

Practitioner Case Studies

Centre for Youth & Criminal Justice and various partners

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Introduction

The Centre for Youth & Criminal Justice (CYCJ) is pleased to introduce its first collection of Practitioner Case Studies, with the aim of providing the busy youth justice workforce with easy access to a wide variety of approaches and learning. Each Case Study was written by practitioner(s) working in the third sector and local authorities, to inform, inspire and share good practice with others.

Based on feedback from our stakeholders across Scotland, they cover a broad range of youth justice topics, including implementing Care and Risk Management (CARM) in Edinburgh; Intensive Support and Monitoring Service and multi-agency working in Glasgow; the Whole System Approach in East Ayrshire; introducing a Structured Deferred Sentence Service in South Lanarkshire; speech and language therapy by the Perth and Kinross REACH Team; taking a problem solving approach in Aberdeen; the Highland Youth Action Service; CYCJ's Interventions for Vulnerable Youth (IVY) Project; and Sacro's STOP (Sacro Tackling Offending Prejudices) programme.

These Case Studies were inspired by positive reactions to CYCJ's 2017 '[Supporting Young People Involved in Offending up to 21 years old: Extending the Whole System Approach](#)' paper, written with Kevin Carter of West Lothian Council and Fiona Dyer from CYCJ, which looked at how West Lothian Local Authority has extended all aspects of the WSA, where possible, to under 21s and how this could work in wider practice.

Each Case Study details the background to the problem; examples of good practice; benefits and impact; challenges and barriers; and what has been learnt.

We will endeavour to update these Case Studies, initially on an ad hoc basis, and on a more formal basis if demand requires this. If you would like to submit a case study to CYCJ, or have feedback, please get in touch via cycj@strath.ac.uk or by calling 0141 444 8622 to discuss.

We hope that you will find these Case Studies to be of use, both in your daily practice and skills development.

Fiona Dyer, Interim Director, CYCJ

Case Study

1. Implementing Care and Risk Management (CARM) arrangements: Edinburgh City Council

David Orr (Edinburgh Young People’s Service)

Background
Example of Good Practice
<p>In Edinburgh, to begin the process of reviewing care and risk management arrangements, the YPS Team Manager coordinated a short-life working group which first met in 2017. In identifying the most appropriate individuals to contribute to the work of the group, it was acknowledged that the assessment and management of complex risk and need displayed by children takes place at the interface of two systems - the CHS and the Adult Criminal Justice System (ACJS). While not an exhaustive list, the key contributors to discussions included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A representative from the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) • A representative from Police Scotland • The School Inclusion Coordinator • The Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) Coordinator • One of the Sex and Violent Offender Liaison Officers (SAVOLO) • The Manager of the Young People’s Review Team • An experienced Children and Families Practice Team Manager <p>Unfortunately, the size of the group and the competing demands placed on the members meant that it was not possible to move forward as swiftly with the process of change as might have been hoped. Ultimately in large, complex organizations, changes tend to come after slow and steady deliberation as opposed to coming swiftly and easily. Furthermore, it was important for the work of the short-life working group to fit within a local governance structure. In this instance, the Offender Management Committee (OMC) is the body with ultimate oversight of this piece of work. In other local authorities it may be the case that the Child Protection Committee (CPC) will choose to retain overall responsibility for the operation of risk assessment and management arrangements for children and young people under the age of 18.</p> <p>The breadth of membership of the group promoted lively discussion and critical engagement with the issues. It also ensured that in the intervening period between</p>

meetings, different individuals with specialist knowledge could undertake specific pieces of work to inform and to direct the short life working group. This included work by MAPPA/SAVOLO colleagues to look more closely at the arrangements for young people charged with serious sexual offences and made subject to Sex Offender Notification Requirements (SONR). The Inclusion Coordinator also worked on a revised process for managing challenging behavior in schools to ensure that only those children whose behaviour reaches a level of high seriousness/severity are discussed at a multi-agency meeting, with the majority being managed safely and appropriately under existing school risk management arrangements.

Benefits and Impact

While in its early stages, the initial signs are positive based on anecdotal feedback from staff members about their experience using START:AV. Feedback highlights that the tool encourages a more discerning and focussed form of assessment. Practitioners are also meeting on a regular basis to share their learning about START:AV and for peer-to-peer support and guidance. Links to wider national START:AV peer learning sets may be established in due course.

Feedback from the Intervention for Vulnerable Youths (IVY) project on our recent referral to IVY highlighted the good quality of the formulation provided within the referral paperwork. The clear formulation enabled a more robust consideration of individualised risk reduction strategies during the multi-agency consultation, in contrast to spending the time trying to understand the drivers to the behaviour.

What makes this work?

One of the reasons why this review process has worked reasonably well is that it sought to include at the outset all the key stakeholders involved in working with children who present a risk of serious harm, so there was a shared understanding of both the process and the challenges faced by the different services/organisations in integrating changes.

An additional factor that has added to the success is the investment that has been made in staff training and development to ensure that staff become confident in the use of the SPJ approach, and that the provision of training and development opportunities are sustainable over time.

Challenges and Barriers

Due to Transformational Change within the Council, there has been a significant change in business practice. One aspect has been less consistency in minute takers from Business Support staff who have experience of minuting YPRMCCs, and this resource issue has been raised with senior managers.

Mental health resources for young people involved in the YPRMCC process are also stretched and arguably lacking in certain key areas. Ideally a young person whose behaviour has given cause for sufficient concern to be discussed at a

YPRMCC ought to have readily available access to comprehensive mental health assessment and intervention. This remains the ideal as opposed to the reality.

The final challenge of note has arguably been one relating to change processes. Is it better to undertake a radical overhaul or to modify the status quo? How can the “Throwing the baby out with the bathwater” cliché be avoided? In Edinburgh, discussions went full circle in some respects during the change process. Initially, it had been anticipated that a revamped CARM process might involve a more pivotal role for the Young People’s Review Team and its integration within the existing IRD model. However, on further consideration, it was felt that the benefits of a new approach (e.g. closer alignment with child protection processes and more robust governance arrangements) were arguably offset by some of the potential negative consequences (e.g. risking absorption and dilution of youth justice assessment, planning and intervention expertise).

Edinburgh has been fortunate over the last decade to retain a level of youth justice knowledge, skills and expertise among practitioners which has been eroded in many other local authorities where Youth Justice Teams have become fewer in number and/or been absorbed into other parts of children’s and/or adult services. On that basis, when concerns are raised about the potential risk of serious harm posed by a child or young person, the principal point of contact in the first instance will be with one of the Team Leaders in the YPS.

How could this be improved further?

One of the improvements that could be made is to provide quality examples of CARM processes in other local authorities, details of the change process to achieving this and examples of good quality practice. This case study is a start. Edinburgh YPS are also working with CYCJ to develop some examples of good quality reports containing best practice.

The recording of information on the strengths and vulnerabilities of these children on a central system will provide Edinburgh with valuable information about both the needs of these children and an evidence base to highlight the current gaps in service provision to inform improvement planning.

What has been learnt?

In terms of learning, this local initiative has reinforced the reality that change takes time and it is not always possible to achieve by the end of a process everything that might have been desired at the start. The expression, “Don’t let the best be the enemy of the good” certainly resonates.

Further information

Borum, R., Bartel, P., & Forth, A. (2006). SAVRY: Structured assessment of violence risk in youth: Professional manual: PAR.

Social Work Inspection Agency (2005). Report on the Management Arrangements for Colyn Evans by Fife Constabulary and Fife Council (SWIA, 2005).

Scottish Government. (2014). Framework for risk assessment, management and evaluation for children and young people under 18. Edinburgh: Scottish Government.

Viljoen, J. L., Nicholls, T. L., Cruise, K. R., Desmarais, S. L., & Webster, C. D. (2014). *Short-term assessment of risk and treatability: Adolescent version. START:AV User Guide.*

Case Study

2. Intensive Support and Monitoring Service: Multi-agency working in Glasgow

Richard Gillespie (Glasgow City Council)

Background

The Intensive Support and Monitoring Service (ISMS) represents an established and evidenced based community alternative to secure care for young people. The service is made up of statutory social work, NHS Forensic Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (FCAMHS) and a bespoke Education base. It is the only service of its kind in Scotland that provides a fully integrated multi-agency model of care planning and risk management based upon a comprehensive assessment and formulation of risks and needs for those young people most at risk of serious harm both to themselves and others. This population are some of the most challenging and complex young people within Glasgow, and thus require the most structured and intensive service intervention available.

The service has developed a highly specialised multi-agency risk assessment process that brings together the statutory partners to develop a shared formulation of the young person's difficulties. Each formulation undertaken is unique to the young person and explores how difficulties arise and are maintained, as well as identifying protective factors. The formulation approach helps to develop a shared understanding between professionals, young people and their families. This provides a clear rationale for risk management and intervention approaches; it promotes collaborations and helps to ensure consistency. The multi-agency model allows for a consensus to develop in how services identify best practice, manage risk and progress treatment outcomes.

Example of Good Practice

The ISMS service will provide a range of supports to mitigate risk and build on strengths in the young person. ISMS will provide where appropriate:

Risk Assessment

Within ISMS the Structured Professional Judgement (SPJ) model of risk assessment is used; this model of risk assessment is recognised as best practice within the extant professional and academic literature (Risk Management Authority, Scotland; RMA, 2011). In utilising the SPJ approach the ISMS worker

develops a comprehensive assessment which is anchored in research and professional literature.

The SAVRY is a risk assessment tool designed to assist professionals to evaluate and make judgements about a young person's risk of violence (Borum et al, 2006). The SAVRY requires an analysis of a set of risk factors associated with youth violence. Equally risk specific assessments will be carried out with young people dependent on the areas of vulnerability, risk and need identified either at the outset or during the course of ISMS involvement. Further risk assessments used to guide analysis is not limited to but may include, START, ERASOR, sexual exploitation tools and self-harm specific assessments.

Risk Formulation

The Forensic Child and Adolescent mental health team (F-CAMHS) will facilitate a formulation meeting alongside ISMS staff. A psychological formulation provides a summary of an individual's difficulties and how these are related. It aims to explain, on the basis of psychological theory, the development and maintenance of these difficulties that can inform subsequent intervention. Each formulation undertaken is unique to the young person and explores how difficulties arise and are maintained, as well as identifying protective factors. The formulation approach helps to develop a shared understanding between professionals, young people, and their families. This provides a clear rationale for risk management and intervention approaches; it promotes collaborations and helps to ensure consistency. The multi-agency models allows for a consensus to develop in how services identify best practice, manage risk and progress treatment outcomes.

Risk Management

From the outset ISMS aims to develop a shared risk management framework with the locality social work team and other involved partners. The consideration of risk management is vital as the service aims to give consideration to and effectively work towards preventing potentially harmful outcomes for the young people in the service. The ISMS review process has been devised to effectively respond to early warning signs and provide a clear rationale by developing an intervention strategy that mitigates against potential future harm to self or others. In doing so it is anticipated that the service will target destabilising factors as a priority to ensure the safety of the young person and others.

Forensic CAMHS

The Forensic Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (FCAMHS) is the only NHS based service of its kind in the country. They provide dedicated clinical forensic psychology input to the ISMS service in line with the protocol agreement between social work and health. The Clinical Psychologist undertakes an initial mental health assessment as part of the ISMS assessment process. Where additional mental health needs are identified (e.g. speech and language), they will link to other resources within CAMHS depending on the young person's presentation. FCAMHS staff work closely with the allocated ISMS worker; an

important factor in this is co-location. FCAMHS staff within ISMS also provide evidence based psychological interventions and support the ISMS team to provide structured interventions based upon cognitive and behavioural principles. Ultimately, the multi-agency approach allows the ISMS service to adapt its approach to meet the best interests of the child and ensure that we are considering all aspects of their social and mental health needs.

Intensive Multi-agency Supports

The ISMS service will match the amount of support and contacts with the young person dependent on the level of need and risk. If the young person needs a significant amount of structure and stability in their lives then the ISMS worker will develop a support package that will co-ordinate a range of partners including education (careers), mental health, third sector partners, housing and locality social work. The service is resilient and is used to working with the most difficult to reach young people and their families. The ISMS worker will act as a focal point as they strive to develop intensive weekly supports in order to develop a relationship with the young person and their family/carers. The ISMS worker will be able to deliver a wide ranging level of interventions that may include an individual focus on; emotional regulation, anger management, problem solving, consequential thinking, or motivational and strengths focused work. Moreover, the ISMS worker will also work alongside families to strengthen relationships, build resources and develop collaborative safety plans.

Education base

ISMS education has developed a truly individualised education package that is influenced by the principles and guidance of both GIRFEC and the Curriculum for Excellence. A range of teaching methods are used within the community and the classroom to harness the young person's interests and develop learning in the four core areas: Literacy, Numeracy, ICT and Health and Well-Being. The service focuses on developing a sense of belonging and connection to the subject matter by focusing the work around the interests of the young people which in turn can stimulate motivation to engage. As a consequence, the education staff can then tailor a package of individualised education according to their assessment and in line with the multi-agency formulation.

The ISMS service throughout the year will also support the young people in the service to attend college and training as a way of gaining valuable experience of the workplace. ISMS has established close links with career providers to develop training/education pathways for the young people involved in the service.

Benefits and Impact

ISMS young people are typically involved in non-violent and violent offending. The young people we work with both male and female are predominantly disengaged from education services. They are likely to be absconding from the home (often for days at a time) and there may be concern around sexual exploitation. The young people often have significant mental health difficulties including, trauma-

related difficulties, neurodevelopmental difficulties, mood disturbance, and self-harm. Ultimately, the behaviours and concerns that young people display or are subject to are incredibly serious and pose a real threat to their safety and often the safety of others. They are equally more likely to present with ongoing conflict or serious violence within the home and community, ongoing mental health difficulties, elevated risk of self-harm, ongoing offending issues and remain disengaged from services, therefore being opposed to treatment. Clearly the level of violence and 'cost' to society is significant and research has shown us that these young people are statistically more likely to continue to have poor life and social outcomes as they develop into adulthood.

Consequently, developing a multi-agency model that can begin to work on addressing the factors above is pivotal to responding to the 'risks' and the 'needs' of the young people. Initially ISMS seeks to manage the young people safely and to ensure timeous and accountable risk management. But ultimately by improving the aspirations, and social and mental health outcomes of young people and their families the ISMS services strives to re-integrate the young people back into society and to develop positive life opportunities that can make them safer and allow them to make valuable contributions to their communities.

In a recent review of the formulation process by FCAMHS they surveyed a host of participants in the formulation meetings, including ISMS staff, locality social workers and managers, health staff and teachers. Professionals reflected that formulation increased their awareness of challenging behaviour "In my experience, formulation has helped create meaning of what is often a complex and layered narrative for a young person. "Furthermore "By taking the facts of a case, I have found formulation an arena where perhaps both mine and others' well-meaning but poorly judged ideas about clients (and therefore workers' current practice) can be challenged in a constructive and positive manner, ensuring the team perspective of the problems a young person is experiencing and how best to tackle these is a more singular and cohesive one." Professionals also reported that the multi-agency formulation process increased their confidence in working with young people and families. One staff member commented "In my experience, formulation has helped create meaning of what is often a complex and layered narrative for a young person... Given its fluidity, I have found formulation to be less restrictive to change and can incorporate the emergence of new information as I continue to work with a client. In doing so, it offers a shift in perspective to one of hope, agency and change for clients and workers." The most positive impact of the formulation process appeared to be on staff confidence in the risk assessment and management of young people particularly in relation to a multi-agency response. Staff reported "it enabled the multi-agency team to develop a fuller understanding of risk, and ways of managing risk, taking in to consideration the social background of the individual concerned, whilst recognising the adversity and potential harm embedded in the professional network of care and support. The agreed formulation came at a critical point for both the young person and the multi-agency team..."

Another professional reported "...the depth of understanding that formulation offers allows for a focused, robust risk management and care plan that identifies and addresses the factors that both manifest in the presenting problem and we have

the potential to influence. Given that it pulls together everything we know about a young person: the issues, their inter-relatedness, the most likely risk they present and how best to affect change and manage risk, I have found the process of formulation can often pinpoint with much greater accuracy as to where the risk actually sits versus pre- formulation.”

In a recent education evaluation we highlighted a significant increase in engagement with learning due to our new multi-agency individualised/formulation informed approach. Prior to our model beginning in 2012 attendance rates at our base stood at 40%. In the year 2017/18 our attendance was at 73% which is striking as the young people are so disengaged from education. Education attainment levels dramatically increased over the period. In a sample of 24 young people taken in the last education session, 16 were receiving support from positive destinations including training, mainstream supports and further ISMS education support.

As a result of the ISMS multi-agency intervention the use of secure care in Glasgow has significantly decreased as the service manages to support young people within their community.

The young people in ISMS all have the opportunity to receive a mental health assessment. Results taken over a recent evaluation found that 88% of the young people took up the mental health assessment option. Fifty percent of the young people received further ongoing FCAMHS support as a consequence of the multi-agency formulation. Of those, 32% received a cognitive assessment, 37% ongoing risk management formulation, 21% individual psychological work and 10% ASD assessment. These figures all highlight the importance of the mental health work within the ISMS population and the important impact of the multi-agency working.

What makes this work?

There appears to be pockets of multi-agency working nationally in relation to young people at serious risk to both themselves and others. However, ISMS is the only service of its kind nationally that has developed a fully integrated model between the three main statutory services. We have also benefitted from integration with One Glasgow and Police Scotland which ensures communication and actions is shared locally. In effect, this has enabled us to work collaboratively with our colleagues in the Police to find an agreed strategy for supporting young people and families locally.

Developing agreed risk management and treatment priorities that are shared and agreed by the partners significantly improves the joint working and our ability to make decisions that improve the safety of the young people, family and the community both in the immediate and long-term. There is a shared responsibility for the care of the young person and integrating the agencies has meant that no agency is working in isolation, and everyone takes an active responsibility in the multi-agency decision making. Risk management and treatment will have a greater likelihood of success if there is a clear rationale and expectations for

agencies. By working together the ISMS service has shown that by developing a single plan for risk management and intervention, we can react more effectively to the risks and needs of the young people and their families we work with. Each agency is clear on its role and responsibility and has a common vision that works toward improving safety and outcomes for the young person, family and community. This approach ensures that communication is at its core which we know is central to making agreed, effective and transparent decisions.

The delivery of the ISMS service adapts to meet the 'needs' of each individual young person. The young people are all unique; therefore the service needs to adapt and be sensitive to these differences. From the outset we understood that we needed to develop a service which worked with the young people to engage them at a level that recognised their strengths and challenges as individuals. We understood that the traditional delivery of services did not necessarily provide us with best practice. Consequently, we came together to develop a bespoke mental health service that could meet the challenges of assessing the complexity of the young people we work with and not solely observe the young people through the prism of mental illness/ disorders. Their role in facilitating our formulation approach has supported the pivotal role multi-agency assessments play in getting the most comprehensive formulation of young people to ensure that we are meeting their best interests. Equally, their role recognised the essential requirement of practitioners with differing skills sets coming together to ensure that we consider all aspects of assessment for our young people. Most important was the development of formulation to produce a consensus in our risk formulation, risk management and treatment approaches across all agencies. With consensus comes transparency and crucially clarity in the provision of valuable resources. In effect, this is about giving the young people the best possible service available.

We also recognised that education provision based around group models for challenging and the hardest to reach young people was presenting us with significant challenges to promoting best outcomes. Consequently, we continued our approach and developed an individualised education package to better meet the needs of our young people. Not only did it allow for better assessment to feed into our shared formulation but it worked to inspire and motivate young people to better engage with the education system. Consequently, our multi-agency approach guided the development of a new model of education that would better serve the young people.

Case Study

3. Perth and Kinross Council REACH Team and the involvement of Speech and Language Therapists

Tracy Garland, Janie Scott, Julia Pollok and Lynsay Johnston

Background

REACH is an Edge of Care multi-disciplinary team that provides intensive support to families with multiple complex needs, where there is a significant likelihood of the young person (aged between 12 and 18 years) becoming accommodated away from home. This includes young people whose current offending behavior puts them at risk of being placed in secure care or their relationship with their parents/carers breaking down.

Perth and Kinross do not have a designated Youth Justice Team. The needs of young people referred in relation to offending are met by various teams:

- Early and Effective Intervention (EEI) and support and intervention for lower level youth offending outwith EEI is delivered via Services for Young People (Youth Work);
- Young people age 16-17 who are not subject to a Compulsory Supervision Order are supported via Criminal Justice Team;
- Young people aged 12 -16 (up to 18 if subject to compulsory measures) who are referred for sexual, violent or persistent offending and require a specialist risk assessment and/or focused intensive support can be referred to REACH.

Police referrals to REACH are considered at the weekly Services for Young People allocation meetings. These meetings consider referrals from a range of agencies, including Police Scotland, and include representation from the Youth Justice Assessor at Police Scotland, REACH Team Leader and Youth Work Team Leader. Any agreed referral is then discussed at the weekly REACH screening group, which is comprised of all the disciplines within REACH:

- Social Work;
- Clinical Psychology;
- Education;
- Speech and Language Therapy (SLT);
- Performance and evaluation

REACH principles and practice are closely aligned with the Whole System Approach and the current Scottish Government Youth Justice Strategy [Preventing Offending: Getting it right for children and young people](#). Some of the shared aims include:

- Supporting work on school inclusion;
- Strengthening positive relationships;
- Improving health and wellbeing;
- Promoting opportunities for all;
- Supporting transitions, including the rehabilitation of young people who are currently looked after away from home and supporting young people in custody and secure care.

To achieve this, REACH provides evidence based assessment and interventions that support families and young people to:

- Develop resilience;
- Develop problem solving skills;
- Reduce risk to self and others;
- Improve overall family functioning;
- Empower families;
- Reduce re-offending.

Example of Good Practice/The role of SLT

The REACH team is particularly unique not just in being a multi-disciplinary team but in the inclusion of SLT (see Appendix 1 for staff structure). This inclusion was deemed critical as it is recognised that Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) are extremely common in youth justice populations, with major studies finding that 50% to 70% of young males in this population have significant difficulties with language function ([CYCJ, 2018a](#)). However, as highlighted in the '[Speech, Language and Communication Needs in Youth Justice: Understanding and addressing the impact Event Report](#)', issues regarding the availability and accessibility of SLT services, lack of specialist SLT roles and dedicated time for young people involved in offending behavior, renders accessing SLT support for these young people difficult ([CYCJ, 2018b](#)). The REACH project board were therefore keen to address this and to implement the recommendation that the inclusion of SLT as a key discipline should be piloted in a Youth Justice team ([CYCJ, 2018b](#)).

In light of the recognition that the majority of the children referred to REACH would have SLCNs ([RCSLT, 2016](#); [CYCJ, 2018a](#)), SLT attend the REACH screening group to gather general information about the Young Person to help ascertain if there are any SLCN which may be negatively impacting on the young person. In line with current good practice, every Young Person involved with the team will then be routinely screened by a SLT to rule out any communication difficulties ([RCSLT, 2017](#)). The development of this screening tool is ongoing. Currently no standardised screening tool exists for this client group; however, there are various tools being utilised by therapists in Scotland and the rest of the UK ([CYCJ, 2018b](#)).

Networking and engaging with other therapists has allowed the SLTs at REACH to begin developing a tool which will give a good snapshot of each young person's communication skills, including their social communication skills and pragmatic understanding. Having such early and ongoing involvement of SLT in the young

person's journey with REACH is deemed to be critical and good practice (CYCJ, 2018b).

If a young person is identified as having a SLCN then a range of SLT inputs and approaches will be recommended and implemented to lessen the impact of the SLCN on the young person. This could include:

- Input into a Young Person's Plan (including expected outcomes and strategies to put in place);
- Development of inclusive communication environments;
- Training to parents and relevant disciplines;
- Development of a one page profile to share most appropriate communication strategies unique to that individual;
- Direct therapy input;
- Further assessment;
- Provision of resources to promote effective communication.

More broadly, this information and any recommended approaches will be shared with the team around the child to help guide the communication approach of all of those involved and develop their confidence and competencies. This heavily reflects the suggestions from action as detailed in the event report (CYCJ, 2018b).

The role of SLT also extends beyond individual children. The SLT is available to other members of the REACH team for informal discussions, general advice and phone support. Through a combination of these activities, inclusive communication practice and culture is being promoted. Moreover, a SLCN 'lens' is being applied at all strategic and operational level and joined up multi-agency working is being implemented (CYCJ, 2018b).

Benefits and Impact

The purpose of the SLT service is to reduce the negative impact of SLCN on a young person's life. The gateway to doing so is the identification of need in the first place, with it noted that young people's SLCNs are often unidentified, unrecognised and unsupported (CYCJ, 2018b). The significant implications of this were highlighted in CYCJ (2018b):

"...young people's rights, including under the UNCRC, fail to be upheld; young people may be unnecessarily criminalised; and may be up-tariffed through the justice system. This has significant implications for the young person, victims and society overall, none of whom achieve justice when young people are not supported in respect of their SLCNs".

By adopting a screening out rather than screen in approach, each young person supported by REACH will be screened by a SLT, which is critical as SLCN can be invisible and difficult to identify by other professionals without specialist training.

When SLCN are identified, via the SLT and their support to the team around the child, every child should be provided with tailored, appropriate and quality support.

The benefits and impacts of these supports and interventions will be measured through the monitoring of young people's outcomes and wellbeing. Anticipated outcomes include young people will:

- Be able to make their needs known and clearly express themselves;
- More effectively participate and engage in the process and services around them;
- More autonomous and able to fulfil their desired social, educational/employment, societal and family roles;
- Supported to build, restore and strengthen relationships with their family and community;
- More resilient and able to cope emotionally with most situations.

Some of the impacts identified thus far include:

- Improved accessibility of reports - Young people with identified SLCN have been provided with their own accessible version of their SLT reports. This provides an example and encouragement for all professionals to ensure that reports and correspondence will be adapted to suit the communication styles of our young people. This promotes the inclusion, respect, responsibility, participation and inclusion of the young person.
- Adapted safety plans for parents - It has been identified that some of the parents the team are working with have their own cognitive and communication needs. The REACH SLTs are available for consultations to support staff on producing accessible information for these parents and are currently developing a staff training drop-in session for this. In more complex cases, the SLTs themselves will develop accessible documents. In one recent case the SLT adapted the social worker's safety plan for a parent with communication difficulties. The plan was adapted using simplified language, easy-read fonts and visual support. The social worker admitted that they would never have considered this approach and felt that it suited the parents' needs and would increase the likelihood of success, ultimately reducing risk to the young person and others.
- Diagnosis of Developmental Language Disorder - Developmental Language Disorder can often be difficult to identify in children who might appear to have good verbal skills. These children will often never be referred to SLT. The REACH SLTs have delivered training to the team to emphasise how subtle these difficulties can be. Shortly after introducing the routine REACH communication screen, one teenage boy was diagnosed with Developmental Language Disorder. This came as a surprise to those working with him at REACH and at school. The Social Worker advised that his diagnosis had helped his mum to understand her son's challenges in accessing the school curriculum and she was now more open to alternative education for him.
- Person centred planning - This approach can help to keep the young person at the centre of the planning and creates a meeting where the young person is more empowered to share their views. At a recent Child's Plan meeting it was noted that the young person had struggled to express any views verbally, giving only the occasional shrug or nod of the head. A Test of Change was carried out to increase the young person's communication within the meeting. A talking mat was used with the young person prior to the meeting to establish what was important to him. A person

centred plan meeting was adopted with an informal seating arrangement, flip charts on the wall and the information was written up as the meeting progressed. The young person shared his talking mat at the meeting. Feedback was gained from four of the eight attendees by questionnaire and all was positive. Positive feedback was gained verbally from another two attendees. Information about person centred planning will be shared the rest of the team. We are looking to trialling this further with other young people.

What makes this work?

Identifiable factors in making the SLT role in the REACH service work include:

- A full-time highly Specialist SLT Post (currently two part time posts), with phone and laptop to allow mobile and flexible working in-line with the rest of the team. A mobile phone has been very successful in allowing us to engage with hard to reach families.
- A full complement of assessments and therapy resources. Some assessments have been purchased in digital formats as this is a more engaging format for this client group.
- A fully resourced therapy room (shared with the wider REACH team).
- Good collaborative working and ‘buy-in’ from the REACH team at all levels.
- Clear communication with the rest of the REACH team about the SLT role and the best use of time. This has been supported by the development of SLT process map (see appendix 2) and operational guidance.
- As having a SLT embedded in a team like this is quite new, the development of a good support network/clinical supervision system and training for the SLTs has been crucial. The importance of training in respect of social care and youth/criminal justice has been key given SLTs have limited prior experience in this area.
- Having a Performance and Evaluation Officer on the team to support the development of the SLT service within the team and establishing outcome and performance measures.
- SLTs are working at strategic and operational levels as part of a multidisciplinary team. This allows for distributed decision making across the disciplines and support to drive forward a communication inclusive culture.
- A flexible approach to developing relationships, working with and choices between the SLT and the young person, including visiting at time and setting of their choice.
- Sharing information with the Youth Justice Assessor to highlight any SLCN for young people they are involved with which can then inform approaches in any subsequent police contact.

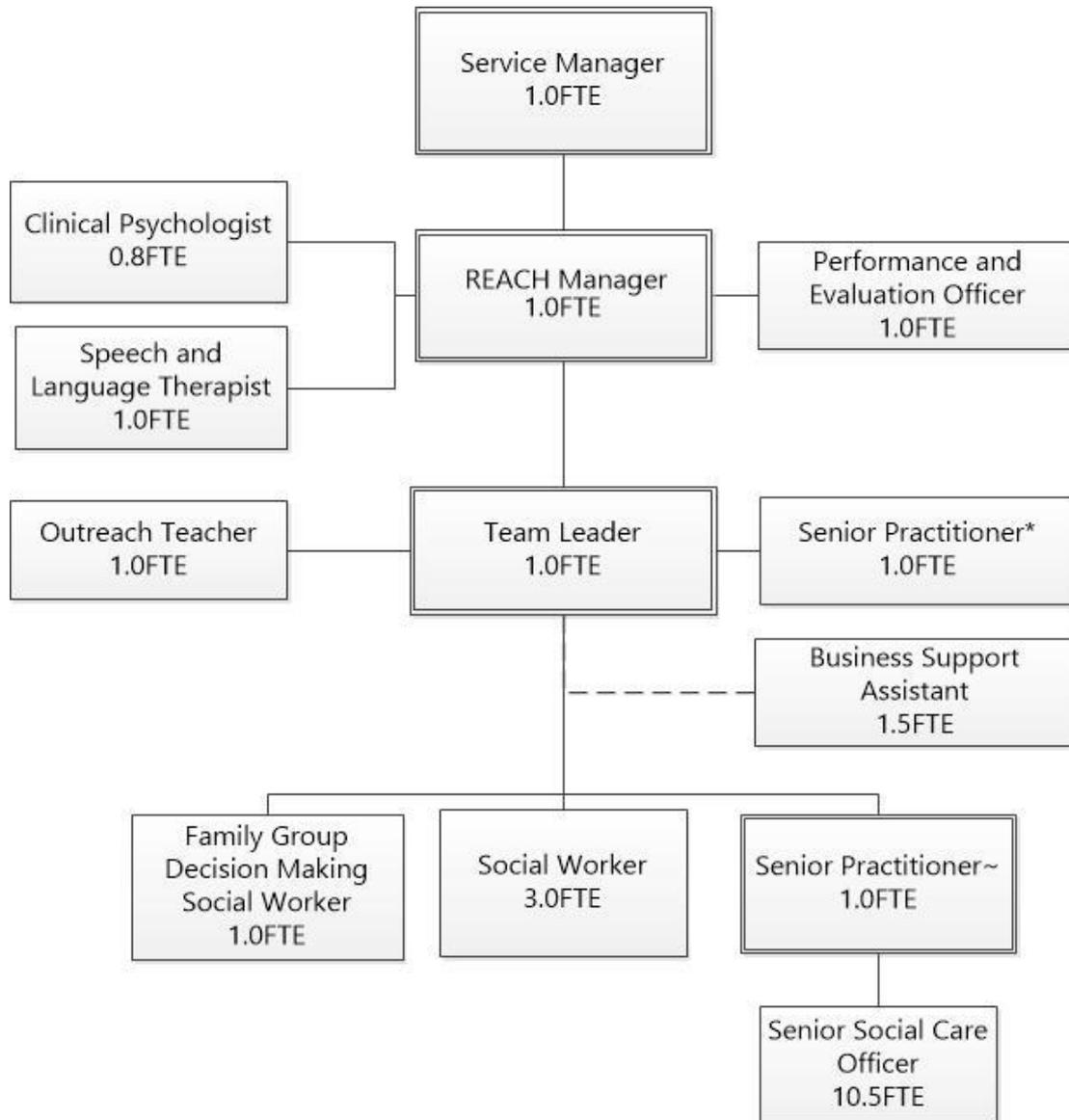
Challenges and Barriers

Some of the challenges faced have included:

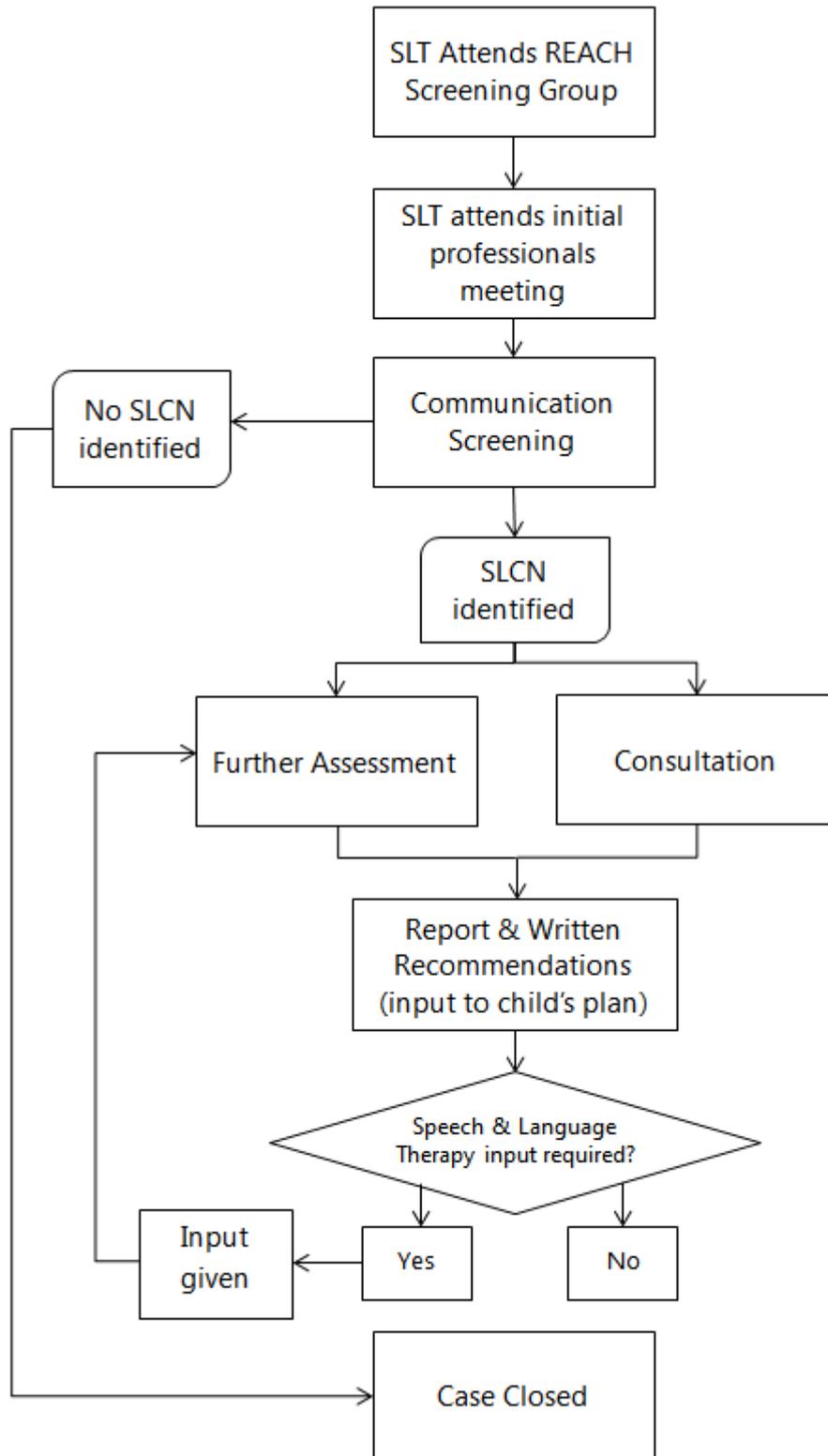
- Initially limited understanding of SLCN and SLT in the REACH team. This was addressed by allowing the SLTs to present to the team at the Service

<p>Development Day to start building an understanding and through ongoing dialogue and support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While the 'screening out' approach is beneficial, existing cases have not been involved. REACH management are now keen to start discussing existing cases at the screening group to ensure that all children are benefitting from the full REACH model and SLT support. • Perth and Kinross' population is projected to grow over the next ten years which could in turn mean a growing client base. By careful monitoring of factors which are impacting on young people, we will be able to target early and effective interventions to tackle these areas.
<p>How could this be improved further?</p>
<p>REACH recognize there are areas that are gaps, which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate training for SLT (and other clinical staff) to help identify and diagnose ASD quickly and linking in with the Autism strategy in Tayside • Across Scotland, the SLT professional network is currently quite limited and we are continuing to widen our links with others.
<p>What has been learnt?</p>
<p>As REACH is still in its infancy we are carefully monitoring our outcomes in addition to keeping a learning log that we can review regularly to ensure others can learn from our journey and we can contribute to the developing research base. We are also committed to reviewing our effectiveness and will be producing annual reports updating others on our progress.</p>
<p>Further Information</p>
<p>CYCJ. (2018a). A Guide to Youth Justice in Scotland: Speech, Language and Communication Needs in Youth Justice. Glasgow: CYCJ.</p> <p>CYCJ. (2018b). Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) in Youth Justice: Understanding and addressing the impact Event Report. Glasgow: CYCJ.</p> <p>Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT). (2016). Growing Communication Assets for Scotland's Future. Edinburgh: RCSLT.</p> <p>RCSLT. (2017). Justice Evidence Base Consolidation: 2017. England: RCSLT.</p> <p>Scottish Government (2015). Preventing Offending: Getting it right for children and young people. Edinburgh: Scottish Government.</p>

Appendix 1 – REACH Staff Structure



Appendix 2 – Speech and Language Therapy Process Map



Case Study

4. Whole System Approach: East Ayrshire Council

Natalie Armitage (East Ayrshire Council)

Background

The Scottish Government remains committed to the advancement of a [Whole System Approach](#) (WSA) in responding to children involved in or at risk of involvement in offending behaviours as children first. WSA seeks to embody a children's rights approach in line with [UNCRC](#) and [Child Friendly Justice](#) to ensure that all under 18s are responded to as children and their involvement in offending behaviours are understood through a lens of child development and holistic understanding of their needs. In a wider sense, it emphasises the importance of a multi-agency approach to offending behaviour by children, which incorporates streamlined and consistent planning, individualised tailored support and decision-making. East Ayrshire have embraced WSA and remained dedicated to sustaining and embedding it within and across practice not just in social work services but all partner agencies who may have a role in relation to supporting children involved in offending behaviour or preventing them from becoming involved. East Ayrshire has continued to develop its WSA ensuring all children receive appropriate and proportionate support across the continuum of offending behaviour. East Ayrshire WSA provides a consistent response, such that all children irrespective of whether they are known to services or not receive the right support, at the right time, diverting them from statutory systems such as the Children's Hearing System or formal Justice System wherever possible and appropriate. As a core value, it prioritises the use of universal services as far as possible and when additional supports and services are required that bespoke community based alternatives with multi-agency partners are created as required.

The purpose of this case study is to outline examples of practice and summarise some of the learning for East Ayrshire since their implementation of WSA from 2012. Whilst following national policy East Ayrshire has adapted WSA to fit with their local service delivery which continues to evolve and develop.

In East Ayrshire, our WSA embedded the six initial components providing the underpinning ethos and values, which we have built upon and incorporated into our guidance and processes. These initial components are:

- Early and Effective Intervention (EEI)
- Diversion from Prosecution for young people under 18 years old
- Risk Assessment and Management of Young People deemed High Risk
- Support for Young People under 18 year olds in Court
- Alternatives to Secure Care & Custody
- Reintegration and Transitions.

This approach and working ethos is being prioritised by a multi-agency team which includes:

- East Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership
- East Ayrshire Council Educational Services
- Police Scotland
- Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA)
- Crown Office Procurators Fiscal Service
- Action for Children
- Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
- East Ayrshire Vibrant Communities
- Voluntary Sector Services providing direct services to young people.

Implementation of the WSA is overseen by an East Ayrshire Whole System Strategic Group. The Strategic Group has representatives from the agencies above who are at a senior level and therefore able to make decisions about key processes and the commitment of resources to progress implementation. This group meets every month and during these meetings we all share learning, ideas, challenges and success stories. Overall, the representatives within this meeting all share the ethos that children involved or at risk of involvement in offending behaviours are all children in need of care, guidance and protection in line with the principles of Kilbrandon, GIRFEC and UNCRC. Often these children are or have been known to services due to previous or current episodes of child protection or welfare concerns due to their experiences of victimisation, exposure to trauma, challenges and adversity. All partner agencies involved in the WSA Strategic Group share a value base that these children need support and guidance as opposed to criminalising their distress behaviours. The strategic group consciously shifted away from using stigmatising and labelling language and replaced it with distress behaviours and unmet needs. This was believed to be in keeping with the values and ethos of getting it right for every child, and shifts from seeing children involved or at risk of involvement in offending behaviour as an exclusive category. Members of the WSA strategic group have a responsibility to ensure the ethos, values, beliefs and passions are extended within their individual workplaces and to grow and embed our approach within the wider working environments.

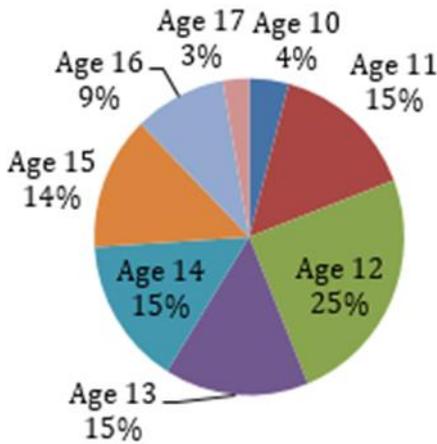
The WSA Coordinator role supports the development and implementation of the work of East Ayrshire's WSA Strategic Group. This post was initially funded through the Scottish Government and was available to all local authorities. However, following cessation of this money, East Ayrshire recognised that in order to truly embed WSA across all partners, there was a need to maintain this post and are committed to doing so.

Example of Good Practice

Early and Effective Intervention (EEI) is one of our key work streams within WSA. Our EEI seeks to provide timely and proportionate responses to alleged offending behaviours by children informed by an understanding of each individual child within the context of their situation. Over the preceding two years, we have experienced a significant reduction in referrals to our EEI process from 217 in 2016/2017 to 128 in 2017/2018. Scrutiny of this significant fluctuation has not seen an increase in offence referrals to SCRA and it is unclear whether offences have progressed by other routes or signifies an overall reduction in offending by under 18s within East Ayrshire. EEI allows an opportunity to consider a child's alleged involvement in offending behaviour as an indicator of need. However, intervention is not always required as evidenced by McAra & McVie (2010) and often doing nothing is the appropriate response.

The involvement of the child and family is crucial to ensure they are meaningful participants within the process and not just recipients.

One of the key drivers of our EEI process is to divert children, who do not require compulsory measures of care, from unnecessary referrals to the Children’s Reporter. In terms of EEI, we thought it would be important to highlight our 2018 breakdown of age and disposals. The chart on the left indicates that

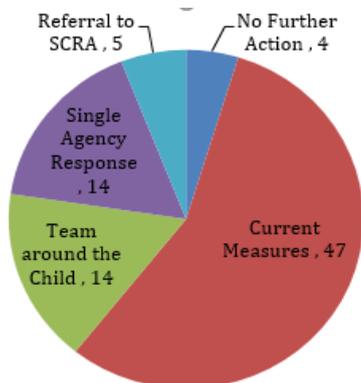


children referred to EEI are between the ages of 10 and 17. It also outlines that 44% of our children referred to EEI are 12 and under. Given the current national consideration of raising the age of criminal responsibility from eight to 12 years old, we need to give thought to implications for practice as under 12s will no longer be criminally responsible. East Ayrshire contributed to national discussions raising our concerns that the increase to 12 does not go far enough both in age of criminal responsibility and of prosecution. We raise these concerns following experience of [brain development](#), [maturity](#), [adversity](#) and [trauma](#).

An example of our EEI process involved a 15-year-old male charged with theft of a small amount of money from a member of teaching staff which the teacher initially did not feel was appropriate to report to police. Following a discussion with other members of staff, the teacher was subsequently asked to report the incident, resulting in the child being cautioned and charged. This was the child’s first charge though the Police report referenced “compulsive theftous behaviour”.

Police referred the charge to EEI. On progressing this referral, the child shared they took the money as they were trying to save enough to leave home due to being unhappy. Subsequently, the child went on to disclose information which resulted in child protection measures being triggered and the child being removed. This child’s alleged offending behavior was an expression of their need to escape from a harmful situation but not knowing how to do this or who to turn to for help. Whilst unusual for an EEI referral to result in child protection processes or the removal of a child to a safe place, this highlights the importance of recognising that offending behaviour is often an indicator of need and must be responded to holistically. Failure to do so risks criminalising children who are often victims themselves.

Over the past four years we have tried to increase the range of interventions we have available to meet the needs of children through our EEI disposals. By continuing to raise awareness and understanding of the purpose and aim of EEI with partner agencies, and building relationships with various projects and agencies, we are able to utilise a wide range of interventions to address any need that involvement in offending behaviour may highlight. It is important to continue to tap into the most appropriate disposals and interventions for our children. The graph to the left highlights the disposals of our 2018 referrals. Nearly half (47%) were dealt with through current measures, emphasising that we did not need additional interventions or to seek statutory measures for these children.



Nearly half (47%) were dealt with through current measures, emphasising that we did not need additional interventions or to seek statutory measures for these children.

In East Ayrshire, we also have an established **youth diversion** from prosecution scheme, which is delivered on either an individual or

group basis depending on the needs of the children participating. Our diversion process is collaborative between Children & Family Social Work and third sector partner Action for Children and offers an opportunity for children aged 16 and 17 years, to participate in a bespoke offending based educational programme as an alternative to prosecution. There is no requirement for the child to accept guilt for the alleged offence and they are informed of the range of options and possible outcomes regarding choosing to participate or not. The expectation of them is should they wish to participate, they are also advised that they can seek legal advice before deciding on doing so. Any child who agrees to participate will be introduced to their support worker from Action for Children who will undertake the tailored intervention seeking to reduce the risk of involvement in any future situations that may bring them into conflict with the law. In addition, the flexibility and individuality of our interventions allows for proportionate and appropriate support for each child.

This approach, which is in line with GIRFEC, recognises some individuals may require very short levels of intervention and no wider assistance, and others may require a longer period and more intensive levels of supports such as dealing with official agencies such as benefit agency appointments, housing, sourcing training or employment. This combination of providing both practical assistance and more traditionally viewed intervention allows opportunity for the child to utilise some of the skills they are learning or confidence to deal with these issues, which previously may have raised their anxieties and inappropriate coping mechanisms. This manner of supporting and engaging also supports development of positive working relationships where the child will often disclose other vulnerabilities they want assistance with and will be incorporated into the diversionary support. The work to address the practical issues will often be prioritised over the intervention to enable individuals to participate by feeling safe, knowing where they are staying, having food to eat. If we do not work in this manner then the likelihood of diversion being successful by the child's measure is slim. In 2018, we successfully diverted 23 children from prosecution, achieving a 100% completion rate.

An aspect of our diversion, which we felt was important to develop, was the availability to all 16/17 year olds living within East Ayrshire. This became pertinent, as there are a number of private care providers with residential units where frequently children from other local authorities (often from England) are placed and we have no knowledge or involvement. However, there have been occasions where these children have been charged with an offence that is referred to either our EEI or youth diversion and we felt it was important they were not disadvantaged because the responsibility for them lay with other local authorities. In 2018, we supported two children, both from England and placed with private care providers in East Ayrshire, to engage in the Youth Diversion Scheme, as otherwise they would most likely been prosecuted in court. We link with the lead professional to explore and consider a range of factors such as what is in place for the child, who is best placed to undertake any work specifically around the diversion referral or if this is being covered within existing intervention. If it is agreed the current supports and interventions are addressing the needs highlighted then follow up to evidence how this is meeting the needs and outcome will be arranged. This is important to ensure credibility in any diversion intervention and appropriate information is provided back to COPFS as to successful engagement and intervention. It is our conviction that GIRFEC should be for any child living in Scotland and any child coming to our attention should receive the same level of support, and the same opportunity to be treated fairly and proportionately as the children whom we have corporate parental responsibility for.

A further example of our WSA is demonstrated by our **provision of court support to all under 18s**. Our protocol is to offer support to all children under 18 years appearing at court irrespective of the route to court. Acceptance and uptake of this support is voluntary on the part of the child and will always be proportionate to their level of needs and existing supports. Multi-agency collaboration between Police

Scotland, East Ayrshire Children & Family Social Work, North Ayrshire and South Ayrshire Court Social Work Teams and Action for Children ensures robust and consistent processes providing support to all under 18s appearing at either Kilmarnock or Ayr Sheriff Court. When an under 18 is appearing from custody, East Ayrshire processes ensure: they are visited in the custody cells to explain what will happen; that they speak with a solicitor; understand how to present in court they are aware of why they are in custody (no discussion of the details around their charge); offers are made to contact family; check they have an address to return to; liaise with professionals such as COPFS, defense solicitor and information for Sheriffs ensuring effective and proportionate information sharing with court.

Court support is not just about the appearance in court but extends through the whole of the child's court experience for every appearance, as well as offering ongoing practical supports where possible, and risks can be managed in the community to try and prevent under 18s being subject to secure care or remand. Where an under 18 from East Ayrshire is appearing in another court in Scotland and we are contacted and made aware we would endeavor to provide information for provision of court notes, provide a worker to attend and support the child and/or their family and provide ongoing support as appropriate. Our commitment to this stems from ongoing research whereby people in prison are 13 times more likely to be care experienced and approximately 88% of 16-20 year olds released from custody are reconvicted within two years. This clearly identifies why supporting our children throughout their court journey is the right thing to do for their own outcomes.

In early 2019, the importance of court support being available not just for children from East Ayrshire but to all under 18s nationally was reinforced when we had an experience regarding two under 18s from another local authority in custody to appear in court. As our protocols and processes we were notified however it quickly became apparent these children were not known to East Ayrshire social work however, they were visited in the custody cells to offer support and any assistance. Whilst both were over 16 years, they were still in education and having been held in the cells overnight were missing school on the Monday, were scared and very apprehensive about the process. They had been in police custody overnight, unable to receive any level of reassurance from professionals or family. As stated, we followed our process as we would for any East Ayrshire child but made contact with the local authority from where the children resided. Unfortunately the local authority was unable to attend court due to the geographical distance and time issues and nor were they able to provide any information as the children were not known to social work services either. As per our processes, we were able to establish this was the first charge they had both accrued, they had supportive parents and in our assessment had been held longer than they should have been. The response seemed punitive and disproportionate. We contacted COPFS to discuss, as per our court support process, and enquired if these children could be considered for diversion from court. We provided the details to COPFS, outlining the reasons as to why appearing before the sheriff was disproportionate and not in the children's best interests and how any issues could be suitably addressed through diversion. The diversion was agreed, with a clause in the liberation that they must be met at court. They were released into the care of their parents who had travelled to collect them.

In 2019 to date, we have had five under 18s arrested and held in Police custody overnight. Four out of the 5 children have been diverted from court, did not appear in front of the Sheriff and were given community support packages as a result. This reduced the number of unnecessary court appearances, court reports and ultimately diverted our children from formal justice processes. When our children do appear in court, we have a commitment to be present in court and for the Sheriff to know that we are providing voluntary support to all under 18s. For example, we had a child charged with a serious charge in 2017, subject to special bail conditions for over 12 months and ultimately convicted of the offence. We liaised with the Procurator Fiscal who was able to provide guidance on possible disposals and

although they could not give sentencing lengths, was able to indicate that she could be subject to 2-3 years detention. Critical to our provision of court support is information for Sheriffs at the points of bail consideration through court notes or sentencing through Criminal Justice Social Work Reports (CJSWRs) outlining available supports and interventions that are proportionate to manage and address needs and risks. In providing tailored wraparound supports either for bail or as part of sentencing this may include secure care and/ or our intensive support services, who can often see a child on a daily basis, always with the caveat of risk being manageable within the community.

An example of our court support highlighting the benefits of our processes was evident on an occasion when an under 18 was appearing for sentencing from custody. The WSA coordinator and a residential worker from the children's house where the child lived attended the court to provide support for the child. The Sheriff closed the court but asked if there was social work or a corporate parent representative. Workers made themselves known and the Sheriff was able to enquire further regarding the supports and interventions available in the community. We were able to provide detailed information to the court as to what and how any interventions and supports would be implemented as well as additional risk management strategies available such that the Sheriff decided a community disposal including a Restriction of Liberty Order (RLO) would be appropriate in this instance. The Sheriff had all available information regarding the child's vulnerabilities, how this may have impacted upon their offending behaviour and the risks and needs associated with their offending behaviour and how these could be addressed and managed in the community. These situations also force us to reflect on what would happen if we did not have a commitment to our WSA. If we did not support this child in court, would she have been remanded in Polmont?

With this said, it is essential that the needs underlying children's harmful behaviours towards others are understood if interventions are to be meaningful and reduce risk and improve outcomes for individual. Our skills in assessing and understanding the needs underlying distress behaviours are becoming more robust though our ability to [balance rights and risks](#) within our risk practice is an area we challenge ourselves to improve and develop. In order to continue improving in this area we are keen to utilise updated research and consider how that should inform our practice and policies. This has also involved linking with the Centre for Youth & Criminal Justice for advice and guidance on how we may embed children's rights within our risk practice.

According to the UNCRC, when a child is remanded into, or sentenced to a period of detention it should be for the minimum time required. On a child being remanded or sentenced, we are committed to attending all our [Initial Custody Reviews](#) (ICR) within 72 hours in line with best practice regarding **reintegration and transitions**. This is a planning meeting to assess unmet needs, co-ordinate prison and community based supports and to plan for the child's release. Should a child be remanded or detained we remain committed to keeping in contact, making welfare visits, showing the child we still care, and looking forward to them coming home. One child in particular wrote to his Intensive Support Worker, referring to him as the uncle he has never had. These powerful messages highlight the importance of keeping connections between the child and community based social work - home. In line with advancing and reinvigorating the whole system approach in 2019, we have purchased 'welcome home bags' in line with the personalised agenda. This is where we meet a child on release from HMYOI Polmont, and give them a bag for their belongings to avoid carrying their possessions in a black bag. The bag is filled with toiletries, clothing and some luxuries for spending their first night back in their home community. We would – and should - do these little things for our own children, for as corporate parents these *are* our children.

In 2018, the Whole System Strategic group took forward the implementation of **Clean Slate Ayrshire**. This model was based upon One Glasgow’s model but has been adapted to fit the local picture within East Ayrshire. The approach is for all under 18s who have outstanding warrants, charges or court dates, and the drive for these to be dealt with at the earliest opportunity, before their sentence ends and to avoid multiple court appearances. These discussions initially took place as some of our under 18s were completing their sentence in HMYOI Polmont, had secured a tenancy and a fresh start, only then to be arrested on their release for an outstanding warrant that had existed since their initial imprisonment date. Although this may result in their sentence being extended it would mean that on their release date they would be leaving with a “clean slate”.

In order to progress this process, we met with COPFS who were very interested to support the approach we were aiming to embed. We agreed a system suited to local needs whereby when East Ayrshire is alerted to any person under the age of 18 with any outstanding warrants or court appearances, contact would be made with COPFS directly who would check the Procurator Fiscal systems and clarify anything outstanding for that individual child and to ascertain what could be achieved in line with the Clean Slate agenda. We were able to set up this approach through having established and positive partnership relationships and within our authority we are given opportunities to develop such ideas and partnerships. We are in the early stages of the implementation and this year need to continue and develop this approach so that we are able to directly report on a live case study.

Within East Ayrshire our response to distress behaviours that pose significant risk to others has been evolving through the use of Care and Risk Management (CARM). This was approved and signed off, as directed within the national guidance, by the East Ayrshire Child Protection Committee and is overseen and reported to them. Although we have not undertaken a formal self- evaluation of CARM it appears to be embraced by Social Work practitioners and we have good experiences of under 18s participating in their conferences. We have evidence that it has resulted in good outcomes and a reduction in risk. Additionally, its implementation has coincided with the development of more strength-based community plans and a reduction in children being accommodated where that may have otherwise have been the outcome.

Benefits and Impact

The vision for sustainability for WSA within East Ayrshire was the need for it being embedded across all partners as good practice in how we respond to children whose needs happen to include offending behaviour. That these are children first, our practitioners are skilled in responding to children and their families, and youth justice should not be seen as a distinct area of work. WSA has been developed across our generic children and family locality teams with the WSA coordinator providing support, guidance and direction as required to individual workers where necessary but also in sharing the developments of the processes and practice. This has ensured children are not transferred to new social workers because they become involved in offending behavior. It has promoted the upskilling of workers in areas they may not have had experience or confidence previously, such as court process and CJSWRs. It has supported areas of practice development where all under 18s are supported who meet the justice system. Children, whom prior to WSA would have received no support during their court journey such as 16/17 year olds appearing from custody, are now offered support not just to them but also for their families. This extends to those who become subject to remand or detention whereas prior to WSA without a statutory licence on release support would have been limited if available at all. The most important aspect and impact is for children in East Ayrshire who have been diverted from formal court processes, robust partnership working supports this but also improved responses and systems at whichever point of the justice system they intersect.

What makes this work?

Partners are committed to providing the right response, at the right time, by the right service(s). Within East Ayrshire EEI is located within Children & Family Locality Social Work Teams utilising existing processes. By embedding the functions of EEI across every day, generic Child & Family Social work this requires effective communication and shared understanding as a fundamental principle. The WSA Strategic group members have a responsibility to promote and share the purpose of EEI across their own agencies to support its development and effectiveness through this shared understanding and communication.

This highlights equality, consistency and the unified approach that we take in East Ayrshire. It is also important to note that in order for the Procurator Fiscal to agree to a child being diverted, both from custody and through the diversion scheme, a level of trust is required within the local authority and for the diversion scheme to have some level of credibility. COPFS policy states that people are diverted, as opposed to cases and diversion should not be restricted to an exhaustive list of offence types. This outlines the flexibility of COPFS in being prepared to work within and through attending the national diversion forum run by CYCJ. It is further emphasised through COPFS' attendance, whereby social work practitioners are encouraged to be seeking diversion for under 18s.

Challenges and Barriers

Ensuring that children are not criminalised when other responses would be more appropriate as well as a wider understanding of the implications of responding through a justice lens across agencies is still an area of ongoing work. This is particularly relevant in thinking about the EEI example where a child stole a very small amount of money, as they were unable to identify how to deal with a situation within which they were actually being victimised. Curiosity by those around that child as to why they felt the need to take the money may have avoided any justice response at all and looked beyond the presenting behaviour.

We must support our colleagues in being familiar with our WSA as we are conscious that each agency has its own aims and objectives. It is important that we recognise this diversity but all have a common strategic goal of working towards the best outcomes for our children who are at risk of displaying offending behaviours.

Limitations to accessing data has a number of implications for delivery of WSA. Unreliable data from parts of the system that is not joined up to give a coherent sense of what is happening limits our ability to understand shifts and trends or identify gaps and address these. Whilst having an impact on ability to improve or addresses issues, it also limits our ability to highlight positives and influence fully. Data is only part of the picture alongside feedback and information from children, their families and professionals as to what is working and what is not, but often the statistics and financial implications can have a significant impact on continuing resources and support for approaches.

How could this be improved further?

Like every local authority, we continue to reflect on and learn from progress and work hard in advancing the WSA. We continue to have some challenges and room for improvement that have been identified throughout this case study. In recognising this, we continue to feed into national forums, meetings and discussions that will assist us in overcoming our challenges. We look to the future and are hopeful that we can keep up, and build on our strong foundations in East Ayrshire.

What has been learnt?

Commitment and support across the agencies and at both strategic and practice level is necessary to make WSA work. Developing shared language and understanding of the roles, demands and limitations of each multi-agency partner is crucial. Taking people with you on the journey and being clear about the fact this is about children not “offenders” can really help shift views and attitudes. It takes significant effort and time to embed new practices and providing a coordinator who can drive these and support practitioners with new or unfamiliar tasks and learning is crucial. It needs to keep evolving and developing, ensuring that national policy provides the framework and that autonomy to connect this in a way that works locally is crucial. Children and their families value this approach; it makes a difference to them. For services it reduces demands on resources by reduction in reports for court and SCRA, utilizes universal services and third sector partners.

Case Study

5. Highland Youth Action Service

Carrie McLaughlan (Highland Youth Action Service)

Background

The Highland Youth Action Service (YAS) consists of two teams, each managed by a Practice Lead. Each team is made up of Social Workers, a Clinical Nurse Specialist and Youth Justice Practitioners. A Forensic Psychologist in Training (FPiT) is attached to the service and has a Highland wide post, supported through supervision from a Chartered Registered Forensic Psychologist. The decision to include such a post grew from an interest (c2007) in an employee's qualification (MSc Forensic Psychology) and how this could be better utilised to assist the service and its development. Over two years, proposals were put forward to the Local Authority's Director to consider funding an FPiT as a 'secondment'.

The inclusion of a FPiT in the Highland YAS staffing structure is not a first and other local authorities have invested in forensic psychology to varying degrees. However, there are a limited number of local authorities who do have forensic psychology staff as part of their teams. This case study explores the benefits of having forensic psychology staff employed directly by the council and the contribution to service provision that this can provide.

Example of Good Practice

Highland YAS recognise the unique contribution that different professionals can bring to partnership working and have effectively included forensic psychology within the multi-disciplinary team.

In relation to psychology, the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) set the standards of proficiency that every Practitioner Psychologist must meet in order to become registered. In addition, once registered, Practitioner Psychologists must continue to meet the standards of proficiency that are relevant to their scope of practice. Whilst there are common standards of proficiency for all Practitioner Psychologists there are standards that are specific to particular psychology domains, including forensic. For Registered Forensic Psychologists these domain specific standards of proficiency include, but are not limited to, the:

- understanding of psychological theory and models on socially and individually damaging behaviours,

- application of these to effective assessment, formulation and intervention, and
- provision of research, consultancy and training in relation to this (HCPC, 2015).

In Highland, the Forensic Psychology Service (FPS) is accessible to all staff in the YAS and the knowledge and skills available have been utilised across a range of areas. The FPiT is employed full time and is co-located within one of the teams, with her Supervisor and Chartered Forensic Psychologist being available within the office fortnightly. Both posts have been able to travel to provide consultation across the Highlands.

Access to the service usually starts with consultation, either through meetings or telephone contact. There is no separate referral form to access the FPS within Children's Services; however, access to the Child's Plan is requested. The FPiT regularly attends the YAS team meetings and offers telephone consultations each week for social workers/practitioners to discuss cases.

The FPS has had a vital role in relation to improving risk practice and has played a part in the implementation and rolling out of Care and Risk Management practice as well as ongoing support to staff. In the first instance this is usually through consultation and advice/guidance to staff, however, it also includes joint work in undertaking risk assessments where this is beneficial. In addition, the FPS offers consultation to Care and Protection Teams and offers Criminal Justice Social Work clinics to teams who otherwise cannot directly access forensic psychology input.

Evaluation of the effectiveness of the FPS suggests that the input increases staff confidence and competence in risk assessment and risk management. The following quotes highlight staff views:

"I felt we gained a more in depth understanding of the presenting behaviour and potential triggers. We were also given advice on how best to approach addressing these behaviours"

"It gave me confidence working in an unfamiliar and potentially dangerous situation"

"The service offers risk assessment information from a specialist discipline which benefits risk assessment, decision making and reduces the professional stress of making such decisions"

"In cases that were causing a high level of anxiety...it was extremely helpful to have this additional perspective. The guidance given shaped the plans that were subsequently put in place and because the families were fully involved this was acceptable to them"

The FPS also plays a role in the development of training packages and the delivery of these to staff. This has included the provision of training in Formulation which has been rolled out to both youth justice services, including the voluntary sector and

residential care staff. In addition, Safer Lives training and support has regularly been provided in response to local need as well as assistance in co-facilitating Risk Assessment (SAVRY) training.

Benefits and Impact

The work in Highland has demonstrated the benefits that the addition of the FPS can provide in terms of further developing staff knowledge, skills and confidence in working with children and young people involved in offending behaviour and other high risk behaviours.

For example, anecdotal information suggests it has facilitated joint training/and joint working (e.g. with CAMHS and Police Scotland) and improved staffs skill set in relation to harmful sexual behavior and how to manage/reduce it.

The FPS has developed a direct link with CAMHS which allows for a collaborative and trusting working relationship between the two services. This is facilitated by frequent and dedicated time for case discussion and has allowed for more collaborative approaches as cases/services develop. Joint consultations are offered when there is an overlapping of cases and these have helped with resolving confusion/concern and increased understanding of what each service can offer.

Both CAMHS and the FPS feel the opportunity to merge clinical and forensic formulations has been valuable - allowing services to see that these are often complimentary, while respecting the expertise and difference in each other's training.

Whilst the relationship between the individual workers in CAMHS and FPS is important (e.g. both are willing to seek opportunities to work together on cases, often within a consultation model) this is only possible because the roles and services allow them the autonomy and flexibility to do so.

Although there has been limited evaluation of the impact the FPS has provided, the evaluations that have taken place suggest it has supported staff in their understanding and analysis of offending and successful interventions. For example feedback from an evaluation of the service included:

"The input into case conferences through formulation became invaluable and I could have used them more - hindsight is a wonderful thing"

"Being introduced to formulation through the Forensic Psychology Service was a real eye opener and helped me take a more in depth look as to why certain people would keep repeating the same mistakes"

"The work helped the young person to understand why certain things were happening and how they could respond in a more positive way"

One of the clear advantages of this model of working is that it helps to fill a skills/service gap that has been identified nationally in relation to those children who do not meet the criteria for CAMHS because their behaviour is deemed to be

behavioural rather than as a result of mental disorder (Murphy, 2018; Scottish Government, 2018). Forensic psychology services have a valid contribution to make in relation to those children and young people whose needs require psychological support and intervention that is additional to what Social Work provide. Having Forensic Psychology embedded within the Social Work team enables this service to be provided flexibly, either through direct work with the child, through consultation with individual staff members/staff teams or through training, without the delays that referrals to other services can result in.

What makes this work?

Positive relationships with partner agencies have been key to successful utilisation of the FPS. These relationships have developed over time and there is a respect for the different roles and acknowledgment of what can feel like competing and conflicting pressures.

It is perhaps a significant benefit that the FPiT spent four years working in a youth justice service as a practitioner before starting on the chartership route as a FP. This has allowed the FPS to develop out of an understanding of the pressures and complexities of a youth justice service.

Another factor that has contributed to the success was senior management supporting the FPiT to work flexibly and with autonomy. This has included allowing the FPiT to spend periods of time 'on placement' working in different environments and alongside different services (e.g. Criminal Justice Social Work, Scottish Prison Service, CAMHS).

Challenges and Barriers

The embedding of the FPS was not without its challenges. One such challenge is accessing adequate peer support to the FPiT as a lone worker. In addition, there are pressures associated with offering a service to Social Work across a whole local authority with limited resource (1 x FPiT and 1 x part-time Chartered Psychologist). This is especially so given the geography of the Highlands and the desire to provide an equitable service.

A further challenge was developing a robust referral process within a youth justice social work service that is fit for purpose, but in line with psychological practice guidance. For example, there continues to be difficulties around recording systems and who can access them/what they should contain due to both Psychology and Social Work recording on the same system.

How could this be improved further?

The FPS could be improved further through ensuring strategic plans consider how to offer a robust service across all agencies as well as continuing to build on links to other psychological services (e.g. CAMHS, Secure Units with psychology services).

Ongoing evaluation of the FPS and the impact it has would assist in shaping the service provided as we move forward. To date one of the improvements highlighted through evaluation is the need to provide better/clearer information for new staff during their induction on how and when to access the FPS.

What has been learnt?

In terms of learning from Highland's experience it would be beneficial to have systems set up prior to the FPiT starting in post. This would include:

- A referral process where there was agreement as to when FPS should be consulted and a process in which to do this that does not create unnecessary barriers, yet ensures appropriate gate keeping from a specialist service.
- Recording systems and agreement at senior management level of what and where FPS should record within a Social Work service.

Further Information

HCPC (2015). Standards of proficiency: Practitioner psychologists. Health and Care Professions Council.

Murphy (2018). Balancing rights and risk: How do we get it right for children involved in violent behavior? Centre for Youth & Criminal Justice.

Scottish Government. (2018). Rejected Referrals Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS): A qualitative and quantitative audit Edinburgh: Scottish Government.

Case Study

6. Structured Deferred Sentence

Gillian Booth (South Lanarkshire)

Background

South Lanarkshire Justice Services designed and developed a Structured Deferred Sentence (SDS) service, which was implemented in April 2018. This service provides intensive social work support to young people between the age of 16 to 21 years of age, where there is a risk of increased offending, the court disposal being remand/custodial sentence or where remittal back to the Children’s Hearing System is not an option (see appendix 1 for further information).

SDS is part of South Lanarkshire’s Whole System’s Approach Strategy and reports to the WSA Strategy group. This group sets aims and goals for Youth Justice Services across South Lanarkshire Council in line with the [Whole System Youth Justice Strategy 2017-2020](#). The service was also established as a response to the recognition by South Lanarkshire Justice Services that traditional Community Payback Orders (CPOs) do not meet the needs of young people, in the sense that often they are unable to cope with the structure and compliance demands that are required (see [Nolan, 2018](#)). The SDS service differs by offering greater opportunity to work intensively with a young person based on their level of risk and needs. In addition to this there is particular emphasis on education/training and employability support offered within SDS.

The service structure is made up of three part time qualified social workers and one part time social work assistant. There is one operations manager who is responsible for the oversight and strategic direction of the service. Linked to this service is our Court Social Work Service. Their involvement is in relation to screening the suitability of all 16-18 year old persons who are both in court custody and pled guilty to an offence where a Criminal Justice Social Work Report (CJSWR) was requested to be considered for an SDS assessment. This information is imparted to the area team (if the case is known to them) and SDS team (if an unallocated case) who will then undertake the CJSWR.

Example of Good Practice

In October 2018 South Lanarkshire Court Services highlighted a 17 year old vulnerable male (MM) who had been remanded to custody. It became apparent this young man had not been subject to social work involvement in any capacity previously through the Children’s Hearing System or Justice Services. Tragically

his father had died when he was three years old and his Mother had ended her life recently. MM had lived with his Aunt and Uncle for a few years before this arrangement had broken down. He had since then been accommodated through housing services as homeless six months prior to his remand. Housing staff had significant concerns in relation to his self-harm, drug misuse and escalation in offending behaviour. MM's offending started in March 2018 and whilst initially involved low level thefts and breach of the peace, escalated to property damage and assault of a Police Officer. An initial case conference was convened with housing, court social work, the SDS team and HMP&YOI Polmont staff; as a result, we were able to identify the immediate risks to and by MM should he be released.

A START:AV risk assessment was commissioned which identified the following risks:

- Self-harm and overdose
- Accidental death due to self-harm and/or substance misuse (with the additional concern that MM would have a lower tolerance to substances on release)
- Victimisation and exploitation by others including older males. Information from the homeless community project advised that older males had been injecting MM with heroin and had resulted in hospital admissions.
- Periods of homelessness/rough sleeping
- Lack of engagement with housing and Young People support
- Behaviour and poor decision making whilst under the influence of substances, including the potential for involvement in altercations with others.
- Financial/money management
- Concerns for health and wellbeing/not engaging in treatment
- Increased risk of further offending

It became apparent that to achieve a sustainable community based package we were required to manage MM under South Lanarkshire's Care and Risk Management Procedures (CARM). South Lanarkshire's CARM operating procedure is concerned with ensuring that the risks presented by children and young people are managed effectively and minimised through effective communication, information sharing, assessment, multi-agency decision making and the implementation of effective risk management plans to safeguard both the individual and their community.

Therefore CARM seeks to achieve a balance between addressing the risk presented by children and young people whilst ensuring that their needs underpinning behaviours are similarly addressed. Although CARM procedures would ordinarily apply to children and young people whose own behaviours may present a risk of serious harm to others, rather than those who present a significant risk of harm to themselves because of their own behavior, in MM's case given the exceptional level and multitude of risks presented, adoption of these procedures was agreed to be appropriate.

The response to this approach was encouraging, with core members of the meeting and subsequent risk management plan being Police, Link Services (based in Polmont), Simon Project, housing, SDS staff, adult services and SACRO. The court were approached to advise MM's case was being reviewed to determine if a robust support package in the community could be offered as an alternative to custody and to allow four weeks of further remand to allow us to do this. Whilst increasing the length of remand is never an approach we would generally advocate, it was recognised that a release without a well-considered risk management plan would result in potential risk to MM's life. The plan combined:

- An Intensive Support Package from SACRO which would provide overnight support within a tenancy from 7pm to 7am for a one month period initially;
- SDS team providing initially daily support and contact;
- Support through the Link Service which offers practical support to people under the age of 18 years who are at risk of or have remanded or released from custody;
- The provision of a single tenancy through housing;
- Mental health services via CPN support and a psychology assessment to rule out any potential enduring mental health issues;
- Substance Misuse services to support a harm reduction plan

We recognised that where possible we wanted to work with MM's extended family to support them and see if they could extend assistance to the care package. We sought consent from MM to make contact with his Aunt and Uncle and ascertain what their position was. Unfortunately, given that their previous experience of supporting MM was not positive, they felt they could not offer anything further at this stage.

Link and SDS staff remained in continual contact with MM during his remand to assess his engagement in the proposed plan and assess whether the ongoing risk of self-harm could be managed adequately in the community. Discussions with custody staff and MM indicated his thoughts and feelings were situational to being in custody and MM had a strong motivation to engage with services and not harm himself if released. His drug use had ceased and MM was verbalising that he was keen to not go back to using heroin again.

The plan was put forward to the presiding Sheriff by the Court Operations Manager. Whilst this was an ambitious offering, it was recognized that historical attempts to maintain MM in the community had not worked and we needed to offer a more creative and intensive service to sustain him. Initially MM received six weeks deferment to assess his ability to engage with all the services involved.

During this time, the SACRO overnight support was sustained and MM worked well with this support. He liked the fact that there were people around at night to talk to and that he was not on his own. Daily food and electricity shopping were provided, and on many occasions we required to assist financially with this as his Universal Credit payments had not started. The risk of harm did not present at all as it had previously, and it was safe to withdraw this service after six

weeks. Levels of engagement with SDS and Link Service fluctuated over the months, and there were challenges in trying to support MM whilst he was drinking alcohol to excess and using cannabis. On reflection we managed to continue our services by having good communication links with the Court and Sheriff, being accountable for what services we were providing and how we were tailoring our approach when it was not working. For example, it was recognised that there were around six different professionals involved with MM in five days and he could not cope with this. Reducing this to three key members helped him stay on track and remember appointments.

Being honest with the Court in terms of what we needed to do differently assisted with the continuation of the SDS disposal in the community. A further example of this was when MM failed to attend court at 9.30am for his reviews. Rather than put a Warrant to Attend for MM, the Court allowed the case to be recalled later that day to assist staff in trying to locate and bring him to Court. Working with Police colleagues to help MM manage his bail curfew was also significant. Police could see the efforts being made to support MM and would feedback their curfew checks and any community safety issues. The compassion and interest that court personnel, particularly the Sheriff, displayed was evident to MM and reaffirmed the efforts everyone was investing to provide him with opportunities other than custody. MM fed this back to staff after each Court appearance in respect of his surprise at being afforded another chance to stay out of custody, even when his liberty at time has been precarious due to limited engagement with staff.

It has now been four months since his initial release and we are still supporting him. MM has now been placed on a six month SDS disposal and there have been no further convictions since his initial remand. MM of his own volition asked to become involved in the local Chance for Change project which offers outdoor and social activities for young people. This is a significant step in MM's motivation and recognition of his own abilities. Whilst there is still a considerable way to go with MM, there is evidence that through services continuing to remain involved and stay with a young person when it appears fruitless, change can happen. Good oversight and leadership of this case also assisted with supporting staff on the direction of travel and when to take a different approach.

Benefits and Impact

This type of response offers a more individualised approach to the needs of the client. Rather than placing MM on a standardised order, we considered how likely he would be to manage either a CPO or SDS at the initial stages of his remand. Given the indicators of risk of harm and previous trauma he had experienced it was clear that a basic package was not going to work. The evidence that this approach is successful could be attributed to a lack of further offending in his case.

Had a CPO been made this would have increased the chances of up-tariffing him within the Justice System and impacted further on employment opportunities further on in his life. There would also have been a high chance of breach of CPO and a return to custody.

This has helped form our organisation's wider thinking around designing CPO services for young people.

What makes this work?

One of the significant drivers of success in this case was the interest and genuine concern that the presiding Sheriff had for MM. There is clear support and vested interest from our local courts in contributing to the success of SDS. Through providing the Sheriff with regular updates on the progress of MM, what had not worked initially and what we were adapting to see improved outcomes we believe supported their trust in what we were suggesting to be a creditable disposal. Having a Sheriff who directly addressed MM, giving him both stern and supportive advice as well as encouragement, helped him to see that everyone (including the Court) was invested in him making a success of his life.

We also believe that having SDS, SACRO and Link staff whose approach is child-centric and focused has contributed to good outcomes for MM. Recognising that helping MM having food and a comfortable home to stay in first was paramount to him developing trust and feeling comfortable enough to let staff support him and open up about what was troubling him.

For this engagement to continue, maintaining the consistency of key staff is paramount to ensuring we keep MM working with us. A change in staff will require building trust up from the start again and may cause disengagement.

Challenges and Barriers

The challenges have been over a number of levels. Outcomes in this case has been achievable due to the ability to provide an Intensive Support Package (ISP) through existing local authority funding. This would not be sustainable to provide for more clients in the current Social Work Grant. In addition our current SDS resource going forward will have to be absorbed through our existing funding arrangements and whilst this has been agreed for a further one year, this is not a long term stable service. There is a need nationally to redistribute CPO funding to services such as this.

One of the other challenges has been around educating locality teams on the ethos and approach to SDS and why it is important we promote this service. Whilst existing Justice and Children and Families Staff welcomed the service, keeping it at the forefront of consideration in CJSWR was a challenge. We have overcome this by providing inputs into locality teams and quality assuring court reports to make sure all appropriate clients are being considered for the service.

Some of the other challenges have been around staff availability at short notice to respond to the needs of MM. For example, when he wasn't at home for an important appointment with DWP or a court appearance. Where staff had set aside time to assist MM, they then had to change pre-existing plans to support him later

that day. This had a knock on effect for other clients who were expecting their worker to see them as arranged. We tried to address this by having a back-up worker (SDS social work assistant) who would try to make contact with MM and where needed, re-arrange pre-existing meetings with clients. This is one of the challenges when you have a small team who work part time in providing support to a high number of clients.

The final challenge was around having appropriate team leader support to deal with the day to day operational issues that arose. The current funding arrangements do not allow for this role and required an Operations Manager to have this oversight. Whilst this was achieved in this case, longer term it was not sustainable.

How could this be improved further?

We are now moving into our second year of SDS service with it being formally evaluated by both Glasgow University and Community Justice Scotland. We have identified that there is further opportunity to extend the service to clients between 21-25 years old as we recognized this age group attracts the highest number of CPO's imposed.

We now have a team leader overseeing the team, providing regular supervision and oversight of the cases.

We identify that we need to widen the criteria for SDS out to young people who are breaching CPO's and have an arrangement with the Court to automatically replace the CPO with an SDS disposal. The difficulty here being the volume of caseload this would present and having a resource that could adequately meet the needs of a high number of clients.

The other area that we think we could improve on is our inclusion of family in a young person's support. Unfortunately MM's extended family could reach out to MM in the way that he needed, and despite staff's attempts at contact with them this was unsuccessful. More consideration needs to be given to how we engage with families to help them be part of successful care plans going forward.

What has been learnt?

We now have a directory of ISP services and voluntary organisations we have pre-existing funding arrangements with. One of the challenges at the beginning of MM'S case was that we did not know who provided live-in support for young people. A lot of time was spent sourcing what was out there and setting up meetings. We would want to tell others that it's important to spend the time scoping out all the options that could be available in advance of having a case like this. One of the limiting factors in getting the right ISP was the time it took to arrange meetings with different agencies such as Step-down and SACRO to discuss potential packages. The other factor is that placing an initial cost of an ISP can be worth it longer term in the sense that getting it right at the start will cost less in terms of service and resources further down the line in that person's life. The view

we took with this case was that the service provided by South Lanarkshire was going to be a cheaper option than multiple custodial sentences for MM, which his behavior was indicating for the future.

We were surprised by what worked and what did not work with this case. For example we had concerns that the SACRO overnight support would not be accepted by MM and that he would breach the bail conditions are refute their help.

However, that was an area that worked really well and MM took to their support and company in a positive way. Initially that support was to maintain his safety but in actual fact offered connection and people to speak to when he was ready to open up about his feelings and what he wanted to achieve. Yet in the situations where we prepared and organised collection of MM for Court hearings and he had spoken of being ready for staff on the day, he could not cope with this and ran away, leaving himself at risk of custody. That was unexpected as MM had always maintained he would do anything to avoid custody. This taught us that his fear of going to court was too much and he needed increased support and preparation for this. It was an amazing outcome that through the safe practice and mental health support that staff provided MM, we have not seen any re-occurrence of physical self-harm since release from custody.

The requirement for a team leader to oversee the operational aspects and day to day leadership requirements is key to making a service like this work, and has now been addressed. Another important aspect to the success of a case like this is having strong leadership and a vision of why you are doing this and bring people along with you. Even when it looks like it's not going to work, keep persisting and have faith in the young person that they can make this work for themselves if you just keep sticking with them. Part of why MM is still working with us, I believe, is that he knows staff will not give up on him and nothing shocks or upsets them. It's also important to re-frame what we see as successful outcomes for clients. Where someone has historically offended through assaults and violent related behaviours, to then have no repeat of this but they breach their bail, still demonstrates some positive outcomes in that there is a reduction in harm to others.

Good staff support is essential, and not just looking after your own team but that of the other agencies involved. Helping them understand why keeping young people out of custody is so important for them and society. At the start of this venture there were some services who were very skeptical of MM's ability to change and believed that custody was the only option to keep him safe and stop offending. It was important for senior management in Justice Services to address this perspective and be clear this approach is not one which is supported, but staff will be supported to be able to do their job to the best of their ability. There is still a way to go culturally in changing wider service views and this case demonstrates how we can make a start on this with the right vision.

We also recognised the need to develop our CARM processes in terms of training for staff in relation to developing risk management plans that are GIRFEC and SHANARRI indicator informed. Having a plan that all agencies are able to work to plus a clear contingency plan is essential, and whilst the Operations Manager was

able to lead and develop this with staff, there is a need for this learning to be available for all staff.

It's really important to develop partnership working with your court services and Sheriff's. Where they see accountability and creditable services, they support your direction.

Appendix 1

Structured Deferred Sentence (SDS)

What is Structured Deferred Sentence?

A Structured Deferred Sentence (SDS) is an interim disposal option that is now available to Hamilton and Lanark Sheriff Courts for all 16-21 year olds who meet the relevant criteria and who are not suitable for remittance back to the Children's Hearing System.

A SDS is an opportunity for a young person to engage with a specified action plan that will be tailored to meet their individual needs, based upon their LSCMI or YLS/CMI (or age-appropriate risk assessment tool) initial risk/needs (**Medium-High**) and will take place prior to the final disposal of their case at court. They will be provided with a tailored action plan and supports for a three to six month deferral period in the hope that if they engage and make progress during the deferral period the Sheriff will take this into consideration when making their final disposal.

A SDS will allow increased support over the three to six month period to address any particular areas of need linked with offending. This will also allow for appropriate signposting to relevant services and agencies with, the primary focus on helping the young person to enhance their employment and training opportunities and to promote constructive use of their free time. Close monitoring and intensive support will be provided to individuals subject to SDS.

A young person who has been involved in offending behaviour that may be considered suitable for a SDS will initially have a CJSWR requested at court and at this stage the Sheriff may stipulate that they also require a SDS assessment to be conducted.

There are therefore two different referral routes; one directly requested by the Sheriff and the other is a referral via the CJSWR authors who will discuss **all** CJSWR requests for 16-21 year olds with the SDS team in order to check their suitability for inclusion.

Suitability for Structured Deferred Sentence

1. Young people (both male and female) prosecuted on Summary complaint in Hamilton Sheriff Court.
2. South/North Lanarkshire Council permanent residents aged 16-21 years of age.

3. Young people are not suitable for remittal to the Children's Hearing System for disposal.
4. Young Person has established patterns of current and previous offending histories.
 - a. Please note that lack of previous convictions or pending breaches are not an automatic exclusion indicator for the Structured Sentencing Court for Young People.
 - b. Young people at risk of custody.
5. Young people who are not on existing Community Payback Order with Supervision. A person on Community Payback Order with Unpaid hours is not excluded.
6. Young people assessed by social workers as being of medium to high risk in relation to needs/ reoffending /custody rating using LSCMI or YLS/CMI - Risk Assessment tools.
7. Consideration of the lower levels of sexual / domestic abuse offences as long as a young person does not present significant public protection concerns.
8. Young people who are motivated to address their offending behaviour and who might benefit from the Structured Sentencing Court for Young People with its progress reviews.
9. Other young people, who do not meet all of the criteria but who, for exceptional reasons, are regarded as being suitable participants.

Case Study

7. The IVY Project

Dr Kate Black (IVY)

Background

The Interventions for Vulnerable Youth (IVY) Project is a highly specialist service for children in Scotland aged 12-18 who present a high risk of harm to others. The project has been running for five years, funded by the Scottish Government. It provides a tiered approach to risk assessment, formulation, support and risk management for children who, in addition to high risk behaviour, often have complex individual experiences of trauma, neglect, instability, neurodevelopment needs, mental health needs, placement breakdown, school exclusion, lack of social support, poverty and marginalisation. These children constitute a population whose distress is frequently unanswered; their needs, whilst recognised at national policy level, continue to fall outwith service thresholds and funding priorities. Accessing support from statutory services/resources is frequently difficult or impossible.

Children are referred to the IVY Project by a range of agencies. When a referral is received by the service, an initial two hour multi-professional consultation is offered in order to assess the needs and risks present, both for the child referred and with respect to their family and the professionals who seek to support them. A detailed report with an analysis of the risk and risk management needs documents the discussion and what is needed to optimise the child's outcomes. IVY works in close collaboration with referring agencies to develop a formulation and support and risk management plan that is attuned to the individual needs of each child and their team. IVY also works directly with children and their families to provide highly specialist assessment and similarly specialist psychological therapies when this is unavailable to them within the child's local authority or health board. Support offered indirectly includes ongoing consultation, reflective practice, supervision and training to teams, liaison with children's lawyers and reports to assist with key decision making, such as placement planning, funding applications, and SCRA or court processes.

The IVY Project is a blended service. IVY consists of social workers, and specially trained clinical and forensic psychologists who work in partnership to understand and respond to individuals and systems in a holistic and a multi-theoretical formulation-led way, informed by, for example, developmental, attachment, phase-based trauma, social materialist, mental health and offending trajectory models.

What works and why

The IVY Project is unique in placing joint working between the professionals as the foundation or 'secure base' of its approach. This partnership between social work and clinical and forensic psychology offers a specialist level of knowledge and skill in the area of youth justice, child development, mental health and risk. Advice is both theoretically grounded and practical. It is equipped to respond to need at individual, systemic, local and national levels. For example, distressing situations such as abuse can be responded to by drawing on social work expertise of child protection, legal proceedings and working with families, alongside clinical psychology knowledge about working with trauma and supervising staff. It appears, from the experience of IVY, that clinical psychologists employed in social work teams and social workers embedded within specialist psychology services would offer significant benefit to service users and the wider workforce. Time and cost savings alone are huge. More importantly, the experience of service users is less fragmented, less confusing and inclusive of the wide ranging needs and risks present.

Further good practice available to IVY has been in providing support to children across local authority and health board boundaries. Given that many of the children who present high risk behaviour have experienced multiple placement moves outwith their control, being able to continue to work with them as they move residence and teams is essential in providing relationship based support, consistency with respect to risk management and monitoring, and supports the provision of long term therapeutic support. Having a constant therapeutic journey and a consistent professional team is a critical factor in supporting other transitions and maintaining stability.

Having the time and space to respond comprehensively and assertively to children, families and their teams, is another strength of IVY. At the consultation level, more time is available for listening, with each discussion lasting a minimum of two hours. This may not be possible in many other services. IVY staff also hold significantly smaller caseloads than other frontline workers in mainstream services, affording workers the time and flexibility required to offer an assertive outreach approach, such as going to children where they need us, rather than expecting children to fit our requirement. This allows IVY to really get to know children, their families and corporate parents across settings, enabling the establishment of safety that is the essential starting point for intervention of any type. Radical change has been possible in the lives of children because of the time afforded to IVY to build secure foundations with service users and work therapeutically over long periods. Frightened, frozen, rejecting systems have become nurturing and claiming; frightened, frightening and isolated children have experienced peace and achieved personal goals, such as being in a loving relationship, going to college, learning to drive, avoiding offending and staying out of prison.

The ultimate aim of IVY is to become obsolete. As such, staff in the IVY Project do not replace teams that are already present in children's lives. Rather, IVY becomes an additional team member in the child's multi-disciplinary team, to learn from those who already know the child, to support risk assessment and management,

and work with staff to develop or enhance their roles as secure attachment figures. The project therefore contributes significantly to workforce planning and capacity to deal with this high risk group.

The usefulness of IVY to children and their support networks is measured by routinely gathering feedback from referring agencies via questionnaires. The effectiveness of individual support and risk management plans is measured via regular monitoring at established forums such as looked after young person reviews, and monitoring change via structured professional judgement risk assessment tools, and formulation and reformulation letters which are used in a therapeutic manner.

What doesn't always work: challenges and barriers

Like all human beings working in 'helping' services, IVY staff are not insulated from the wider system in which they operate, and they too can be vulnerable to mirroring or repeating unhelpful systemic responses to trauma such as risk averse or risky responses, impulsive or reactive decision making, inconsistency, avoidance, numbing or fragmentation. Furthermore, the harrowing nature of the risks and histories that characterise the cases seen pose considerable risk of vicarious trauma. In order to attend to support staff well-being and to ensure these potential process issues and bias are managed, reflective practice, team meetings and supervision are embedded into team practice as a matter of routine. IVY staff are therefore able to reflect on their own practice regularly, to monitor and attend to challenges to helpful responding that may arise and are encouraged and supported to maintain their own well-being. Formalised and protected space for staff and teams to reflect on their own thinking and their work with service users is vital, and from our experience should be an essential component of how all services operate. In order to function as a secure attachment figure or even a good risk assessor for others, workers must first be able to maintain a reflective capacity, which is no easy task amidst the pressures, threats, content and volume of work required of those who work at the frontline of services.

What has been learned?

Whilst IVY operates at national level, taking some of the strengths of IVY and applying them in local contexts would appear in many ways to be straightforward and inexpensive. For example, the addition of a clinical psychologist to a social work team (or vice versa) is a simple idea, but one which would allow the type of joint working that has been successful at IVY, and which would enable children who require highly specialist psychological interventions to benefit from specialist assessment and therapeutic intervention. The time saved on gatekeeping between services would surely also be staggering and the policy aims for children and young people to see the right person, at the right time and in the right place could be achieved. This would also therefore reduce waste and increase efficiencies. Similarly, embedding protected time for reflective practice into a service's operational policy is a simple step, yet one that could improve worker's wellbeing and capacity, improving both the service they are able to offer vulnerable children and families and ensuring service sustainability.

It is important to emphasise that just because IVY strongly adheres to the principle of treating children as children, this does not equate to taking risk less seriously. Instead, it means that risk formulation and management plans are truly developmentally informed, child centred, context relevant and some of those offered to the youngest children have been the most attuned and specific risk management plans, and sometimes the most structured or highly supervised of plans. It is developmentally informed practice that offers the greatest likelihood of reducing risk in the highest of high risk scenarios. Equipping all staff working in youth justice and looked after settings with knowledge and skill in the areas of child development, structured professional judgement risk assessment for children, and formulation would appear to be essential and manageable ways to provide better services.

Another less practical reflection from IVY would be noticing that sometimes a conclusion can be reached that something isn't working, when in fact, the something hasn't been given a fair chance to work. Case level evidence from IVY demonstrates that when sufficient time and nurturing is offered to children over a long period in a safe environment, radical change is possible. It is pertinent that systems are mindful of knowing the difference between something that is failing because it's the wrong thing, and something that simply needs more time and resource to succeed.

Case Study

8. Problem Solving Approach

Lorna Murray (Aberdeen City Council)

Background

Problem Solving Court

The Problem Solving Approach originally aimed to reduce the use of short custodial sentences and reduce offending by taking a rehabilitative and supportive approach that is tailored to meet the needs of the individual.

The “down-tariffing” ethos of the problem-solving approach is consistent with the presumption against short sentences.

The five principles of problem solving justice are:

- enhanced information
- collaboration
- procedural fairness
- accountability
- focus on outcomes

Preliminary evidence about those dealt with by the Problem Solving Court in 2017-18 shows more positive outcomes for younger participants irrespective of gender and this is further supported by anecdotal information from Sheriffs.

The consensus view following recent discussion with Sheriffs, Procurator Fiscal, Court Staff, Police Scotland and Justice Social Work is that the Problem Solving Approach should continue but with priority given to young people, ideally before they have been to prison.

The main criteria therefore has been reviewed and now focuses on the presence of complex needs and an increasing involvement in offending (which includes offences that have previously been reported to the Children’s Hearing). The aim of this was to take a proactive earlier intervention approach for young people.

Following evaluation and review, the initial criteria have been revised to widen access to the problem-solving approach, primarily aimed at including younger people before they have gone to custody for the first time. To be eligible for

consideration for the Problem Solving Court participants will usually need to meet all of the following criteria.

General

- Aged 16 and over with priority given to those aged 16 to 25
- Prosecuted on summary complaint in Aberdeen Sheriff Court
- Resident in Aberdeen City
- Pattern of offending behaviour
- Multiple and complex needs
- Assessed by social work as medium to high risk needs/reoffending
- Amenable to the problem-solving approach and who would benefit from regular PSC Progress Reviews
- Individuals who do not meet all of the criteria may be considered in exceptional circumstances if it is considered that they would benefit from the unique PSA.
- Offences excluded: DWP fraud, sexual offences

Complex needs are generally multiple and both practical and psychological. The major issues are around access to safe and stable accommodation; money or lack of it; drug and alcohol use; mental and physical health and wellbeing; and lack of confidence and coping skills, many of which are associated with Adverse Childhood Experiences and trauma.

Initial Screening Assessment

Individuals are assessed by Criminal Justice Social Work prior to appearing in court. If assessed as suitable for the Problem Solving Approach the Court is requested to defer sentence for a week for a Criminal Justice Social Work Report:

- Takes place with individuals appearing from custody, on undertaking or on cited list
- May offer future potential to screen arrestees at Kittybrewster Custody Hub
- CJ social worker gives brief induction to PSA
- Assesses: whether the individual would agree and would benefit from the problem-solving approach
- If suitable and consent given, the assessment is passed to court

Court First Appearance

- If Sheriff agrees with the recommendation, the sentence may be deferred to the Problem Solving Court with CJSW Problem Solving Report requested within seven days (brief, incisive and sentence specific).

Court Appearance for considering the suitability of Problem Solving Approach

If suitable:

At the next court appearance the individual is made subject to a Structured Deferred Sentence for between six and nine months. There are regular reviews with the Sheriff who imposed the Structured Deferred Sentence. The Reviews are heard before 10am in a small Court. Progress Reports are available to the Sheriff and the Solicitor prior to the court appearance and are discussed with everyone involved at the Review. The main discussion is between the Sheriff and the individual and plans for the next review period are agreed. If there are other matters that call in Court during the Structured Deferred Sentence, these are usually referred to the Problem Solving Court.

- Structured Deferred Sentence and Progress Review set
- Individual is seen within the Social Work Office immediately after Court
- CJ social worker explains the next steps of the PSA and gives appointment within two working days
- Monthly Progress Reviews at which Sheriff holds individual accountable for behaviour and provides encouragement. Social work staff, who have prepared a Progress Report also attend to join the conversation around progress and plans for the following month.
- Personal Plans tailored to the individual will take place within four weeks. This will include the individual, social worker, support worker and any other relevant parties.

Problem Solving Structured Deferred Sentence

The Structured Deferred Sentence (SDS) is generally considered to be a “low-tariff intervention providing structured social work intervention for individuals post-conviction but prior to sentencing”.

The Aberdeen Problem Solving Structured Deferred Sentence is however neither low-tariff nor low intensity. Indeed, by the very nature of the criteria for inclusion in the problem-solving approach, specifically that participants have complex needs, this is a very high intensity intervention from a criminal justice social work perspective. Programmes of intervention are individualised and delivered by a social worker, support worker and other agencies as required. Individuals will typically be seen a minimum of twice per week up to a maximum of five times per week depending on risk/needs, and social workers will prepare monthly Progress Reports and attend Review Hearings. Women have access to activities and support at the Connections Women’s Centre; men have access to a structured but flexible Men’s Programme tailored to individual need; all have access to the Venture Trust and a wide range of other services.

On successful completion of the Structured Deferred Sentence the outcome is Admonition.

Example of Good Practice

The Problem Solving Approach involves all levels of the Criminal Justice Service, including Sheriffs, Solicitors, Procurator Fiscal and Social Work Services and most importantly the individual who is the centre. Services are tailored to the individual and can be creative and innovative. The relationships between all involved are important, and consistency, honesty and willingness to overcome any potential hurdles are necessary for the approach to work.

Benefits and Impact

Karen is a 17 year old who was known to Children’s Services and had come to the attention of the police on more than 100 occasions. She had appeared in Court prior to the Problem Solving approach becoming available and was subject to a Community Payback Order with supervision and unpaid work along with an Anti Social Behaviour Order. Due to consistent appearances in Court and non compliance with the Orders that were in place she was eventually remanded in custody for two weeks. At which point, there was discussion with all those involved in the Problem Solving Approach around whether this was an option that could be utilized in this case. The assessment was undertaken and the service was provided by Criminal Justice Services in conjunction with the Women’s Centre.

The approach involved Karen at all stages and eventually she was able to accept the service and build relationships with all involved after having been extremely resistant to any authority and very mistrusting of services. The regular reviews at Court became an important part of the process and she began to make eye contact and eventually have a conversation with the Sheriff. This approach included the supervision of the Community Payback Order which was reviewed at the Problem Solving Court. Her mother was involved and was supportive of the approach which encouraged Karen to engage with the service. She herself struggled to manage her own mental health and found it difficult to cope with the constant police contact and court appearances.

By the end of the Problem Solving approach, Karen had managed to secure part time employment and was in a relationship. She completed the CPO and the PSA and was admonished on all the charges.

She has not come to the attention of the Courts since the completion of the PSA 28 months ago and now has her own family.

<p>What makes this work?</p> <p>The problem-solving approach works because all partners share a clarity of purpose and a commitment to making it work: are clear about their roles and responsibilities; have clear processes and practices in place; and, most importantly, they talk to each other.</p> <p>There is a commitment from all services and the belief that people can change with the right supports at the right time. In addition, support from management to allow the service to be creative and take risks that will be supported.</p>
<p>Challenges and Barriers</p> <p>Setting up of the approach and deciding the criteria along with securing appropriate funding to allow it to continue; accessing Mental Health Services; Housing and Employment; support from outside agencies.</p>
<p>How could this be improved further?</p> <p>Identifying individuals at an earlier stage and being able to access mental health services and appropriate accommodation.</p>
<p>What has been learnt?</p> <p>Relationships are a vital component at all levels. Persistence is a key factor and assertive outreach is important to sustain the approach and assist in building relationships. The focus needs to be on the person and not the offence and programmes need to be tailored to the individual.</p>
<p>Further Information</p> <p>Review of the Aberdeen Problem Solving Approach;</p> <p>Commission on Women Offenders Final Report.</p>

Case Study

9. STOP (Sacro Tackling Offending Prejudices)

Kate Ritchie (SACRO)

Background

STOP (Sacro Tackling Offending Prejudices) effectively tackles all low to moderate levels of Sectarian and Hate Crime offending by addressing the root cause of discrimination whilst challenging the attitudes and behaviours that may contribute to the offending.

The service provides bespoke CBT (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy) educational programmes focused on behavioural and attitudinal change, for first time/low to moderate level offenders who are assessed as appropriate for either the six or four module programme; these can be completed within a small group environment or on a one-to-one basis. Each programme delivery is tailored to meet the needs of the service user/and can also assist with those at risk of radicalisation. STOP can also be utilised as a preventative service where there are genuine Hate Crime behavioural concerns.

The bespoke programme that the STOP service utilises was written by Tim Chapman (LIB Hons) to tackle Sectarianism in Scotland and has been adapted to cover all Hate Crime protected characteristics using the same structure and Cognitive Behavioural Intervention techniques. The programmes support the individual to understand why they behave in a specific way and to take ownership of their attitude and behaviours to ensure positive changes so as not to commit any further Hate Crimes.

The STOP team are based in Motherwell and are currently funded by the Scottish Government to work Pan Lanarkshire (North and South), Glasgow, and East Dunbartonshire.

Referrals can be processed as a Preventative Measure, Diversion from Prosecution (DfP), as part of a Structured Deferred Sentence (SDS) and also as a Post Prosecution measure. The programme takes approximately six to eight weeks for completion.

STOP can accept referrals from Procurator Fiscals (PF's), Community Payback Services (CPS), Social Work, Sheriffs, EEI/Whole System teams, Children's Hearing/Reporters, Police Scotland, British Transport Police, Scottish Prison Service

Staff, Education Services, Solicitors, Third Sector Organisations, Housing Providers, Football Clubs and Self Referrals.

STOP can accept referrals for service users from the age of 12 years.

STOP can also respond to the needs of victims (Person Harmed - PH) to increase confidence and access to the Criminal Justice System by (where suitable) establishing the participation and representation of PHs through Restorative Justice (RJ) interventions. RJ allows Persons Harmed by the offence to be involved in dialogue around impact of the offenders' attitudes and behaviours.

STOP will update the referrer accordingly regarding the engagement levels of the service user and a completion report is compiled by the allocated Criminal Justice Worker for the referrer.

Example of Good Practice

Jordan (18 years old) was referred for sectarian behaviour on two counts; social media posts and prohibited flag flying at football. He had been charged under the Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications (Scotland) Act 2012, Section 1(1). The social media and football related behaviours were linked with the same item being posted as well as flown.

Jordan had no previous charges and was referred as a DfP service for youths; evidence for the case had been collated by FoCUS and Police Scotland. He lived in an area of Glasgow that is well known for sectarian views amongst the residents. Jordan genuinely thought his behaviour was normal and not illegal. He was really worried the impact that the charge would have on prospects for education and work.

Jordan was very willing to work with STOP and half way through the programme successfully gained employment over the Christmas period and is still in that employment today. Jordan demonstrated a real lack of awareness of the full wide reaching impact of his behaviours and was very shocked and humbled by the potential direct and indirect consequences of his behaviours. He successfully demonstrated real changes to behaviour and attitudes, as well as expressing genuine feelings of never getting involved in the Criminal Justice System ever again. Throughout the programme, Jordan had not been banned from attending football matches but explored all the aspects of non-offensive behaviour at football games including competitiveness as opposed to hatred, and researching to understand the history and meanings of flags and symbols, banter, and song lyrics. This linked in well with appropriate social media posting and involvement/association. Jordan successfully completed the programme.

Benefits and Impact

STOP are continually increasing the number of rehabilitative options open to the Procurator Fiscal, Scottish Courts, Youth Justice and Criminal Justice services in Scotland to address Sectarian and Hate Crime offences.

STOP has worked with individuals charged with Sectarianism and Hate Crime offences in order to positively challenge and change prejudicial attitudes and behaviours, reducing the re/occurrence of Hate Crime offences. These messages of inclusion and cohesion are filtered through service user's families, friends and communities, increasing the safety and participation of victimised groups. The utilisation of all STOP programmes will increase awareness and understanding of the definition and recognition of prejudice, Sectarianism and all other Hate Crimes in the hope of preventing further Sectarian and Hate Crimes being committed, increasing understanding of the effects of discrimination, while promoting a united response to challenging the philosophy of "It's none of my business." This places responsibility on individuals and communities to safe guard each other and report/challenge any prejudicial behaviour.

The benefits of the service and programme are immense, as it provides a real educational option for young people and first time offenders who would otherwise be criminalised, to analyse and address their attitudes and behaviours, in turn making communities (particularly those that are marginalized) safer, and creating more responsible citizens.

During the delivery of the STOP programme staff have been able to increase informed understanding of approaches to dealing with offending behaviour arising from discriminatory attitudes via efficient and effective communication with key stakeholders and gatekeepers.

The utilisation of all STOP programmes will increase awareness and understanding of the definition and recognition of prejudice, Sectarianism and all other Hate Crimes, thus embracing the need for a united and active response to the reporting of Hate Crime offences, which will increase the visibility of these offences and the impact on the necessary reporting of such.

STOP has continued to evolve our one day awareness raising group work sessions to HMP and HMYOI establishments in the hope of preventing further Sectarian and Hate Crimes being committed, increasing understanding of the effects of discrimination, while promoting a united response to challenging the philosophy of "It's none of my business." placing the responsibilities on individuals and communities to safe guard each other and report/challenge any prejudicial behaviour. The programme also incorporated a discussion in relation to the Hate Crime consultation process that was taking place in Scotland and the possible implication that the current five protected characteristics could realistically be seven soon.

STOP acknowledges that the delivery of Sectarian and Hate Crime programmes as part of Other Activities within CPS and within HMP/HMYOI has the potential to be a

very valuable tool to assist with increasing awareness and reducing the potential of Hate Crime offending for a population already involved with the criminal justice system.

Our service aims to enhance community living and promote a society where any form of prejudice, discrimination and offending because of affiliation or membership with religion, race, colour, creed, ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation, gender presentation or disability is eliminated. Only once these skills and competencies are established within the minority group of Sectarian and Hate Crime offenders within our communities can we begin to eradicate Sectarianism and Hate Crime behaviours in Scotland.

All programmes encompass a cognitive behavioural coaching model combining Motivational Interviewing Techniques with Change Talk to encourage and support the individual to identify their attitudes and behaviours as unacceptable, dangerous and illegal.

The programmes empower the service user to understand why they behave in a specific way and why they need to take ownership of their attitudes and behaviours to increase the likelihood of positive changes. These messages are embraced by those participating in the programme and filtered through their own social contacts and networks, allowing for the programme messages to have a wider reach. STOP has continued to provide, develop, advertise and monitor our Social Media Sectarian and Hate Crime Facebook page for hard to reach communities. This is a national safe and secure place where anyone can access information, guidance or support on Sectarian and Hate Crime issues/rights.

What makes this work?

Scottish Government funding and investment in the service, good partnership working and knowledge of the service with all potential referrers. Committed, passionate and dedicated STOP staff utilising a bespoke CBT programme that is flexible enough to be tailored to the needs of the service user. Preservation of the validity of the programme and expansion of the programme to meet the needs of service users in a variety of communities.

Challenges and Barriers

STOP has been unable to take action in directly responding to the needs of persons harmed this year (Restorative Justice). This may well have a damaging effect to the confidence and presence of those with protected characteristics who wanted to have a voice in relation to being offended against. The need to feel valued and to co-operate within the current criminal justice system for these persons harmed has not been possible this year largely due to new GDPR laws.

The fact that the STOP service is not available nationally is another potential barrier for the allocation of PF's referrals as our financial income confines us in relation to areas that we can cover. The areas that we do currently operate in encompasses over 37% of all Scotland's Hate Crime (2018-2019).

Although STOP was funded with the same amount of money as last year, once again this meant that we could no longer sustain the staffing structure at a comparable level.

How could this be improved further?

The vision is that Sacro STOP becomes a National Service embedded in the Criminal/Community Justice System and that the Restorative Justice process is available for all persons harmed by Hate Crime.

What has been learnt?

The STOP service Hate Crime programmes were developed from the bespoke programme to tackle Sectarianism as some service users presented with more than one Hate Crime issue and it was important that the service addressed all of the presenting Hate Crime issues to prevent any further Hate Crime offending by the service user.

Communications with PF's is vital to ensure that the hub markers are aware of the STOP service and the areas in which we operate.

Although the existence of STOP is communicated and discussed at a senior level with all potential referral services it is important that discussions also take place with staff on the ground level as these are the case holders/front line workers and our potential referrers.

The majority of service users who are referred to the service willingly engage with and successfully complete the programme.

In order for STOP to exist it is imperative that DfP and educational rehabilitative services like STOP are funded appropriately and consistently to effectively and efficiently assist with both Criminal/Community Justice Reforms in Scotland.

STOP requires to be independently evaluated.

Further Information

<https://www.sacro.org.uk/services/criminal-justice/stop-anti-sectarianism-hate-crime-services>