

ANNUAL REPORT



Children and Young People's
Centre for Justice



2022-2023

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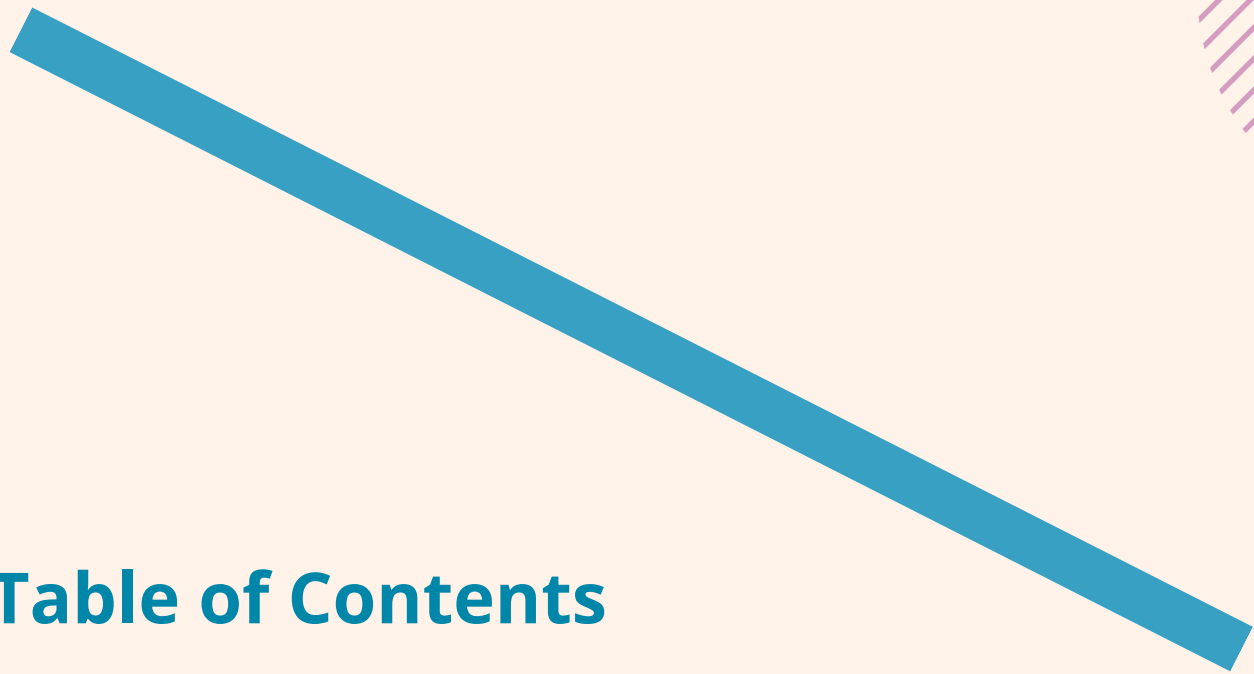


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1. OVERVIEW

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.

Bringing together three separate workstreams:

Research
Practice and Policy Development
Participation and Engagement

under one banner, CYCJ is uniquely situated to push for an approach to youth justice that is well-evidenced, rights-respecting, and inclusionary.

We continue to strive to meet the needs of the Scottish youth justice workforce alongside those of children, young people, families, and communities.

HIGHLIGHTS

Highlights from 22/23 include: working closely with Scottish Government, young people and wider stakeholders on the development of the Children (Care and Justice) (Scotland) Bill; launching the Men Minds research project; STARR winning the Young Scot Community Award; countless well received training sessions, workshops and roadshows; and a meeting with the Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Veterans.

2. IMPACT AND REACH

A Unique Perspective and Platform

In March 2023 we celebrated 10 years of advocating for a fairer, rights-respecting approach to youth justice with and for, children and young people in conflict with the law. To read reflections from colleagues, allies and wider stakeholders click [here](#)

Whether sharing our own responses or amplifying the voices of others, CYCJ continues to provide valuable support to Scottish Government during the legislative consultation process. Across 22/23 we provided consultation responses to: the [Children \(Care and Justice\) Scotland Bill](#); [Bail and Release from Custody \(Scotland\) Bill](#); the Covid (Recovery and Reform) Bill; the [Scottish Mental Health Law Review](#) (and the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy); Improving Victims' Experiences of the Justice System consultation; Foxgrove National Secure Adolescent Inpatient Service consultation; [Bairns' Hoose Draft Standards](#); and the [Policy Position paper on Cross-border placements of children and young people into residential care in Scotland](#).

The Centre has played a significant role in the development of the Children (Care and Justice) (Scotland) Bill, offering specialised input and promoting wider stakeholder engagement. CYCJ Director Fiona Dyer was invited to give evidence to the Education, Children and Young People Committee on the Bill in March 2022; her counsel was also sought by the committee members at an informal knowledge-gathering session.

Across numerous workshops and discussions over 50 partner organisations were consulted on the Bill. We also ensured that young people's voices were heard, running open events with Scottish Government colleagues in which young people and other stakeholders were supported to engage with the substance of the Bill, and encouraged to provide feedback.

The work of CYCJ continues to inform and impact government policy more broadly. As a member of the Scottish Government's collective leadership group, Fiona Dyer raised the issue of conditions for children in Polmont during COVID-19; this led to the creation of a short-life working group to respond to this issue, which made several recommendations, endorsed by the group. As part of the Age of Criminal Responsibility Act a 3-year review period was included within legislation to examine raising the age further. CYCJ supports the work of various groups that sit under the steering group to provide evidence for this review.

2. IMPACT AND REACH

A Unique Perspective and Platform

Fiona Dyer chairs the Data and Research group that reports directly to the Minister for Children, Young People and the Promise who chairs the steering group. Fiona Dyer also represents CYCJ on the Youth Justice Improvement Board and the Children's Hearing Improvement Partnership. Deputy Director Karen Ralston represents CYCJ on the Restorative Justice Stakeholder Group whilst Practice Development Advisor Ruby Whitelaw sits on the Secure Care Board. CYCJ is also represented on Partnership groups with Police Scotland, Social Work Scotland, The Promise Scotland, and Clan Childlaw.

We also reach out to children and young people who have lived experience of the justice system to encourage them to share their views on various aspects of government policy. Examples include during the Children's Care and Justice Bill consultation, and in relation to the development of the Bairns' Hoose Draft Standards, which resulted in those views being shared in a report - 'Hear Us, Make Changes' - published in August 2022.

Local Authority Reach

CYCJ continues to support local authorities in the development of their practice. Across 22/23 we received **1071 requests** from practitioners, managers and policy makers during this period. This included: requests for case specific support; facilitating meetings between youth and adult justice services to improve communication and transitions between services; and supporting EEL, 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.

Service Design that is Innovative, Collaborative and Rights-Respecting

Across 2022/2023 the CYCJ Director secured a significant growth in funding; this has led an increase in core business and partnership work, all of which is engineered to amplify the voices of children and families and embed a rights-respecting approach. Utilising the Scottish Government's service design model **Reimagining Justice** supports local authorities and other partners to deliver rights-respecting services with, and for, children in conflict with the law. This innovative model allows us to bring together three areas of CYCJ expertise: upholding children's rights; youth justice policy and practice; and our proven track record in participation and co-production.

2. IMPACT AND REACH

Service Design that is Innovative, Collaborative and Rights-Respecting

Whilst this work began in 21/22, new funding secured via The Promise Partnership Fund has allowed us to expand our operations. After presenting a report on the development of Youth Courts in Scotland to the Youth Justice Improvement Board, Fiona Dyer moved to incorporate Youth Courts into the Reimagining Justice Project. Having secured the agreement of all Sheriff Principals in Scotland, and presented to the Social Work Scotland standing committees, discussions are now underway to introduce youth courts across Scotland.

Commissioned by the Scottish Government the **Reimagining Secure Care** project was created to ensure that children with lived experience and their families play a role in reshaping the future of secure care provision in Scotland when children are removed from YOI as part of the Children's Care and Justice Bill. Working alongside secure care professionals and CYCJ staff, participants are developing a blueprint for what rights-respecting, trauma-informed secure care services should look like. Both workstreams exist to support partners to ensure compliance with the relevant (existing and incoming) legislation and policy re. children's rights and child protection: The Promise; UNCRC incorporation; GIRFEC and the Children's Care and Justice Bill.

In January 2023 we also began work on a new project, delivered in partnership with **Action for Children**. Together we are developing a practitioner framework/toolkit to raise awareness of **Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**; this will empower staff across multiple agencies with the intervention tools and know-how to recognise and address this challenging issue. Funded via The Promise Partnership, this work again features a significant co-production component.

Campaigning

Elsewhere in June, Fiona Dyer campaigned for the Bairns' Hoose model to include provision for all children - including children who are accused of offending behaviour - authoring a letter to the Cabinet Secretary and Minister that was co-signed by 19 other organisations, including The Promise, Action for Children, SCRA, Children's Hearings Scotland, NSPCC Scotland and more. This led to a group being created by the independent chair, which is project managed by CYCJ.

2. IMPACT AND REACH

CYCJ has also campaigned for children to be removed from Police Custody. After regular discussions with colleagues in Police Scotland and the Scottish Police Authority, a conference was held in November 2022 to discuss the issue. Alongside the Assistant Chief Constable, Fiona Dyer spoke of the traumatising impact police custody can have on children, using research undertaken by CYCJ. Further work and events are being planned for later in 2023.

Ministerial visits

In April 22' Fiona Dyer and other CYCJ staff and members of the Executive Governance Group met with Keith Brown, MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Veterans. Topics on the agenda included trauma-informed and trauma-responsive practice, Bairns' Hoose, the use of bail and remand with children and alternatives to custody. Mr Brown also engaged with findings from '[Thinking About Justice](#)' and celebrated the research as an example of effectively working with children and young people to reshape the justice system:

“I welcome the publication of this report and would like to thank the young people who took part in this research. It's so important that children are supported to participate in the justice process and engage in decisions which affect them. What is clear from this report is that the voices of children and young people must be heard to ensure we shape services and supports which meet their needs.”

We also welcomed Joe Griffin (then Director-General, Education and Justice) and Ian Donaldson (Deputy Director, Children's Rights, Protection and Justice) to the Centre in March 2023 to showcase our work and promote a rights-respecting approach to children in conflict with the law.

CYCJ Associates Scheme

Across this period we welcomed a number of new members to our Associates scheme including **Shumela Ahmed** (Co-founder and Managing Director of [Resilience Learning Partnership](#)), **Dr Sean Creaney** (Criminologist and Senior Lecturer at [Edge Hill University](#)), **Dr Claire Paterson-Young** (Senior Researcher at the [Institute for Social Innovation and Impact](#) at Northampton University) and **Nadine Smith** (Project Manager of Young Justice Advisors at [Leaders Unlocked](#)). We are grateful for the contributions made by Stuart Allardyce, Tim Bateman and Rania McGoran whose tenure with the scheme came to an end in September 2022.

2. IMPACT AND REACH

Practice guidance

June 2022 saw the publication of a revised edition of 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. Alongside revised editions of the existing 15 sections, a new section on Diversion from Prosecution was added for 2022.

Making an impact beyond Scotland

Of necessity CYCJ's focus remains youth justice in Scotland; that being said we continue to engage in trans-national knowledge exchange, to see what we can learn from partners who are further afield (and vice versa). Academics and children's commissioners from across the UK and Ireland meet quarterly as part of a 'Rights-Respecting' 6 Nations group to share best practice regarding children in conflict with the law. Created by CYCJ, the group is chaired by Professor in Emeritus Mike Nellis. Membership includes: Professor Ursula Kilkelly; Dr Tim Bateman; Dr Anthony Charles; Dr Deena Haydon; Fiona Dyer; Dr Nina Vaswani; and the Children's Commissioners from Scotland and Jersey.

In August 2022 the Nuffield Family Justice Observatory utilised data from the secure care censuses that CYCJ conducted in 2018 and 2019 to inform a wider study on cross border secure care placements. CYCJ were commissioned to write a new report using this data, which indicated that, at any one time, around 25 children or more from England and Wales are living in secure care in Scotland, an average of 353 miles away from their homes, family and friends. This work was picked up by [The Times](#).

Exploring different approaches to secure care was the focus of Ruby Whitelaw's visit to two secure care centres in Ireland in September 2022. She blogged about her experiences [here](#); she also provided advice and guidance to providers of secure care in Jersey during this period. CYCJ's appetite for collaboration around secure care was further underlined by our Four Nations Secure Care Symposium (see below) which took place in March 2023.

Our Restorative Justice team also met with a delegation of Dutch students in early 2023, sharing RJ work in Scotland and learning from their experience of RJ in the Netherlands.

CYCJ is also a member of the Child Friendly Justice - European Network which currently consists of 24 member organisations across 19 countries. (cont. below)

Making an impact beyond Scotland

We have been a member of the inaugural steering committee for the past 16 months and participated in the general committee, helping to shape the network's priorities and strategy, in terms of areas to address. Practice Development Advisor Donna McEwan attended the annual meeting of the general assembly and annual seminar in October 2022 in Brussels. This provided an opportunity to share learning from our participation work and developments with regards to child-friendly courts.

Relationships have been forged with academics from England who are leading their "Reimagining Secure Care Project". This is offering CYCJ the potential to share learning regarding the differing approaches being taken between England and Scotland to this area of work.

3. YOUTH JUSTICE PARTNERSHIPS AND FORUMS

Inclusion as Prevention (IAP)

Along with Action for Children, South Lanarkshire Council and Dartington Service Design Lab, CYCJ is a partner on the 'Inclusion as Prevention' project, funded by the National Lottery Community Fund Early Action System Change Fund. Across 22/23 the project developed and delivered a number of 'tests of change', working with youth groups, school groups and wider stakeholders in South Lanarkshire; issues addressed in this period include the transition from primary to secondary school; grief and loss; gender-based violence; expressing lived experience through creativity; and supporting care-experienced children and young people.



“IAP is so important to me. I have been given a platform to have a voice and to help people learn from my experiences. I want others to have a platform that IAP gave to us.”

Young Person

For more on IAP visit their dedicated website [here](#). The project is now beginning to enter its final period and will conclude in 23/24. CYCJ’s Kristina Moodie has been providing support as project evaluator, undertaking evaluation and measuring impact as it progresses.

Talking Hope

We are a partner in the Talking Hope project. Led by colleagues in the University of Strathclyde, the project works with staff and young people in secure care to facilitate and promote the power of ‘hopeful’ dialogue. Now in its third year, the Talking Hope project has developed a toolkit and the [Talking Hope website](#), which launched in November 2022. Providing support with both direction and communications, CYCJ have made significant contributions to the development of this remarkable project

“Hope is empowering our families to focus on strengths and positives in their lives and using these strengths to reach their goals and become their own person.”

National Leadership Network

Following a successful recruitment drive, the [National Leadership Network](#) has brought on board a steering group of care experienced people. The steering group has made a number of recommendations over the allocation of funds; these will be actioned over the summer of 2023.

All five partners (CYCJ, Resilience Learning Partnership, Who Cares? Scotland, Columba 1400 and Staf) have continued to meet to discuss next steps and approaches for the NLN.



FORUMS

The CYCJ managed Forums met regularly throughout the year, with a mix of online and in-person meetings. These meetings provide the workforce with a safe, informal space to discuss issues, practice and ideas.

Early and Effective Practitioners Forum

This forum provides a platform for all parties involved in EEI to identify any issues and contribute to the resolution of those issues. The EEI Practitioners Forum met 3 times across the reporting period. Stakeholders who attended these meetings included: Police Scotland; Social Workers from 17 different Local Authorities; SCRA; COPFS; third sector; and the Scottish Fire and Rescue service.

Risk Formulation Forum

The Risk Formulation Forum has continued to support practitioners with the assessment and formulation of individuals, whilst simultaneously providing support with wider issues in relation to local systems and processes. Across 22/23 the Risk Formulation Forum met 5 times, with attendees coming from 7 different Local Authorities and one third sector organisation. One area in which colleagues repeatedly requested practice support in 22/23 was around harmful sexual behaviour.

Diversion from Prosecution Forum

CYCJ continues to promote and support wider use of Diversion from Prosecution amongst justice partners; this has included work on a revised guidance document for partner organisations. This work has led to a significant increase in the use of diversion across Scotland, leading to fewer instances of children and young people unnecessarily entering the justice system.

CYCJ's work in this area was singled out for praise within the Joint Inspection of Diversion from Prosecution, which stated that the centre was "a very useful resource for advice and guidance on working with young people on diversion. The diversion from prosecution practitioners' forum hosted by CYCJ was described as invaluable in accessing support and sharing good practice across the country." The forums were said to provide "a useful platform for a wide range of practitioners and senior personnel across statutory partner agencies and key stakeholders." The review also concluded that "those who attended the forum typically have a better strategic and operational awareness of diversion".



Secure Care Practitioner Forum

The Secure Care Practitioner Forum is a safe space for those working with children within secure care to meet, receive specialist input, and share any good experiences and practice issues. Across the reporting period the group met five times with representatives from secure care, local authorities, the Scottish Government and third sector. Topics that were addressed included: contagion, managing high levels of risk, Covid-19 recovery, language, standardisation and sharing good practice.

4. EVENTS AND TRAINING

Across January to December 2022 we delivered our second year of CYCJ's Postgraduate Certificate on Children & Young People in Conflict with the Law, in conjunction with the University of Strathclyde. We welcomed a cohort of 21 students, including one justice-experienced student whose place was funded via the Lady Eileen McDonald Fund. This fully online part time course provides a flexible way for students to develop their knowledge and understanding of rights-based practice via 3 different modules. Feedback on the modules to date has been incredibly positive.

START: AV training has been delivered in person and online, alongside CARM 'train the trainer' sessions and Child Interview Rights Practitioner (ChIRPS) training. This year we also developed and delivered a bespoke 2-day training course on upholding rights for children in conflict with the law with speech language and communication needs. It received excellent feedback and has been scheduled for a second iteration in 23/24.

Our popular webinar series continued through 22/23, allowing us to reach audiences who would not be able to attend in person training or events. Topics and presenters included: Professors Lesley McAra and Susan McVie on new findings from the Edinburgh Study; a follow up session on the new guideline on the sentencing of young people with Sheriff Mackie, Kirsty Giles and Suzanne O'Rourke; a Thinking About Justice launch event; online security for the social care workforce with the SSSC; Jan Green and Maxine Jolly on upholding children's right in the context of SLCN; Liz Murdoch and Donna McEwan on the revised Youth Justice Standards; and a Four Nations Secure Care Symposium which showcased the latest secure care research findings from across the UK to an online audience of 180 attendees.

National Youth Justice Conference 2022

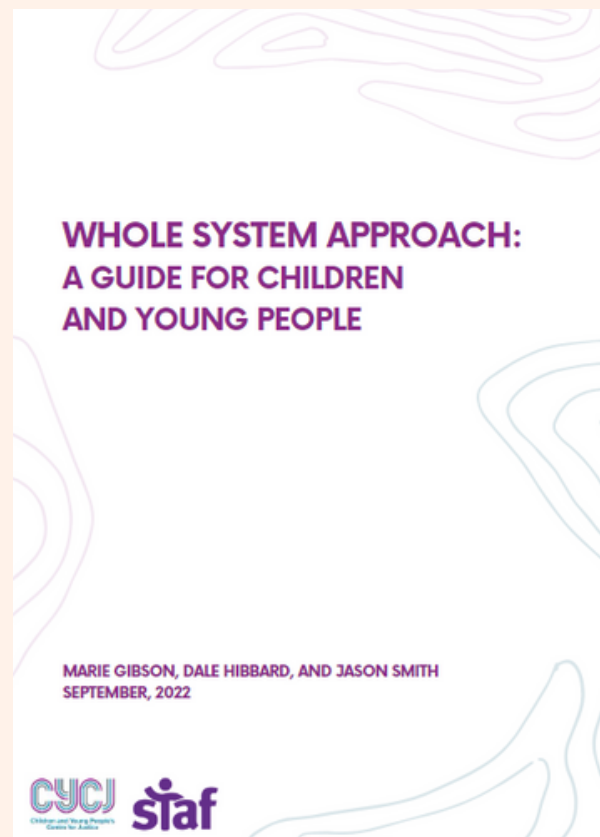
Having successfully pivoted to online delivery in 2021, the **National Youth Justice Conference** returned for a second online iteration in June 2022. One advantage of being online is greater capacity; we were delighted that 530 individuals signed up to join us for sessions exploring the theme of 'Our Journey to Rights Respecting Justice'. Speakers included: Prof Anne Skelton, Prof. Steve Case, Prof. Ursula Kilkelly, Sheriff Susan Craig and Dr Diana Johns. Talks and resources are available on the [2022 Conference Padlet](#).

The team have also delivered lectures, roadshows and seminars to social workers and social work and criminology students across Scotland, presenting at various conferences and events.

5. PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Supporting children and young people to know their rights and raise their voices on issues that affect them has become an integral part of CYCJ business.

In September 2022 we published our [accessible guide](#) to the Whole System Approach, which was co-produced with young people. It aims to notify children and young people who come into conflict with the law about their legal rights and available support. Dale, Marie and Jason were recruited to lead this project, using their own experiences to share important information they think children and young people need to know about the various stages of the WSA.



Across two open [events](#) in 22/23 we supported children and young people to take part in Scottish Government's consultation on the Children's Care and Justice Bill; we also provided a platform for young people to contribute to the development of the Bairns' Hoose standards.



Youth Justice Voices

Delivered in partnership with Scottish Throughcare and Aftercare Forum (Staf) Youth Justice Voices is now a well-established project with a strong track record of making change happen. Thanks to funding from the National Lottery and The Promise Partnership Good Childhood Partnership they are now expanding their reach nationally, with 3 youth-led steering groups.

Each of these aim to amplify the voices of care and justice experienced young people, using creative and innovative ways to influence change within the care and justice systems and sharing learning across implementation groups and decision-making forums. Highlights across 22/23 include:

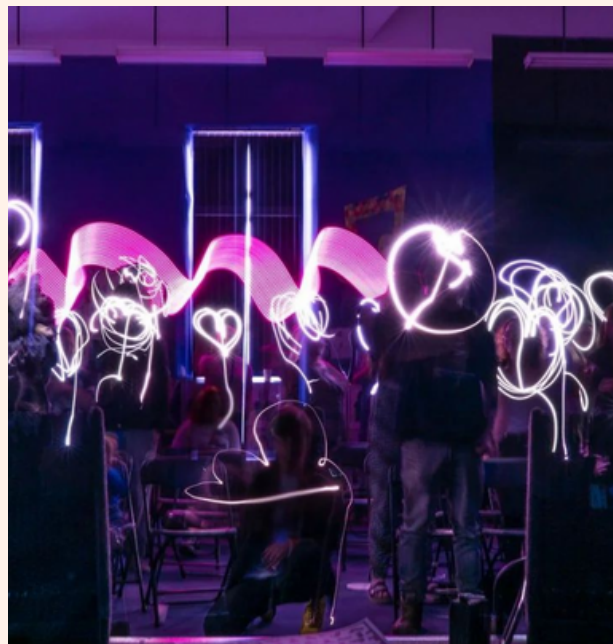
In April 2022 Youth Justice Voices work was showcased to **Keith Brown**, Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Veterans.

In this period Youth Justice Voices began a fruitful creative partnership with **Liminal Studios**. Making use of the latest developments in VR technology to help young people to challenge stigma and know their own power. This collaboration - labelled Digital Dough - is going from strength to strength.

Youth Justice Voices members also played a crucial role in a scoping study commissioned by **Clan Childlaw**, leading on participation and engagement. The study examined

access to legal support for children and young people in conflict with the law. A child-friendly report was published and work continues to creatively share these outputs.

Youth Justice Voices is a national participation project, but up until this period, it's activities had predominantly been based in the Central Belt. In Spring 2023 the group expanded into Aberdeen for the first time, creating the opportunity for a wider group of young people to come together, build positive relationships and influence the youth justice agenda. **Youth Justice Voices North East** continues to grow and develop.





Unfortunately, January 2023 was a particularly difficult and challenging time for Youth Just Us. Longstanding member **Bella McOuat** sadly passed away after falling ill with meningitis.

Bella was a committed and articulate advocate for the rights of care experienced young people, and her passing was a really difficult moment for the group. Familiarise yourself with some of Bella's work [here](#) and [here](#).

Inside Out

Supported by Youth Justice Voices and Barnardo's, [Inside Out](#) is a group of care experienced young boys and men in HMPYOI Polmont who come together to advocate for change at system, policy and practice levels. Across 22/23 the group have been active. They've pushed for positive change within Polmont, meeting with the Governor and developing an induction pack to support new arrivals during their transition.

However, they want their voices to be heard outside of Polmont as well, hence their tagline: 'Inside, speaking Out'. This year the group responded to consultations on the Children's Care and Justice Bill and the Bail and Release from Custody Bill, addressing issues like the use of electronic tags as an alternative to remand, the exclusionary nature of consultation language and process; consideration of victims in bail decisions, and the damaging impact of being held on remand:

"Young people's minds are developing. Your brain isn't fully developed [when you are under 25]. You might want to fit into the crowd. Why wouldn't you want to give them bail? You don't how to care yet. Going to the jail or secure is traumatising. Going off to the jail at 16 isn't right. Some people are terrorised and scared to come out of their cell. They can be bullied. Bad behaviour is normalised. You don't know what to ask for, what your entitled to and you can go back out with no support".

They were able to raise their concerns directly with the Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Veterans, Keith Brown MSP, when he visited them in September 2022. They've also worked with Clan Childlaw, contributing their voices and experiences to a scoping study of legal support provision for children and young people. In May 2022 their time and effort was recognised when they were nominated for the Pioneering Project Award at the Scottish Charity Awards.

STARR



22/23 saw STARR consolidate the excellent progress they made during the previous reporting period. In April 2022 they won the Young Scot Community Award, in recognition of the positive impact of their work on the wider care-experienced community, including their pivotal role in the development of the Secure Care Pathway and Standards. Speaking about the win, Founder and Chair Beth-Anne Logan said:

“The creation of STARR is one of my proudest achievements. Having a safe, curated space for people with lived experience of secure care come together to create change is something I’d been wanting to do for a while – and we made that a reality.

“STARR brings a sense of belonging, of community and of hope. And my biggest hope is that we continue to grow and flourish into the changemakers I know we are all capable of being.”

The group continue to work closely with a range of strategic partners on the Secure Care Pathway and Standards, including local authorities, secure care centres and working groups. Leveraging their position to push for wider positive social change, this year they collaborated with Police Scotland to develop custody information sheets, and with Scottish Government’s Access to Justice team on a letter of rights in police custody.

The group also responded to consultations on the Children’s Care and Justice Bill and Foxgrove, and co-delivered a Kilbrandon webinar in the autumn of 2022.

6. KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

From April 2022 to March 2023 cycj.org.uk saw **54,712 sessions** – a consolidation of the increase in user traffic witnessed across 21/22 (52,850). The top 5 countries by volume of sessions were: **UK** (46,105 – 84.27%); **USA** (2,902 – 5.30%); **Australia** (742 – 1.36%); **Canada** (483 – 0.88%); and **Ireland** (432 – 0.79%). Of the 54,712 sessions that took place 37,633 were from **new visitors** (68.78%) with 17,079 (31.22%) from **returning visitors**.

Social media continues to be a crucial tool for audience engagement. Twitter remains our dominant account, with 9,439 followers compared to 7,870 at this stage the previous year. LinkedIn has also seen significant organic audience growth – thanks to increased content turnover and interaction – with our audience numbers increasing by 609 to from 229 to 838 followers. Instagram and Facebook have seen smaller increases, with Instagram growing to 643 (from 560 in 21/22) and Facebook climbing to 1494 from 1,400.

CYCJ received media coverage on a number of occasions. Highlights included Dr Fern Gillon's 'Thinking About Justice' research which was picked up by the Aberdeen Press and Journal, Glasgow Times and Yahoo.com. The launch of Men Minds was celebrated in [The National](#), and That's TV Scotland, whilst our work on cross-border placements was featured in [The Times in this piece](#) by Emma Yeomans.

7. RESEARCH & RESOURCES

2022: April

In **April** we shared the research findings from 'Thinking About Justice', in which young people were supported to consider their awareness of, and aspirations for, justice. As mentioned, this received positive media coverage, and support from the Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Veterans. '[Exacerbating, illuminating and hiding rights issues: COVID-19 and children in conflict with the law](#)', by Fiona Dyer, Claire Lightowler and Nina Vaswani, was published by the International Journal of Human Rights.

Based on work completed during the first Covid lockdown it examines how Scotland's pandemic response impacted children in conflict with the law. Carole Murphy updated our paper presenting and navigating the official statistics that are available in Scotland on children in conflict with the law.

May

A year on from sharing our Participation and Engagement Strategy we published the Participation Issue, a one-off special edition e-bulletin celebrating the work that children and young people are doing to re-shape the justice system. Participation was also the focus of Episode 1 of 'Creative Conversations with CYCJ', our new podcast series which launched in May 22'. Diversifying our resource output in this way has allowed us to access new audiences and extend our reach. Info Sheet 102 by Donna McEwan looked at Child and Adolescent to Parent Violence and Abuse (CAPVA). Inclusion as Prevention (IAP) hosted a guest blog in which staff at South Lanarkshire Council celebrated the project's collaborative approach.

June

We published our revised youth justice practice guidance. Featuring a new section on Diversion from Prosecution the guidance was also given a new name, reflecting CYCJ's focus on placing children and young people at the centre of the systems and policies that affect them: 'Children and young people in conflict with the law: policy, practice and legislation'.

Fiona Dyer's paper 'Alternatives to Young Offender Institutions for children under 18' explored the role of secure care placements, and robust community-based packages (supervision, electronic monitoring) as alternatives to YOI. As such, it can be considered part of the evidence base for the move away from incarcerating children that is reflected in the Children's Care and Justice Bill.

Working alongside young people and a Glasgow design studio, we coproduced an animation sharing the findings so far from the 'Co-designing Socially Just Justice for Young Adults in Conflict with the Law' project. This project, a collaboration with academics at the University of Dundee, University of Strathclyde and the Glasgow School of Art, supported young adults to co-design a socially just approach to justice.



In Info Sheet 103 Kirsty Deacon (SCRA) looked into the legal entitlements and experiences of young people dealing with Simultaneous Familial Imprisonment. CYCJ also contributed to 'COVID Learning Report: The Fragility of Justice' in partnership with the University of Strathclyde Centre for Sustainable Development and Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies.



July

The ROSA project was set up by the Lucy Faithfull Foundation to address technologically assisted harmful sexual behaviour among children and young people. In July the Research Team shared an independent evaluation of the project. Kristina Moodie published [a report](#) on the positive impact of IAP's pilot project which provided increased access to football pitches for marginalised groups. Episode 2 of the Creative Conversations podcast featured an interview with Fiona Dyer and Karen Ralston. Kirsty Deacon also guest-blogged for us on 'Staying Connected', a collaboration between Families Outside and SCRA.

August

Co-produced with justice-experienced children and young people, the 'Hear us, Make Changes' report outlined their views on how the Bairns' Hoose model could work best for children in Scotland who have been victims of harm, as well as children under 12 whose actions may have caused harm. Inclusion as Prevention published a number of animated videos, coproduced with children and young people, with a view to supporting other young people with their mental health, with a particular focus on grief and loss.

September

Designed to help children know their rights, and the supports that should be available to them, our accessible guide to Scotland's Whole System Approach was published this month. Working in partnership with STAF, three young people - Dale, Marie and Jason - led the creation of this guidance. Written by Fiona Dyer, Info Sheet 104 focused on remittal from court for children, highlighting that, to date, it has been significantly underutilised in every area of Scotland. We also shared work that demonstrated how, both now and going forward, our work will support the Promise's Plan 21 - 24.

October

In October Inclusion as Prevention published a report ('All of the snakes and none of the ladders') on their experiences of co-production. In Info Sheet 105 Ross Gibson wrote about effective practice in diversion from prosecution and the reasons behind it. Director General Joe Griffin also joined Fiona Dyer for an episode of Creative Conversations with CYCJ.

Following her visit to secure care centres in Ireland Ruby Whitelaw blogs about similarities and differences in secure care provision across the two nations and Fiona Dyer blogged about the fledgling Reimagining Justice service, and how it aligns with The Promise and the findings of the Independent Care Review.

November

Access to Restorative Justice for children was the focus of Info Sheet 106, by Pamela Morrison and Yvette O'Donnell. Fi McFarlane (The Promise) joined Fiona Dyer for Episode 4 of Creative Conversations with CYCJ.

December

Bruce Adamson, Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland, was our guest with Fiona Dyer for Episode 5 of Creative Conversations with CYCJ. Animator Rosie Patterson produced a guest blog for IAP discussing the assumptions, challenges and benefits involved in coproducing work with young people.



2023: January

The Men Minds research project launched. Funded by UKRI, this project is a collaboration between colleagues in Dundee, Monash, Melbourne and Strathclyde Universities, working alongside a steering group made up of young participants. The project aims to advance adolescent mental health research by working with marginalised young men to understand their masculine identities and how these contribute to their mental health and wellbeing. The project will identify barriers to accessing mental health services and participating in research in order to pave the way for more inclusive mental health research.

Inclusion as Prevention published a report on the Junior Pathfinder Pilot Test of Change, in which dedicated Pathfinders were placed in a number of schools to support pupils in their transition between primary and secondary school.



February

In February Carole Murphy produced an updated version of 'Scotland's response to children in conflict with the law'; this report provides the clearest possible portrait of the data that is currently available across different datasets, and its provenance. Inclusion as Prevention produced a Test of Change update, sharing research results from a survey of young people's views on gender-based violence (GBV).

March


'Preparing to Keep The Promise: 'A Comparative Study of Secure Care and YOI' by Ruby Whitelaw and Ross Gibson is published. Making the case that the needs and challenges experienced by children in secure care and those in YOI are analogous, it provides some of the evidence base for Scottish Government's move to stop housing children in YOI. Holly Maclean and Julia Swann's 'Thematic Review of Biometric Data Relating to Children and Vulnerable Adults' is published. It provides an opportunity for young people to have their say on the practice of biometric data collection, contributing to a wider assurance review by the Scottish Biometrics Commissioner. A revised version of Info Sheet 44 is published, providing guidance on reviews for children and young people in custody under the WSA.

8. SECURE CARE

CYCJ continues to effectively support practice development and improvement within secure care provision, collaborating directly with secure care centres, local authorities and a wider network of strategic partners. A number of internally and externally hosted working groups support this, including: Secure Care Group; Secure Care Practitioners Forum; Secure Care Transport Group; and the Secure Care Champions Group. Members of STARR - Scotland's only group for secure care experienced young people - continue to work closely alongside Ruby Whitelaw and Julia Swann, ensuring that those with lived experience expertise have a voice at all levels of decision-making and influence.

Secure Care Pathway and Standards Scotland

Since their launch in October 2020 CYCJ has supported stakeholder partners with the rollout of the Secure Care Pathway and Standards (SCPS) via workshops, webinars, Info Sheets and forums. The SCPS promise transformational change, ensuring a rights-respecting approach for those children in, or on the edges of, secure care. Secure Care Lead Ruby Whitelaw has supported local authorities and secure care centres to conduct monitoring and evaluation work, providing an opportunity to demonstrate how they are adapting their practice to meet the expectations set out in the SCPS and embedding it within their youth justice strategies.



The Journey of the Standards Implementation Report outlines the approaches that different strategic partners have adopted in phase 1 of the implementation process, with the most effective of these being a multi-disciplinary partnership approach. Overall, the direction of travel is very positive; contact has been made with all 32 Local Authorities and all four of the secure care centres have embraced the Standards. Working alongside members of STARR, 25 sessions were delivered in the 2 years prior to publication, for a mix of frontline and managerial staff. Whilst the majority of HSCPs have adopted the SCPS, it must be noted that 11 local authorities have not received specific formal input; this makes it very challenging to meaningfully assess their progress.

9. RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

CYCJ continues to work with Community Justice Scotland to deliver the Scottish Government's Restorative Justice (RJ) Action Plan 2019-2023.

The Restorative Justice team works with a range of stakeholders to raise the profile of RJ within Scotland, with a particular focus on ensuring the rights and views of children and young people are embedded within practice. To this end a Children's Rights Impact Assessment was conducted for the Restorative Justice Action Plan across 22/23. Following on from previous research into young people's understanding of, and attitude towards, restorative justice, Pamela Morrison and Yvette O'Donnell produced Info Sheet 106, exploring referral routes for children looking to access restorative justice processes. Fiona Dyer also spoke at a Restorative Justice Law Symposium at Glasgow City College in November 2022.

Following CYCJ research into RJ with children and young people, the Scottish Government commissioned additional engagement with this group. 3 separate engagement projects are planned; young stakeholders include 2 school groups (one with justice-experienced children) and a youth group. Further work is planned with children under the age of criminal responsibility and for professionals working with children and young people. Other stakeholder engagement work across 22/23 included sessions with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, countless local authority partners, third sector organisations, secure care centres, campus police officers and more.

RJ specific networks: Scottish Network of Restorative Justice Researchers, RJ Practitioners network, RJ Forum.

10. GOVERNANCE & PEOPLE

The CYCJ team saw some significant changes during this period. In April 2022 Karen Ralston started in post as Deputy Director and Practice and Participation Lead. Karen brings with her a wealth of experience and contacts following a 35-year career in leadership roles within Local Government.

Although initially brought on board as maternity cover, Yvette O'Donnell's contract was extended following Pamela Morrison's return, strengthening our Restorative Justice work. Former EGG member Iain Corbett joined the team as a Participation Advisor.

Longtime team members Beverley MacCabe (Office Manager) and Charlotte Morris (Communications Lead) left their posts to be replaced by Lesley Evans and Rollo Strickland respectively. Within the Research Team Harvey Humphrey came on board as the Research Associate leading on Men Minds. Elizabeth Paterson joined as Admin Assistant and Julia Swann was also promoted from Participation Worker to Participation and Policy Advisor.

Nesha Dixon joined the team on a three-month internship, organised by the Scottish Graduate School of Social Science, during which time she authored an impressive scoping review of child criminal exploitation (CCE) in Scotland. Marie Gibson's internship with us came to an end.

Within the Executive Governance Group Paul Carberry, Kenny Donnelly, and Iain Corbett moved on, and were replaced by Martin Dorchester (Includem) and Laura Buchan (COPFS). We are grateful to each member of the EGG for their continued support and guidance.

