



Annual Report
April 2021 to March 2022
CYCJ



Image by Tammy Henderson

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Overview

The Children and Young People's Centre for Justice (CYCJ) has achieved another excellent year, publishing ground-breaking research, hosting well received events and training sessions, and continuing to support practitioners, the youth justice workforce and the Scottish Government Vision and Action Plan.

Highlights include hosting the first ever online National Youth Justice Conference to positive acclaim; designing and launching 'Reimagining Justice' to build rights-respecting systems; meeting with the Minister for Children and Young People; undertaking award winning 'socially just' research; and launching a new Postgraduate Certificate on Children and Young People in Conflict with the Law.

Above all, CYCJ has continued to strive to meet the needs of the Scottish youth justice workforce and children, young people, families and communities.

Impact and Outreach

Local Authority Reach

CYCJ continues to support local authorities to develop their practice, receiving and responding to over 700 requests made by practitioners, managers and policy makers during this period. This has included providing case specific support; facilitating meetings between youth and adult justice services to improve communication and transitions between services; and supporting EEI, diversion, secure care, restorative justice and risk management procedures and practice. We have also supported National Youth Justice Advisory Group (NYJAG), NYJAG Executive and WSA Lead meetings.

Building rights-respecting services for all

Our 2019 [evaluation](#) included stakeholder requests for further support from CYCJ with service design and delivery. In response to this - and recent changes in Scotland that will impact on children and young people's rights, such as The Promise and UNCRC incorporation - in November we launched '[Reimagining Justice with Children and Young People: Building Rights Respecting Services Together](#)'. This innovative service design approach, open to all local authorities and organisations, aims to build rights-respecting services for, and with, children and young people in conflict with the law, by placing service users at the heart of the design process.

Informing youth justice legislation and policy

CYCJ has given support to the Scottish Government as they develop Scotland's Youth Justice Vision and action plan and revised Youth Justice Standards (published in June 2021). This has included the work of our partnership project, Youth Justice Voices, who consulted young people on their views about the vision, as well as support from CYCJ's Director and practice development team.

In September, Fiona Dyer attended a roundtable session of the Criminal Justice Committee to contribute evidence on policy ideas to reduce youth offending, offer community justice solutions and provide alternatives to custody. The team has also responded to Scottish Government consultations on legislation and policy including poverty, the National Care Service, and Bail and Release.

CYCJ has been helping to improve participation of and support for child victims in justice processes, through exploring information and services currently provided to child victims; linking to the work of the 16/17 cross systems group and the ACR victims subgroup; and engaging with key stakeholders.

Ministerial visits

Members of CYCJ met with Scotland's Minister for Children and Young People, Ms Clare Haughey, in October. Ms Haughey also met with Professor Sandy Cameron (Chair of CYCJ's Executive Governance Group), Professor Ian Rivers (Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at Strathclyde University) and Beth-Anne Logan (Chair of STARR). She then joined members of Youth Justice Voices, who asked about her priorities for care and justice experienced young people.

CYCJ Associates

During this period we welcomed Irina Beaton, former director of the Scottish Child Law Centre, as an Associate. Stuart Allardyce and Dr Johanne Miller both delivered well received CYCJ webinars, and we have been collaborating on research with Dr Anthony Charles.

Practice guidance

CYCJ's [guide to youth justice practice, policy and legislation](#), aimed at practitioners and managers who work with children and young people who offend or who are at risk of offending, was revised for 2021 and published in June. A new section was included on participation, reflecting a growing interest in this area.

Making an impact beyond Scotland

CYCJ has continued to forge links and strengthen existing relationships within the UK and beyond.

Ross Gibson linked with the Estonian Government on Scotland's secure care work, and contributed to four nations work on secure care research. Donna McEwan delivered an input on Youth Justice in Scotland and participation to the John Smith Trust, and at the Great Britain China Centre as part of the UK and Ireland Symposium on Social Work in Youth Justice. Youth Just Us has been working with Leaders Unlocked, Young Justice Advisors in England to prepare for a summer knowledge exchange with young people in Scotland.

CYCJ is undertaking Age of Criminal Responsibility Country Research with the ACR Data and Research subgroup, chaired by Fiona Dyer, and Fern Gillon had her article on 'Children's rights in children's hearings: the impact of Covid-19' published in the International Journal for Children's Rights (Porter & Gillon). CYCJ is also a member of the Child Friendly Justice European Network.

Youth Justice Partnerships and Forums

Inclusion as Prevention

Along with Action for Children, South Lanarkshire Council and the Dartington Service Design Lab, CYCJ is a partner on the 'Inclusion as Prevention' project, funded by the National Lottery Community Early Action System Change Fund. The project, which is now halfway through its five year span, has been working with the local community (initially in Rutherglen and Cambuslang) to share its aims and arrange opportunities for people to find out more and get involved. IAP undertakes various 'tests of change', based on an improvement methodology. Themes have included exploring loss, grief and bereavement, healthy eating and lifestyles, and creating opportunities for marginalised young people to play football in their community. IAP introduced a [new website](#) in June, which CYCJ led on the development and creation of.

CYCJ's Kristina Moodie has been providing support as the projects' embedded evaluator, undertaking evaluation and measuring impact as it progresses.



Youth Justice Implementation Groups

Implementation groups have been set up to support the Youth Justice Improvement Board (YJIB) in progressing the ambitions of the Youth Justice Vision and Action Plan, which are project managed by CYCJ.

The Children's Rights Implementation Group (CRIG) aims to identify human rights issues that impact upon children and young people in conflict with the law. CRIG includes two working groups, focusing on Participation of children and young people in conflict with the law, and the Speech Language and Communication Needs of children in justice systems. The CRIG is co-chaired by Fiona Dyer.

Advancing the Whole System Approach Implementation Group is identifying areas of focus, including progressing Scotland's Approach to Children in Conflict with the Law: Vision & Priorities and associated action plan. Two subgroups are part of this. The first focusses on alternatives to secure care and custody, seeking out good practice examples from across Scotland to develop our understanding of what this work looks like, recognising themes and principles that could be promoted to reduce the use of secure care and custody, safely scaffolding children and their support networks in the community. The second subgroup focuses on EEI in greater detail, ensuring this is rights-respecting, promoting children and family involvement throughout, and supporting consistency of approach and embedding nationally.

Forums

The CYCJ managed Forums have met with regularity during the year, with a mixture of online and in person meetings. They provide a safe and informal space in which to discuss practice and ideas.

Early and Effective Practitioners Forum

The EEI forum provides a platform for all those involved in EEI to express their views and influence areas of work, identify issues and contribute to the resolution of these issues. This has included discussing the GIRFEC consultation; inviting discussion on the Age of Criminal Responsibility Act implementation from Jim Devoy (Police Scotland) and Sharon Glasgow (Social Work Advisor for the Scottish Government's ACR team); and hearing about the Police Pitchin' In Programme, which uses football as a way of engaging with children and young people to develop understanding of different ways in which hate crime and discrimination affect people, and to reflect on their experiences, attitudes and behaviours. The forum members are supporting the work of the National WSA Implementation Group by participating in a mapping and scoping exercise of local EEI practice and processes.

Risk Formulation Forum

The Risk Formulation Forum has continued to support practitioners with the assessment and formulation of individuals, as well as providing support with wider issues in relation to local systems and processes. This has included discussion around how to continue supporting children through a child-focused lens when they are involved in court proceedings and the adult criminal justice system; and practice in relation to high risk behaviours and good peer support around understanding the drivers to these behaviours, and how to support their reduction.

Diversion from Prosecution Forum

This forum discusses diversion related issues and topics, featuring inputs from Disclosure Scotland on changes to how the legal system responds to Class A drugs possession; the HALT and ROSA projects on support that they offer to children who have been accused of causing sexual harm; and the joint thematic inspection team who are looking into diversion from prosecution.

Secure Care Practitioners' Forum

Formed in March 2022, this forum provides a safe space for secure care practitioners to share experiences, practice issues, and specialist input. A multi-disciplinary national approach to secure care practice offers practitioners the opportunity to learn from partner agencies, and develop innovative practice that is evidence based.

Events and training

CYCJ's Postgraduate Certificate on Children & Young People in Conflict with the Law, in conjunction with the University of Strathclyde, welcomed its first cohort of students. This fully online part-time course gives learners the chance to grow knowledge, skills and continued professional development whilst maintaining professional and personal commitments. It was developed based on feedback from those who asked for further training, and the growing need for a workforce that is trained to understand children's rights. Dr Paul Rigby (University of Stirling) joined as external examiner in February 2021.

In June 2021, after a break due to the pandemic, we hosted the National Youth Justice Conference, which was fully online for the first time. This was well received, with almost 1,000 people signing up to hear speakers on the theme of children's rights and justice.

CYCJ's webinar series has continued to be well attended and received, with a wide variety of topics including Stuart Allardyce on technology assisted harmful sexual behaviour amongst children and young people; Dr Johanne Miller sharing young people's narratives and experiences of justice; Tim Chapman on children's rights in restorative justice; Dr Sean Creaney and Dr Samantha Burns on barriers to participation and co-production in youth justice; what The Promise means for children in conflict with the law; a joint webinar with the Scottish Sentencing Council on Scotland's first sentencing guidelines for young people; Jim Devoy and Sharon Glasgow sharing what the police and social work are doing to implement the Age of Criminal Responsibility (Scotland) Bill; and Professor Laura Lundy discussing the Lundy Model and children's participation in justice processes.

To mark the tenth anniversary since it was first aired, together with the Violence Reduction Unit we hosted a screening of 'Warriors: revisiting the Boys of Ballikinkrain', followed by a Q&A session with the film's director Stephen Bennett and panellists. Former CYCJ director Claire Lightowler delivered the 2022 Kilbrandon Lecture on why we must take a rights-respecting approach for children who offend, sharing CYCJ's progress in this.

Roadshows have been delivered across Scotland, on the Secure Care Pathway and Standards, diversion and participation. The team has also delivered online START:AV, SAVRY and FRAME training, and CARM 'train the trainers', to practitioners.

CYCJ is supporting a fully funded PhD studentship in Law, offered by the Institute for Inspiring Children's Futures. The PhD will have a strong focus on a child friendly justice system, and is part funded and supervised by CYCJ. The application process closed in April 2022, with the successful candidate hopefully commencing studies in Autumn.

The team has also delivered lectures and seminars to social work and criminology students across Scotland, and presentations at various conferences and events.

Participation and Engagement

At CYCJ, we know that many children and young people with experience of the justice systems have a desire to express their views, to be listened to and to be heard. To demonstrate our recognition of this and ensure this is embedded in everything we do, we produced our first Participation and Engagement Strategy, together with young people who have lived experience of the systems. The response has been very positive, leading to requests for CYCJ to support stakeholder organisations in undertaking similar steps.

Part of this commitment was to create a space where people of all ages and experiences can access and understand the justice system. The result was 'Just the Right Space', a new website that aims to help children and young people, and those supporting them, better understand and navigate the justice system. It includes resources, links to further support and experiences. We worked with young people right from the beginning of this process, and are extremely grateful for their ideas and wisdom.

Youth Justice Voices

CYCJ and Staf's collaborative participation project has gone from strength to strength this year. Funded in its first three years by the Life Changes Trust, in early 2022 Youth Justice Voices was awarded funding from The National Lottery Community Fund and The Promise Partnership Good Childhood Fund to continue its journey. This has given the project a renewed determination to amplify the voices of justice and care experienced young people, creating excitement for the future.

Youth Just Us

The project is led by the Youth Just Us steering group. Highlights have included:

- Co-producing CYCJ's accessible website: 'Just the Right Space'
- Contributing to 'Representing care experienced children & young people in police custody: A good practice guide'
- Recording podcasts on co-producing with No Knives Better Lives on the Nae Danger game Youth Just Us helped to develop, Community Learning and Development Podcast, and Just Humans.
- Delivering talks and workshops at the National Youth Justice Conference, Life Changes Trust 'Voice and Vision' and 'A socially just approach to justice' events, the 2021 World Congress on Justice with Children, and Transforming Scotland's Justice System conference
- Participating in a workshop with Children 1st on the role of the Safeguarder in the Children's Hearing System; and presenting with CYCJ to the John Smith Foundation Juvenile Justice Working Group.
- Responding to (and influencing) Dr Claire Lightowler's 2022 Kilbrandon Lecture on 'A rights-respecting approach for children who offend'

Youth Just Us have also been working closely with Police Scotland. The group partnered with the Children and Young People's Team to highlight the current issues and solutions that care and justice experienced young people want to change in their interactions with the police. Workshops were a success, with positive feedback from the team. In addition, the group gave advice to the British Transport Police on ways to positively engage with young people on public transport.

Inside Out

Inside Out (supported by Youth Justice Voices and Barnardo's Scotland: Outside In HMP&YOI Polmont) works with care experienced young boys and men in Polmont to amplify their voices and bring about system, policy and practice change. The project focuses on driving change and promoting rights-based issues for those in Polmont.

In a short space of time, the group has produced a newsletter for the young people in Polmont, worked with Youth Just Us to contribute to course content for CYCJ's Postgraduate Certificate on Children and Young People in Conflict with the Law, and produced a response to the Scottish Government's Bail, Remand and Release Consultation. Inside Out are now focusing on creating accessible information and guidance, based on their own experiences to help others. Inside Out also creates opportunities to enjoy the social aspect of the project, with regular games and team building activities taking place.

STARR

This has been an exciting period for STARR, Scotland's only curated space for secure care experienced children, young people and adults. STARR is a space for people of all ages with lived experience to come together, spend time with peers and friends, and share ideas of how to improve the journey before, during and after secure care. CYCJ provides support through communications and guidance. STARR's profile has continued to rise as members engage in consultations, provide input at events and support key stakeholders to develop information leaflets and policies informed by lived experience.

The group launched their online space at the Secure Care Pathway and Standards event on October 5. They also shared their Vision and joined Twitter @STARR_Secure.

In March 2022 STARR were nominated for a Sunday Mail Young Scot Award under the Community category. They have also been approached by the Care Inspectorate to engage in their appreciative enquiry of the application of the Pathway and Standards for those in, or on the edges, of secure care.



Co-producing rights-based WSA guidance

To help understanding of how we can support children in conflict with the law to understand their legal rights following the UNCRC incorporation, CYCJ joined forces with with Staf and Youth Justice Voices to co-produce a resource with children and young people. Participation workers Dale, Jason and Marie have been working hard on this guidance, which is now complete and awaiting approval.

Bairns' Hoose

CYCJ was awarded funding to work with children and young people in creating a set of standards for Scotland's Bairns' Hoose model. This involved recruiting and working with 16 to 25 year olds who have been witnesses or victims to abuse or violence to share their views and shape the Bairns' Hoose draft standards.

National Leadership Network

The National Leadership Network, which will be led and directed by young people and individuals with care experience to support others to become leaders, launched in early 2022. CYCJ is a partner host of this Life Changes Trust legacy project, alongside Staf, Who Cares? Scotland, Columba 1400, and the Resilience Learning Partnership.

Participation Intern

A young person with lived experience of the care and justice systems joined us as CYCJ's first participation intern as part of their Community Education degree. The focus of this placement was to create and manage a survey for children and young people to share their views on GIRFEC (Getting It Right For Every Child), lead development sessions for Just the Right Space, support the work of Youth Just Us, and generally contribute to CYCJ's participation agenda, which they did with much enthusiasm.

Knowledge Exchange

There was a total of 52,850 user sessions during April 2021 to March 2022, compared to 36,869 sessions during April 2020 to March 2021 - a substantial increase that indicates a healthy growth in user traffic. The top five user countries were: UK (39,698); USA (3,339); Netherlands (1,419); Finland (1,309); Austria (672). Stats indicate that an increasing number of users are accessing the site from educational settings (via Glow platforms).

Our social media presence has never been stronger. Twitter remains our dominant account, with 7,870 followers compared to 7,230 at this stage the previous year. The CYCJ Facebook page has over 1,400 likes, compared to 1,000 the previous year. Additionally, we created an account on Instagram, which currently has 560 followers and a growing amount of interaction.

CYCJ has featured in the media on several occasions, with positive and expert comment coverage. This has included alternatives to custody (BBC Scotland); impact of young persons' sentencing guideline (Sunday Post); and very young children being detained in care homes (Sunday National/Ferrit).

Research and Resources

2021

April

In response to difficulties around monitoring and accessing data on children and young people in conflict with the law, CYCJ published a [new paper](#) that collates the official statistics in Scotland that are known to us. It documents what data exists, where and when it is published, as well as providing the available data for the past five years.

Fifty years on from the first Children's Hearing was held in Scotland, Fiona Dyer [blogged](#) for the Children's Hearings System about why the hearings system was developed, and how today's Panel Members can ensure they are safeguarding children's rights in the justice system. We also published an [Information Sheet](#) sharing practical tips on how to develop participative practice in the workplace. Written by Youth Justice Voices' Ruth Kerracher, it gives first-hand advice from members of STARR, Youth Just Us and individuals.

May

'[ACEs, Distance and Sources of Resilience](#)' shares full findings from this census, which measured the prevalence of a range of life experiences encountered by children within secure care on one particular day in 2019. Bruce Adamson, Children and Young People's Commissioner, praised the report as "an important reminder of how much more there is to do".

We published our first [Participation and Engagement Strategy](#), reflecting our commitment to putting children and young people at the heart of what we do. This was [developed](#) in conjunction with young people. We also responded to [research](#) by the Expert Group on Preventing Sexual Offending, which found that when children who display Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB) are examined in detail, there is evidence of neglect and abuse. Our [corresponding report](#) examined the childhood experiences of children referred to the Interventions for Vulnerable Youth (IVY) project who are displaying HSB.

June

CYJ supported and promoted the publication of 'The Rights-Respecting Approach to Justice for Children and Young People – Scotland's Vision and Priorities 2021' published by the Scottish Government. This five year vision builds on conclusions and findings from CYJ's 'Rights Respecting? Scotland's approach to children in conflict with the law' paper, published in 2020 by Claire Lightowler. It also focuses on The Promise's key findings and calls to action on avoiding and stopping the criminalisation of care experienced children, and how Scotland can meet the UNCRC obligations for children in conflict with the law, or who are at risk of being so.

Alongside this we shared supporting resources on our website. Children in conflict with the law: An intervention planning approach outlines an intervention planning approach to reducing harm and improving outcomes for children whose harmful behaviour has brought, or may bring, them into conflict with the law. And Scotland's EEI – Framework of Core Elements; and the Framework for Risk Assessment Management and Evaluation (FRAME) with children aged 12-17 was updated for 2021.

This month's Information Sheet, written by Police Scotland, gave an overview of Direct Measures and Recorded Police Warnings and what practitioners should be aware of.

July

CYJ collaborated with the Scottish Child Law Centre to produce Representing care experienced children & young people in police custody: A good practice guide, aimed at solicitors, practitioners and children and young people. Key issues and recommendations are explored in a report based on a paper by the Howard League for Penal Reform and the Youth Justice Legal Centre (part of Just for Kids Law) with quotes by Youth Just Us and Scottish solicitors. A summary of Good Practice Principles for solicitors, an Information Sheet for practitioners and a flyer for children and young people, who may not know their rights in custody, all provide practical advice and information. The guide was formally launched at an event in August.

As part of our commitment to making resources accessible to a wider audience, we have adapted our Use and impact of bail and remand with children in Scotland report for a younger audience. Access it here. This is accompanied by a short animation that aims to give children and young people a better understanding of the issues and emotions involved - and who they can reach out to for support.

Together with Scottish Transitions Forum and SOLD Network, we co-produced a supplement to Scotland's framework for children and young people aged 14-25 with additional support needs, who are making the transition to young adult life. 'Children and young people in conflict with the law' is a supplement to the Scottish Transitions Forum's Principles of Good Transitions 3.

As more organisations turn to people with lived experience, Shumela Ahmed (Resilience Learning Partnership) blogged about how we must ensure that we are suitably compensating them for their time and effort. And CYJ's Research Lead Nina Vaswani had a chapter published in the Palgrave International Handbook of Youth Imprisonment, calling for a greater focus on trauma and masculinity in prison settings.



August

Inclusion as Prevention, our partnership project that's aiming to shift and reshape the design and delivery of preventative services for children and young people involved in offending, published a [blog](#) calling for collaboration in sharing its learning so far.

September

In line with changes in the youth justice landscape, the time was right to refresh 'Youth and Criminal Justice in Scotland: the Young Person's Journey', our interactive resource with Iriss that guides children, families and professionals through the justice system. As well as a new name, '[The child's journey: A guide to the Scottish justice system](#)' has been updated with new sections added.

With September being FASD Awareness month, we shared an Information Sheet written by the FASD Hub Scotland about supporting young people with FASD who are in conflict with the law. We also updated our [Information Sheet](#) on routes to secure care, to reflect recent changes to legislation.

October

Together with [joint guidance](#) with the Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland team for children in custody, on the rights they are entitled to and how to make sure these are met. We are grateful to the young people in HMP&YOI Polmont, who helped write and review this as part of Youth Justice Voice's Inside Out group.

This was published alongside Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons for Scotland (HMIPs) pre-inspection [survey](#), which aimed to understand the experiences, health and wellbeing of young people in prison. The survey, developed together with CYCJ and the Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland, found that the majority of children in custody had experienced high levels of loss, separation and disruption, and that not all of their needs were being met. An [accessible version](#) is also available.

November

'Hurt people, hurt people', a [blog](#) by newly appointed EGG member Iain Corbett, considers the impact of trauma on causing harm, based on Iain's own experiences. This month's [Information Sheet](#) focused on the Appropriate Adult, a role that provides communication support to vulnerable adults in the justice system.

December

'[Children who have been deprived of their liberty: Learning from their journeys](#)' compiles information from three case studies where children had been deprived of their liberty, which CYCJ gave support to. It provides a summary of this information to stimulate wider professional reflection.

2022

January

We published our [child friendly guide](#) to the Scottish Government's updated Youth Justice Standards which set out an understanding of what's expected at each stage of a child's journey through the justice system. 'How good your care and support should be: Standards for people working with children in conflict with the law' was co-produced with Hannah Snow and pupils from The Robert Burns Academy in Cumnock.

The Scottish Government funded Glasgow City Council to develop and trial digital approaches to criminal justice provision during the pandemic, who subsequently commissioned CYCJ to undertake an evaluation of this work. This [report](#) by Nina Vaswani and Aaron Brown shares findings from interviews with service providers and users at Street Cones, Nemo Arts and Sacro, helping to document and understand contexts, needs, experiences, and outcomes.

Ruby Whitelaw - newly appointed as Practice Development Advisor leading on secure care - shared [her thoughts](#) on 'taking a leap of faith' in a new role.

February

We shared the [results](#) of our recent stakeholder survey, which consulted practitioners; children and young people; parents and carers; and communities (via community councils) for their views on justice and children. Practitioners shared concerns about a lack of resources and inadequate funding for services; children and young people said offending was an issue in their community, and they feel safer in their communities during the day than they do at school; parents and carers described their experience of the justice system as 'shocking and frightening'; and community council members told us the biggest issue facing their community was antisocial behaviour - along with a lack of facilities and things to do.

For Cyber Scotland Week, we published a [guest blog](#) by the Scottish Social Services Council with advice and tips for staying safe online. And Hannah Snow [shared](#) how she's working on healing herself so that she can help others.

March

CYCJ's '[Co-designing Socially Just Justice for Young Adults in Conflict with the Law](#)' project, received an RSE Research Network Grant. Supported by academics at the University of Dundee, University of Strathclyde and the Glasgow School of Art, 'Socially Just Justice' is the first study of its kind to use design-led methods to co-produce solutions to issues young adults identify as priority targets for change.

Following the launch of the Scottish Government's Child Poverty Delivery Plan, Maureen Roberts responded with a [blog](#) reflecting on the impact of poverty, and why now is the time to invest in our most deprived communities to break the links between childhood offending and poverty in adulthood. St Mary's Kenmure [blogged](#) about how they used Professor Laura Lundy's webinar as an opportunity to raise awareness of participation amongst the workforce.



Secure Care

CYCJ has continued to effectively support Scotland's secure care work through involvement with Scotland's Secure Care Group (and related transport subgroup), secure care centres, and partners to ensure the country's secure care provision meets the aims and vision of [The Promise Scotland](#). Secure care lead Debbie Nolan left in late 2021 to undertake a secondment with the Scottish Government's Care and Justice Bill team, with Ruby Whitelaw taking up this role.

Secure Care Pathway and Standards Scotland

Since the [Secure Care Pathway and Standards Scotland](#) launched in October 2020, CYCJ has been supporting and leading on the implementation. This has included dissemination of the Standards through workshops and conference input, provision of spaces to share experiences and capturing of good practice; and supporting and helping to grow the Standards Champions Group, as well as attending secure care related groups and forums.

We have captured learning about the journey of implementation and the impact of the Standards through a range of mediums, including events, blogs, Information Sheets, case studies and maintenance of the [dedicated website](#). CYCJ's secure care lead has also undertaken the development and implementation of evaluation, monitoring and accountability processes for the Standards and a report reflecting the journey so far will be completed at the end of the summer in 2022.

One year on from the launch of the Standards, we hosted an [open event](#), to showcase how the Standards are transforming the secure care journey in Scotland. Speakers from the Scottish Government, CYCJ and local authorities discussed why the Standards matter, the journey so far and experiences of implementation.

We also hosted a [webinar](#) in December with The Promise team exploring what Keeping the Promise means for children in conflict with the law and how well we are doing this. Speakers included Brian Houston, the newly appointed Head of Support at The Promise Scotland; Ross Gibson, Practice Development Advisor at CYCJ; and David Orr, Social Work Team Leader at Edinburgh City Council and representing the Scottish Association of Social Workers.

Secure Care census

Published in May 2021, ['ACEs, Distance and Sources of Resilience'](#) shared full findings from this census, which measured the prevalence of a range of life experiences encountered by children resident within secure care on one particular day in 2019. It complements the ['ACEs, Places and Status: Results from the 2018 Scottish Secure Care Census'](#).

Secure Care Practitioners' Forum

CYCJ hosted the first Secure Care Practitioners' Forum on March 31. This provides secure care practitioners with a safe space to meet and share good experiences, practice issues and receive specialist input.



Restorative Justice

CYCJ has continued to work with Community Justice Scotland to deliver the Scottish Government's Restorative Justice (RJ) Action Plan 2019-2023. CYCJ's RJ Coordinator Yvette O'Donnell is leading on this, ensuring the rights and needs of children and young people are considered and met throughout this process.

In May 2021, we shared a survey seeking the views of children and young people in order to shape the future of restorative justice, giving them the chance to voice how the process may look and feel moving forward. The survey also gathered views on a short animation developed with Community Justice Scotland, explaining what restorative justice is and how it works.

CYCJ was commissioned by the Scottish Government to conduct research with children, young people and families to explore their awareness, understanding and attitudes to restorative justice. Findings were shared in a January 2021 report by researchers Nina Vaswani and Aaron Brown, including children's understandings of harm, the awareness and acceptability of Restorative Justice, and key messages about the implementation and delivery of Restorative Justice in Scotland. To ensure this research is accessible to a younger audience, a child-friendly version was also made available.

CYCJ is part of the Restorative Justice Project Group, which has been working on developing a code of practice for restorative justice, including a specific code for children. We contributed to a proposal to carry out restorative justice related awareness events that will invite local communities to learn about and discuss this in a Scottish context.

Governance and People

In April, we bid farewell to Claire Lightowler who stepped down as Director of CYCJ after seven years. Claire made a huge impact during her time in the role, most notably with her 2020 report 'Rights Respecting? Scotland's response to children in conflict with the law' which informed the Scottish Government's Youth Justice vision and priorities and is still inspiring important conversations and actions around children's rights in the justice system. After stepping up in an interim capacity, Fiona Dyer was appointed as Director in November.

During this period, we welcomed Dr Aaron Brown as Research Associate, Yvette O'Donnell as RJ Coordinator (maternity leave cover), Maureen Roberts as Practice Development Advisor with a focus on CYCJ's Postgraduate Certificate and Julia Swann as Participation Worker. Ruby Whitelaw joined us to take on the role of Practice Development Advisor for Secure Care, following Debbie Nolan's secondment to work on the Scottish Government's Children's Care and Justice Bill team in November. We also employed several young people with justice related experience to offer their advice and expertise to different areas of our work.

As part of our aim to ensure participation is represented in everything we do, we welcomed Scott McMillan and Iain Corbett as members of our Executive Governance Group (EGG), who both bring a wealth of lived experience and knowledge to the role. Kathryn Lindsay (Chief Social Work Officer at Angus Council) also joined the EGG during this period. Additionally, we have a wealth of experience on the EGG, including representatives from SCRA, COPFS, third sector, and Strathclyde University. We are grateful to the EGG for the support and guidance they give to CYCJ.