the fundamental practices that actually help young people the most”.

“Very informative, thought provoking and useful event”

“Interesting day”

“Events are useful to bring professionals together and provide equal practice”

“Good to be at a course with such a range of different professionals”

“All in all, great training day”

“Please provide more days like today”

“Brilliant training, should be mandatory for all social work staff”

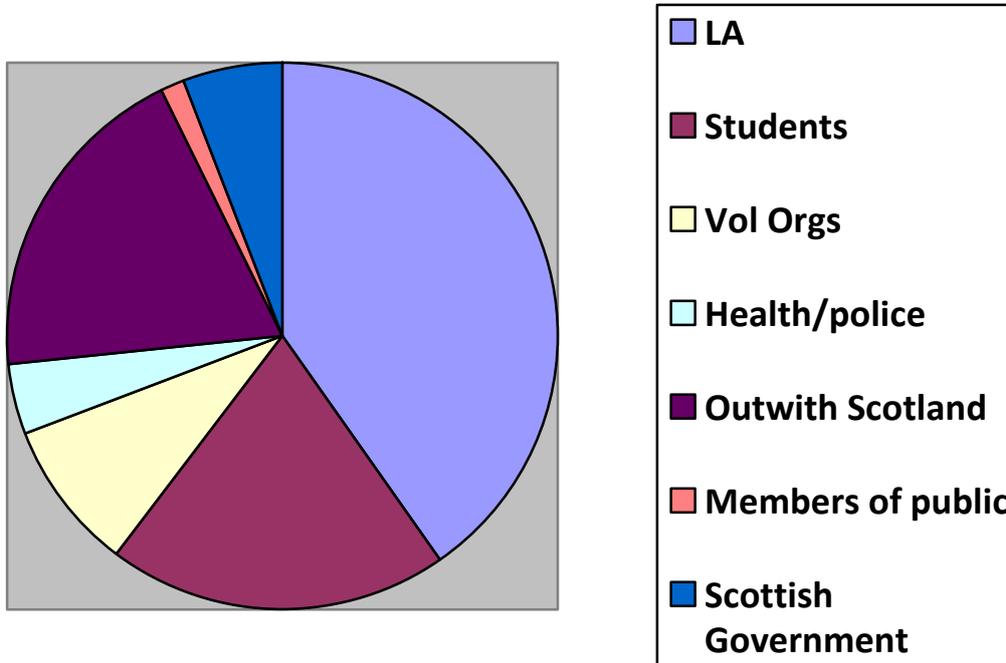
Practice advice, master classes and consultancy

The NDT provides support to local authorities and partners on various areas of work including; problematic sexual behaviour, violent offending, working with vulnerable girls, early intervention and prevention, family work; and reintegration and transitions. This work will be further developed within the proposal for a high risk clinic, including the risk of violence and sexual offending, the risks presented by girls and many different forms of mental health.

During the past year, the NDT has given regular consultation to local authorities across Scotland in relation to specific cases, areas of work and the creation of local practitioner groups. Some local authorities have requested regular input for staff throughout the year

Requests come into the CJDC on a regular basis and cover various forms from professionals asking for case advice; students requesting assistance with dissertations; members of the public looking for advice regarding friends or relatives involved in the justice system; colleagues from voluntary organisations looking for strategic direction and organisations and professionals outwith Scotland seeking advice and information on the Scottish youth and adult justice systems.

This year, the centre has responded to 355 different requests, which can be broken down as:



The NDT has also given various lectures, seminars and presentations to social work students and to different youth justice teams throughout Scotland and colleagues in England, Ireland and Wales.

“Thank you so much for the information. I really do appreciate you taking the time to send me this. Its sounds to me that Scotland are head and shoulders above the UK in response to children and young people who display sexually harmful behaviour”.

The NDT has also responded to various consultation reports including:

- Risk Management Authorities FRAME Standards and Guidance
- Scottish Children’s Reporters Administration – M Grounds for Children’s Hearings
- Scottish Government - Redesigning the community justice system

Family Work

In partnership with the Scottish Government, the *Family Therapy Training Network (FTTN)* over three years will deliver a post graduate professionally accredited, foundation level training in Systemic Practice and Family Interventions for up to 20 practitioners per year. The programme is designed to build on and enhance existing social work skills.

The Systemic Practice Family Intervention (SPFI) project provides a training and practice development opportunity to support confident direct work with young people and families, where they exist, family networks or other key adults, and the team of professionals responsible for the



target group of young people. The programme provides an opportunity for participants to share experience and learning. The NDT supports this work, supports the practitioners who are being trained during and post training, and administers the application process for the foundation courses.

Communications

Over the past 6 months, the NDT have produced 4 e-bulletins to publicise the on-going work of the team. There is also a Twitter account for both the team and the CJDC which provides updates on our work, conferences and events. All of our contacts are sent information in relation to conferences and network events and fact sheets, which are also published on our web-site.

Future

The NDT is committed to continuing their work to meet priorities through 2013/14. There have been some developments with the Centre moving to Strathclyde University from 1st April 2013 but this has not affected the on-going work of the team.

The priorities of the team remain and there are lots of exciting developments planned over the forthcoming months that will be published on our web-site and included in our e-bulletins.

If you have any comments or would like to speak to us regarding any aspect of our work, you can contact us at:

Cjsw@strath.ac.uk

0141 444 8700

Fiona Dyer