

YOT Good Practice

This document is an amalgamation of good practice examples from the phase four Youth Offending Team reports published to date: Hertfordshire, Hammersmith & Fulham, Westminster, Knowsley, East Sussex, Richmond, Lewisham, Wessex, Derbyshire, Pembrokeshire, Kirklees, Bracknell Forest, West Berkshire, Liverpool, Gloucestershire, Southend, Bolton and Bridgend.

Work in the courts

General criterion: 1.1 - Children and young people are safeguarded and the likelihood of their further offending reduced by the provision of an appropriate pre-sentence service, including bail supervision and support programmes.

DH of Turkish origin was remanded into a secure establishment on a charge of rape. YJS staff were able to put together a bail support package that convinced the court to release him on bail. He was later acquitted of the offence. The conditions of the bail were written in both English and Turkish so that the young man and his family were able to understand it.

Hertfordshire YJS

The local youth courts had IT facilities, including access to YOIS, which enabled the YOT to access up-to-date information on children and young people to assist the courts in their decision-making processes.

East Sussex YOT

CL, a 16 year old Vietnamese young man, who was assessed by YJS staff as vulnerable and not able to speak English, was remanded to HM Young Offenders Institution Feltham. YJS staff and staff in the Young Offenders Institution remand team arranged for him to be in contact with other Vietnamese children and young people, and also arranged for him to be in a cell nearer to the prison officers on duty, in order that he could be supported and monitored more closely.

Hertfordshire YJS

Five of the 12 children and young people who had previously been remanded were made subject to a bail support arrangement on their second appearance as a result of the YOS bail officer's work. With others, he put together an appropriate and convincing package of support in which the court could have confidence.

Southend YOS

William was a vulnerable individual with a history of self-harming. He had been made the subject of a supervision order but had reoffended. When he appeared in court, a custodial sentence appeared inevitable. His case manager prepared William for this sentence, including writing a detailed PSR. The supervising officer took time to brief the court officer who would be dealing with William about his vulnerability and the risk of self-harm. The court officer ensured that the escort staff were aware of the situation and had made sure that all the relevant documentation contained the details about the risk of self-harm. Finally, the court officer contacted the secure establishment by telephone to brief them about William and the difficulties he would face on reception into custody. By ensuring that there was clarity in communication, the risk of self-harm on William's part was much reduced.

Kirklees YOT

Preparation for a court appearance was seen as important, especially if a custodial sentence was anticipated. In order to assist in preparing children and young people for a potential custodial sentence, they were provided with advice about what items to take to court with them, what the sentence would involve and how their family would be able to make contact with them after sentence.

West Berkshire YOT

The YOS was an integral part of the CJC based in the north of the city. This centre acted as a local courtroom, presided over by one resident judge. It offered a range of resources to address underlying problems facing people in the community e.g. housing advice and alcohol and drugs counselling. In addition, it also acted as a hub for crime prevention advice and guidance.

Liverpool YOS

The commissioned Appropriate Adult service (shared with two other YOTs) delivered a consistently high quality service to children and young people from the point of arrest through until first appearance in court, if necessary. Well trained and supported volunteers were available round the clock to work with children and young people, identify risks and vulnerabilities and promote the meeting of any identified safeguarding needs. It had clear performance management and reporting mechanisms, enabling a clear analysis of trends in arrest and detention.

Bolton YOT

General criterion: 1.2 - Courts are assisted in making informed, timely and effective decisions by the provision of good quality reports and appropriate information from the YOT.

The YOS had a single borough youth court, sitting each Wednesday. On Thursday mornings, staff from across the YOS met to review the previous day's court decisions and plan for the sentencing events the following week. Managers led the meeting through the different types of cases, conditional bail, secure remands, results and pre-sentence reports. Crown Court decisions and cases for the following week were also reviewed. The meeting was the formal forum for consulting colleagues on pre-sentence report assessments and proposals. By having all partner agency staff at the meeting this ensured consultation with specialist staff.

Hammersmith and Fulham YOS

A PSR was an exemplar of best practice.

A brief description of the offence to set the scene was followed by a full analysis of the offending, setting out and explaining the behaviour in the context of the young person's life and family. Factors relating to vulnerability and protection were clearly identified, using information from relevant sources. A clear distinction was made in the analysis between the likelihood of further offending and RoH. The report led logically to a clear and appropriate conclusion, which explored those sentencing options that were relevant in the context of the case.

The report was full enough to cover the key issues relevant to sentencing, but written in a clear and concise style, avoiding lengthy and colloquial phraseology and unnecessary content.

Wessex YOT

YOS youth court staff were described by sentencers as "*incredibly proactive in court, if they have anything to say they will put it forward effectively. I can not over emphasise the support we get from the YOS*".

Bracknell Forest YOS

Through a partnership with Parentline Plus the YOT had a specialist parenting worker available at each of the court sittings. This enabled parents/carers to have ready and informal access to information on the range of services that were available to them and to progress referrals quickly.

Gloucestershire YOT

Work with children and young people at risk of offending

General criterion: 2.1 - The YOT (or others on its behalf) undertakes appropriate activities to prevent children and young people from offending.

In 2005 127 cases were referred to the ABC scheme, of which 98 were monitored and 29 had a contract. Only one case resulted in an ASBO. Generally most ASBOs were made on current statutory cases to reinforce work already being undertaken. The YOT had been able to establish a graduated approach with the ASBU so that all children and young people were referred to the ABC scheme before an application for an order was made.

Westminster YOT

The YOT had set up an intensive Family Intervention Project to work with families known to the ABC team and whose tenancies were at risk. This provided support to prevent further antisocial behaviour and the risk of an ASBO and/or criminalisation where children and young people were vulnerable to the loss of stable accommodation.

Westminster YOT

The YOT had developed a mentoring scheme with 20 trained mentors and a capacity of 40 cases per year. The YOT recognised the importance of positive male role models which could be provided (where appropriate) through such a scheme.

Westminster YOT

The West of the county benefited from four full-time dedicated youth justice workers, part-funded by a YJB grant and the CDRP. The role of these workers, primarily based in schools, was to work with children and young people on the cusp of offending and link into the overall prevention agenda.

East Sussex YOT

Yhang, who was thought to be a young person, had entered the country on his own from Vietnam and was looked after by the local authority whilst his status was being investigated. Children's Social Care Services referred him to the YOT for prevention work to support him. The YOT worker realised that Yhang was finding it difficult to adapt to western food. She made links with a local Vietnamese family and arranged for Yhang to meet and eat with them occasionally. This preserved his cultural heritage, helped him feel less isolated and hopefully made it less likely he would offend.

East Sussex YOT

YISP workers were engaged with two young people in a school to ensure that they were not excluded. Problems such as poor behaviour in the playground were identified by the school. YISP workers met the boys at lunchtimes to engage in other activities and to address such issues. This had resulted in the boys remaining in school and the head teacher had recognised improvements in attitude, attendance and behaviour.

Derbyshire YOT

This project was run by the Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service for groups of eight children and young people four times a year for five days. The children and young people experienced many of the training activities undertaken by the Service. The aims of the project were improving self esteem, team building, and instilling the discipline to work from 9am–5pm.

It was not only for those at risk of committing, or who had committed, arson, but addressed wider issues, including car crime, accidents and the effects of irresponsible driving. The feedback from children and young people was very positive. At times the project had insufficient referrals to operate.

Pembrokeshire YOT

In order to provide an alternative way of children and young people completing the *Over to You!* Onset self-assessment at the outset of contact with the EIT, a board had been created with all of the different responses on it. Each of the self-assessment statements had been typed onto a strip of paper which the child or young person could then attach to the applicable response area of the board with velcro. Completion of the self-assessment was therefore turned into a 'game' for the younger children, with all statements and potential responses read out and discussed with them in order that they could make informed decisions about what their needs were.

West Berkshire YOT

The prevention team had run a group work programme for a number of children and young people aged up to 12, who were on the periphery of gang membership in the area. The group was drawn from different areas of the city and, through art and drama, looked at the personal and community impact of gang membership. The feedback from children and young people showed a good understanding of the risks of being part of the gang culture in their area.

Liverpool YOS

Work initiated through involvement with the LCJB saw the YOT contributing to the training of local teachers. This focused on enhancing citizenship classes for Key Stage 3 and 4 pupils. These sessions looked at the impact of offending for both victims and those who had offended.

Gloucestershire YOT

A police community support officer seconded to the YOS had been trained as a restorative justice conference facilitator and had developed a 'Community Circle' for a deprived and difficult area of Southend-on-Sea. The principles for Community Circles were the same as for restorative justice conferencing, but their purpose was to get residents together to address the problem of nuisance youths in the area. A quick outcome of the first circle meeting was that the group set up a youth club. Circle meetings were held every three months or so, as long as the residents wanted them. A measurable outcome was that the rate of nuisance calls to the police in that area had reduced by 55% since the introduction of the circle meetings. The initiative had been identified as best practice by the police and was being rolled out to other areas of Southend-on-Sea.

Southend YOS

General criterion: 2.2 - The health of children and young people who are at risk of offending is promoted by the work of the YOT and its partners.

The substance misuse workers had worked with a group of children and young people to produce a cannabis awareness magazine, with an emphasis on learning through active involvement.

Knowsley YOT

Seven sexual health workshops were delivered by the YOT during the year and were attended by 28 children and young people aged 13-18 years. Pre- and post-workshop questionnaires were used to assess the effectiveness of these educational sessions. The workshops utilised quizzes, practical demonstrations of condom use, pictures of sexually transmitted infections and dialogue to explain safe sexual health practices. The results from a sample of 16 participants indicated a significant improvement in their knowledge.

Bridgend YOT

Streetwise, a sexual exploitation project, was an excellent example of a development which had arisen from the recognition that children and young people were at increased risk because of the night time economy and high level of casual visitors associated with Southend. The project had its origins within the YOS, where it remained based. CRB checks for arcade workers and coach drivers were being introduced through the influence of the project. It had produced materials for children and young people to raise their awareness of risks around vulnerability, had delivered training to other agencies and was working through a continuing programme in local schools using NSPCC materials.

Southend YOS

General criterion: 2.3 - Children and young people who are at risk of offending are safeguarded through the work of the YOT and its partners, to contribute to the promotion of their welfare and, where applicable, their protection.

In response to the relatively high numbers of LAC committing offences, the YOS and children's services formulated a policy of assessing the needs of all children becoming Looked After and offering interventions to reduce the likelihood of offending where necessary.

Bracknell Forest YOS

General criterion: 2.4 - Children and young people who are at risk of offending are enabled and encouraged to achieve their potential.

The YOT had developed a schools-based programme in which schools advised of children at risk of exclusion. There was good liaison with schools and most PRU cases were on the YISP scheme. A six session prevention programme had been run in four schools.

Children and young people were encouraged to engage in a PAYP overseen by the YOT PAYP keyworker. The YOT also worked with the Positive Futures worker from the Westminster Sports Unit.

Westminster YOT

James had specific learning needs resulting in not having a commitment to formal education and being at risk of offending. He had also been a Looked After Child. Prevention services obtained a psychological assessment of his needs, funded by Bolton Business Enterprise. Identifying his interests and abilities, James was supported by LACE (Looked After Children Enterprise) in becoming an apprentice plasterer. He was given considerable support throughout. An improvement in self-esteem, the development of friendships with pro-social adults and contributing to his family, all considerably reduced his likelihood of offending and vulnerability to others.

Bolton YOT

Work with children and young people who have offended

General criterion: 2.5 - The YOT (or others on its behalf) undertake appropriate activities to prevent children and young people from reoffending.

SP was given a referral order for possession of an imitation firearm. His case manager had seen a television programme about the police firearms unit and made contact with it. The sergeant at the unit arranged for SP to visit and he was able to talk to police officers about the possession of firearms and the risk that it involved.

He was shown 15 firearms, some were imitations and some real, and he had to identify the difference. He was only able to successfully identify two. This made a powerful impact on SP as he realised that faced with someone with a gun, the police had to make a quick decision whether or not it was real. He realised that he could have been shot.

SP's evaluation of this experience was so positive that the YJS and police were in the process of offering it as a regular intervention. They were also looking into a similar intervention for knives.

Hertfordshire YJS

The substance misuse work was consistently designed around sensitivity to the impact of diversity. Interventions were tailored appropriately to maximise potential progress in this area of work. Significant examples included work recognising and adapting interventions to gender, cultural background (and specifically one young person of dual heritage) and sexual orientation.

Richmond upon Thames YOT

David, a 14 year old male, was engaged with through an action plan order following a series of offences, including breach of an ASBO. The case manager exhibited excellent motivation in advocating for the re-provisioning of an appropriate educational placement. Added to this was substantial evidence of worker commitment, alongside detailed and sensitive intervention planning, with methods adapted to his learning style. David's offending ceased.

Richmond upon Thames YOT

The ISSP had developed a range of individual activities for constructive use of leisure pursuits. These included bird watching, photography and researching the history of local monuments using visits and ICT resources. The feedback from children and young people had been very positive and they were able to recognise and use the new skills that they had learned.

Knowsley YOS

A Muslim young person was timetabled to attend a religious meeting at his mosque as a part of his ISSP programme. This represented family support time and was monitored by staff and his parents.

Westminster YOT

The YOS had developed a version of the *What do you think?* form that was based on cartoons and stickers, which allowed children and young people with lower levels of literacy to engage in the exercise more fully.

Derbyshire YOS

The YOS was working in conjunction with the fire service, Connexions, Youth Service, Regeneration Board and schools on project 'YES'. A twelve week course had been devised by the fire service, which targeted 15 children and young people aged 13-18 identified as being at risk of committing antisocial behaviour. On the first course, nine of the participants subsequently went on to join the fire cadet scheme.

Derbyshire YOS

Two young people involved in a 'road rage' incident pointed a replica firearm at people in another vehicle. They subsequently received 12 month referral orders. Having achieved grade As in A Level examinations, the case manager realised that the normal workbooks would not be appropriate. A project was devised for them that involved compiling crime statistics relating to gun and knife crime. They also produced a related resource for use by other case managers.

Derbyshire YOS

Paul was referred to a programmes worker to address consequences of crime and conflict resolution issues. Paul had difficulties in maintaining concentration and the worker adapted the style of work to encourage Paul's participation. The sessions were kept short and the theme of football was used to undertake the work. Through discussion on the rules of football, the consequences of breaking the rules – for players, the teams and the fans – Paul was able to explore the impact of behaviour on others. These issues were then translated into discussions of the impact of offending behaviour and its consequences to those involved. By the end of the work Paul was more able to recognise the impact of his behaviour on himself and others.

Gloucestershire YOT

Keith was in his final year at school but had a poor history of attendance. Previous efforts to get him back into education had not succeeded. He regularly drank alcohol and used cannabis, and his referral order was made for offences committed whilst drunk. The future was not looking good for Keith but his YOT worker put considerable effort into engaging him with the services on offer through the YOT, encouraging him to take part in group and individual sessions about substance use. Outcomes were positive, with a reduction in drinking and cannabis use. The youth offender panel was so impressed with progress on his contract, including art work on the effects of cannabis, that he was asked to produce similar work in respect of the effects of alcohol, detailing the consequences for victims of offending as well. Keith's YOT worker motivated and encouraged him back into education. He was supported through a meeting with the head teacher of the pupil referral unit, which resulted in him being offered further attendance to see the workplace training officer with the aim of finding appropriate training. There has been a demonstrable change in his attitudes and behaviour, with no further offending, and Keith's future prospects were improving, through the support and encouragement of YOT staff.

Kirklees YOT

The ISSP was well run and there was a good balance of restrictive and constructive interventions. In particular, a range of activities was provided at weekends when children and young people were often at most risk of offending. All participants were provided with a mentor, but alongside this, good use was made of curfews, and arrangements had been made to ensure that children and young people subject to supervision were regularly visited at weekends.

Kirklees YOT

One of the YOT staff had a talent for drawing, and had created a number of cartoon scenarios enabling children and young people to view their offending from the perspectives of other people present, most notably the victim(s). These cartoons were specific for each child or young person and were completed on large pieces of paper with space for comments by them to be added. Such innovative material was used routinely in supervision in order to engage the children and young people in perspective taking work around their offending.

West Berkshire YOT

Young women had access to a health and beauty course provided by Positive Futures, a Basildon organisation based in Southend at the Focus Centre. This course could lead to employment and was accredited. Similarly, an apprenticeship scheme for young women led to occupations in the caring professions.

Southend YOS

General criterion: 2.6 - The health of children and young people who have offended is promoted by the work of the YOT.

PJ had significant drug use, including dependency. A residential placement with a specialist foster carer was used to stabilise him. The YJS health and substance misuse staff offered daily support, which changed to weekly visits as he stabilised. Interventions included drug testing, which was reviewed every six weeks. PJ was successfully stabilised; he was able to attend further education, maintained contact with his family and completed his community order. This successful intervention had subsequently been used with another young person on the bail support scheme and the YJS intend to continue with this practice as and when appropriate.

Hertfordshire YJS

Andrea was 16 years of age. She had been attending the YOS on a referral order for theft and had been referred to the health worker for issues with self-image. With support, she was able to identify her own goal – she wanted to walk down the street and be confident enough to show her face, rather than hiding under her hood. Following sessions with the health worker, which included getting out of the YOS environment into everyday settings, she was gradually able to go out confidently on her own. In time she gradually reduced depressive symptoms. The work continued with Andrea and she has developed the skills to problem solve some of these issues for herself.

Hammersmith and Fulham YOS

The YOT health workers were able to offer appointments at a number of locations and support children and young people to overcome fears and prejudices about specialist services to which they were referred. Where necessary they were escorted to appointments. A high rate of compliance with health interventions was achieved.

Westminster YOT

Friday's ISSP session brought together in a recreational setting a range of skills learnt in other sessions. These included budgets, team work, healthy eating and communication. This session was predominantly child and young person led but supervised by staff.

Each week, £10 was provided as a food budget for lunch, irrespective of how many attended. Attendees decided how the money was to be spent – on occasions feeding as many as 8 people, and including dessert. A peer-nominated child or young person then went to the supermarket to buy the supplies. The rest took part in recreational activities. Lessons learned included playing by the rules, keeping their cool even if losing, and building self-esteem whilst interacting with others. When the supplies arrived another member of the group prepared and cooked the lunch – over the course of the programme everyone had a go at each role.

At 1pm the table was set and everyone sat around it. All were expected to help each other, use their cutlery and be considerate. Everyone helped clear, wash and put away as a team effort, which encouraged members to take responsibility.

Wessex YOT

The physical health work undertaken by the nurse with children and young people known to the YOS with a score of two on the relevant section of Asset was exceptional. The physical health worker offered a wide range of advice and assistance to children and young people and their case managers.

Bracknell Forest YOS

Rebecca was engaged with the YOT having received a six month supervision order. Her troubled background, unsafe lifestyle and alcohol and drug misuse led to an accurate and comprehensive assessment that she was highly vulnerable and had multiple needs. The YOT health worker and another member of staff jointly managed the case, to build her trust and enable her health needs to be addressed as part of normal supervision rather than requiring her to access an alternative service. An excellent initial assessment led to appropriate multi-agency involvement from an early stage, including the police, the Domestic Violence Unit and social care. This case was managed sensitively and carefully, with substantial evidence of real understanding of her diversity issues and complex needs leading to positive outcomes of reduced alcohol and drug misuse and improvements to her safety.

West Berkshire YOT

The general nurse, in consultation with a group of children and young people, had designed a number of 'health bags' which were age and gender related. These contained leaflets and items that would promote healthy living, such as toothbrushes and pedometers.

Liverpool YOS

General criterion: 2.7 - Children and young people who have offended are safeguarded through the work of the YOT to contribute to the promotion of their welfare and, where applicable, their protection.

DM was a young father in employment. His mother had died when he was three years old and his father had brought him up. He was assessed as having emotional needs. The mental health worker within the YJS had negotiated with DM's employer to allow him the time to undertake counselling. This work had been positively undertaken with him.

Hertfordshire YJS

Carl was a 17 year old young man and was known to the health worker. He had a number of behavioural problems. When he was in a secure establishment the YOS health worker gathered information on his mental state. Discussion with the custodial mental health practitioner indicated concerns about his deteriorating mental health. The YOS health worker was able to share a mental health assessment taken while Carl was in the community. This included helpful contextual and personal information. Carl was referred to the youth offending institution psychiatrist. His care by the custodial healthcare team led to an improvement in his condition.

Hammersmith and Fulham YOS

A 15 year old LAC was experiencing a range of problems directly linked to her serious and reckless offending. After threatening to become a sex worker and continuing to reoffend, action was required to prevent serious harm to herself and others, and a custodial sentence was a likely outcome. However, a comprehensive package was prepared between children's services, NCH and the YOS. This addressed her deteriorating mental health, offending behaviour, substance misuse and self-harm issues, and resulted in a welfare bed being found in a secure unit. On her next appearance before the District Judge she was made the subject of a further supervision order, as he was satisfied that the appropriate intensity of intervention and safeguarding was in place. After three successful months in the establishment, she was placed with specialist foster carers, where her supervision continued, and plans were in place to attend a local college.

Derbyshire YOS

General criterion: 2.8 - Children and young people who have offended are enabled and encouraged to achieve their potential.

The YOS helped a group of children and young people apply for a grant. The funds were achieved to design a programme to look at citizenship in the context of the celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the European Union. Thus, the Rolling Europe Group ran for six months. Among their activities, the group visited the European Parliament and met a Member of the European Parliament, who described them as more prepared and knowledgeable than the usual groups from schools. Feedback from some group members showed their experience of the programme was a profound and positive learning opportunity.

Hammersmith and Fulham YOS

Steven had presented to the YOT as a 17 year old with a string of offences that had been committed in a short space of time in the company of a distinct group of young people already known to the YOT. The case manager undertook 'lifeline' work where she established that Steven's offending behaviour was influenced by the peer group with whom he associated. Good uses of in-house resources were made (substance misuse, Connexions) but also role plays, visual exercises and quality work on a one-to-one basis. This work centred around issues that had impacted on his life so far- his 'lifeline'. The case manager showed exceptional qualities in her empathetic style whilst retaining an open attitude to revisiting issues with Steven.

East Sussex YOT

A young Lithuanian man was sentenced to a DTO for a first offence. He was far from home, had no family visits and had little command of the English language. At the review meeting, the case manager discussed the young person's needs with regard to his diversity and potential vulnerability. Arrangements were made to have an independent visitor visit and befriend the young person and assist him in reading/writing. Since release, the young person had gained employment and was also enrolled to start college in September 2007.

Lewisham YOT

A group of travellers moved into the local authority, after living in two other London boroughs, and their children were refusing to engage in education. Three brothers and two sisters were not in education and were known to the YOT. With careful negotiation between the school, the YOT parenting officer, the ETE worker and case managers, with the support of the Lewisham Out of School Panel and the Lewisham Traveller Service, the young people were persuaded to attend school. They continued to do well and make progress. Their parents also subsequently engaged with the school.

Lewisham YOT

In this small community with a stable population, many adults had been taught by the same teachers as their children. For this reason, many parents found it awkward to deal with schools when their children were having difficulties, as they knew the teachers from their own school days. The ETE worker collaborated with parents and schools in arranging managed moves and transfers. She set up interviews with parents, young people and schools on behalf of the family. Where communication had broken down, she organised interviews and supported the family by attending meetings to ensure that outcomes met their needs.

Wessex YOT

The Gloucestershire YOT had developed the use of artwork in service delivery. Staff used the approach to assist with effective engagement, particularly with those children and young people who had literacy or learning needs. The art worker could focus on the achievements of the child or young person, e.g. through the completion of a piece of artwork, whilst another member of staff would look at offending related issues. This helped to retain the interest of the child or young person and to work in a non-confrontational manner. The YOT ran a public exhibition of artwork produced through the scheme. The children and young people received positive feedback about the quality of their work and the publicity surrounding the event helped to challenge stereotypical views of those who had offended.

Gloucestershire YOT

Connor, aged 15 benefited from the multiple elements of the *Next Steps* programme. Each morning, his mother delivered him to the project base at Southend Rugby Club and he was brought back to the YOS at the end of the day. He enjoyed the Basic Skills programme, gaining in both skills and confidence. He participated in a 1:1 programme on substance abuse and fully engaged in the sports programme. He was a keen member of the health programme and was supported by Connexions in applying for a college place. He now had a place at the local college for a basic craft course and had secured financial assistance through an Educational Maintenance Allowance.

Southend YOS

Emma, by 14 years old, had refused to attend school for over a year, consuming substantial quantities of alcohol. The latter contributed to many public order offences resulting, in the making of an ASBO and a supervision order when she breached this. Through daily contact and commitment by the YOT worker and others she was reintegrated into learning. Over a long period of time this resulted in her successfully sitting some GCSEs, attending an additional computer literacy course and seeking a further education place at Bolton College. She continued with support from the YOT worker, and others, in improving her life chances.

Bolton YOT

PRIDE was a full-time programme run by the Behaviour Support Service for up to 70 young people aged 14-16 years who were disaffected/disengaged from mainstream education. It provided for a wide range of qualifications and accreditations and the outcomes for young people were impressive.

PRIDE 16+ provided opportunities for young people to remain with the PRIDE programme post-16 and it allowed them to strengthen their qualifications, and could be used as a transition into the world of work and training.

LINC was a part of this PRIDE programme catering for up to ten young people who needed a small supportive environment. The accreditation opportunities were more limited in this group but they could take Entry Levels in English, Maths and Graphical Studies. The project used the YOT workshop facilities, and YOT workshop staff supported it three mornings per week. The first group finished their final attendance with a commendable record of achievement.

Pembrokeshire YOT

Reading Matters was a YJB funded intensive reading programme that provided 12-week intensive coaching to help children and young people with reading skills and comprehension, and facilitated access to libraries and bookshops. Incentives included a book voucher for each session attended. The programme was delivered by trained YOT staff and mentors. A total of 11 children and young people had been involved and feedback from schools had shown that the child or young person's reading age had increased by two years in some cases. For one child, the location of the programme in school encouraged his attendance and assisted with his re-integration into mainstream school. The YOT was considering extending the pilot to include numeracy and had reviewed a number of assessment tools in preparation for extending the scheme.

Kirklees YOT

Work with parents/carers

General criterion: 2.9 - Parents/carers are supported in addressing their children's antisocial and offending behaviour.

The parenting team were aware of the need for parents/carers with disabilities to access their services. They had sought specialist help to re-design their leaflets, taking into account layout and colour, so that they were more easily read by parents/carers with dyslexia.

Knowsley YOS

Plant Dewi, a local voluntary organisation that provided parenting interventions, had set up a weekly drop-in support and advice group for fathers/male carers. One parent commented that he found it easier to discuss issues with other men and their support enabled him to gain confidence and parent his children more appropriately.

Pembrokeshire YOT

The YOS had adopted a very robust policy with regard to offering parenting interventions. The result of this policy was that a very high proportion of cases received a parenting intervention. Once engaged with the parenting team, most parents/carers gave positive feedback on the services they had received.

Bracknell Forest YOS

As part of the SLA with Barnardo's, the YOS also had access to a small support group for parents/carers called 'Parents like you' which was run by two mothers who had experience of children involved in the criminal justice system. This offered specific support for parents/carers who were reticent about engaging with formal services.

Liverpool YOS

Outcomes of work with children and young people in the community

General criterion: 2.10 - The YOT promotes consultation with service users about the services they receive, and this information is used to improve outcomes.

The Prevention Summit was a series of meetings consulting with service users and partners on key issues relating to youth crime. It aimed to change the way service users and partners influenced the planning of services. The meetings were hosted by different agencies and addressed issues including, keeping children and young people safe, bullying and gangs. The YOS learned many things from the children and young people, one of which was that some children and young people doubt the abilities of adults to keep them safe, so they adopt behaviours that address their own fears and this might present as challenging behaviour.

Hammersmith and Fulham YOS

In conjunction with the local children's services, the YOT commissioned a research project called *How did I end up here?* Its objective was to work with children and young people who had received custodial sentences, to explore their experience of specialist and universal children's services and how these had influenced their journey to custody. A range of techniques were used including drama, storyboards and a video. Agreement was reached with Ashfield YOI for the work to take place there.

Wessex YOT

General criterion: 2.11 – The YOT demonstrates positive outcomes in its work with children and young people in the community.

With persistent levels of reoffending, the YOT persuaded the Management Board to fund a dedicated resource targeting this issue with a small number of children and young people who were identified through high and specific Asset scores. The focus was to be upon addressing the myriad practical issues that can inhibit stability, particularly insecure accommodation and lack of engagement with learning providers. Evaluation was awaited, but this presented as both an imaginative and a creative use of targeting resources.

Richmond upon Thames YOT

Kerry was on a referral order for assaulting a man in the street. She was a vulnerable young woman and had previously self-harmed aged 12-13 due to bullying at school. She was assessed as relatively low risk of reoffending on Asset. As a result, the case manager decided it would be better for her to do the required interventions (anger management, victim empathy, peer pressure, substance misuse) through a one-to-one programme rather than in group settings. This seemed to have been exactly the right decision for Kerry as she got on incredibly well during the order; she cut down on her drinking, gave up smoking cannabis, and stopped hanging around in the notoriously bad area where the offence had occurred. Good outcomes and a well managed case!

Southend YOS

A helpful way of encouraging case workers to consider outcomes in every case with which they worked was the use of closing summaries. These were completed once every case ended to encourage reflection and focus on outcomes. They served as a summary record placed at the front of each file about the issues in the case. The summaries also functioned as a quality checking mechanism, with all closed cases going to the YOT manager to check that all procedures had been followed correctly throughout the case. The documents also provided helpful starting point for workers in those cases where the children and young people had subsequent contact with the YOT.

West Berkshire YOT

Work with children and young people subject to custodial sentences

General criterion: 3.1 - The YOT (or others on its behalf), undertake appropriate activities during the custodial phase of the sentence to prevent children and young people from reoffending.

Sean was on a two year DTO. The distance to the YOI made frequent attendance by the YOT worker difficult. Therefore, in addition to visits, the worker had written to Sean twice between each planning meeting to praise him for his progress and behaviour. The worker had taken time to check with others in the YOI how Sean was doing prior to writing the letters. Sean valued these letters and the evidence they provided of the YOT worker's interest and commitment to his case.

Wessex YOT

Parents/carers of those children and young people serving custodial sentences were supported well by the YOT during the weeks that their children were in secure establishments. It was common practice within the YOT for case workers to take responsibility for making contact with the parents/carers every day during the first week. This supported them in coming to terms with the order and in making sure that they understood the processes and had been able to successfully make contact with their children within the secure establishment.

West Berkshire YOT

General criterion: 3.2 - Children and young people are safeguarded through the work of the YOT during the custodial phase of the sentence to contribute to the promotion of their welfare and, where applicable, their protection.

We saw a very good example of YOT and YOI staff working together to safeguard children and young people. The victim of a young person in custody had died from a cause unrelated to the offence. Knowing that this would distress the young person, the YOT case manager alerted YOI staff who were able to ensure his safety during the most critical period.

Bridgend YOT

The YOT had benefited from previously having a specialist programmes team to create and deliver a range of programmes. Effective practice principles underpinned the development of the programmes. One of the earliest to be launched was a retail theft initiative. Others followed including a robbery programme. This was established after an upsurge of street robberies in the area. Other programmes had been developed to work on general issues contributing to offending behaviour, e.g. male awareness issues and conflict resolution.

Gloucestershire YOT

General criterion: 3.3 - The YOT (or others on its behalf), undertake appropriate activities during the community phase of the sentence, to prevent children and young people from reoffending.

Felicity was 15 when she was sentenced to a Detention and Training Order. Her offence of burglary was linked with negative parental influence, drug misuse and sexual exploitation. Whilst thriving in the secure unit she was sent to, those influences rapidly took hold once more when she was in the community. When recalled to prison, the YOT led a coordinated effort (with Connexions and a drugs worker), resulting in Felicity having safe accommodation on release. She had considerable support to resist involvement with drugs, and risk of sexual exploitation and offending. Felicity still had a long way to go but had made a good start in working closely with the YOT.

Bolton YOT

Kevin had been using heroin since the age of 14, as had his brothers before him. Taking the opportunity afforded by his Detention and Training Order to withdraw, he went further, accepting the involvement of the RAP team in staying drug free on return to the community. Intensive support from RAP workers, including practical support (housing tenancies, clothing, food, sexual health advice and relaxation techniques) had been provided. Over a year later Kevin had not offended again, was clear of drugs, in both full-time employment and a stable relationship.

Bolton YOT

General criterion: 3.3 - The YOT (or others on its behalf), undertake appropriate activities during the community phase of the sentence, to prevent children and young people from reoffending.

Katie, a 17 year old young woman on release from custody, was located in safe, local accommodation, and was being helped to re-establish contact with her mother. Katie continued the work she had begun in custody on substance misuse, attending all sessions. She then started to go to the library and developed an enjoyment of reading. She had studied information technology and citizenship in custody and had developed a pride in her achievements. The YOT subsequently arranged a work experience placement for her, helping her to prepare for interviews and write a curriculum vitae. Katie obtained permanent employment in the retail trade that was sustained.

Richmond upon Thames YOT

A pre-release risk meeting had been developed in one area to address concerns about planning to manage risk issues. The meeting was held several weeks before a planned release and was attended by YOT, police, children's services social care and education, substance misuse and health workers. Information was shared to inform licence conditions and support effective management of release and integration back into the community.

Wessex YOT

A young person assessed as presenting a high RoSH was sentenced to a DTO after repeatedly breaching a supervision order. A pre-release meeting identified that non-compliance with court orders was a prelude to offending behaviour. It was concluded that structure and tight boundaries needed to be in place. He was released subject to an ISSP that progressively allowed him more freedom as the months passed. As part of his ISSP he was expected to undertake 25 hours directed activities to include ETE work, work on his substance misuse, psychological health and offending behaviour. The licence was worded so as to indicate that breach would follow one rather than two warnings over non-compliance with the licence.

Bracknell Forest YOS

General criterion: 3.4 - The YOT demonstrates positive outcomes in its work with children and young people subject to custodial sentences.

The work with Jane, a 15 year old young person sentenced to custody for a first offence, was a model of the benefits of proactive liaison between agencies in the criminal justice system. A comprehensive assessment by the prison's educational psychologist revealed that attention was required to be paid to Jane's learning style. The YOT worker adapted intervention methods accordingly, ensuring that targets were appropriately focused and achievable. A simple paper-based system to reframe targets as 'bite-size' was used. The YOT maintained very regular contact with Jane, using staff that were likely to be working with her in the community.

Richmond upon Thames YOT

This example involved Sonny, a complex case of a young person who was convicted of supplying controlled substances. There was no evidence of significant personal drug use, with the motivation for offending directed towards financial gain. Whilst in the custody, the young person was supported by the YOT to achieve a number of educational qualifications. Complicated by deportation procedures, through which Sonny was well supported by YOT staff, he was released into the community and had since found full-time employment.

East Sussex

The ETE support worker and the Careers Wales adviser at the local YOI worked together to support BC who had been learning computer skills at a local training scheme prior to his sentence. The careers advisor completed all the necessary paperwork so that when BC left the YOI on Friday he was able to restart his training the following Monday. He completed his computer training, received a qualification and was able to progress to the next level.

Bridgend YOT

Victims and restorative justice

General criterion: 4.1 - Victims of children and young people who have offended feel that they have been assisted by the intervention of the YOT in feeling safer and achieving closure.

The YOT used a five session Letter of Apology Programme which set the production of the letter within the context of general victim awareness work. It looked at the participant's own experiences and aimed to produce a meaningful letter of apology to the victim, or an explanation to the Youth Offender Panel. The YOT also used the Think Victim work programme and undertook pre-programme work where necessary (e.g. if the offence was denied).

Westminster YOT

A South African woman, who had been a victim of crime, returned to South Africa and was unable to attend the initial Youth Offender Panel. She was keen to engage in the process and so the review panel was held at a convenient time when she returned to the UK a few months later.

Westminster YOT

As a reparative intervention, the 'Headway' programme facilitated meetings between children and young people with a brain injured person, together with their carer, to gain an understanding of the effect of head injuries and to increase their awareness of the consequences of offending. This programme was targeted at young people who had committed violent offences or motoring offences.

Lewisham YOT

Two young people were convicted of theft of £700 worth of alcohol from a miner's social club. They both subsequently carried out direct reparation, under the supervision of sessional workers, clearing out some disused rooms there. The victim was very satisfied with the service that he had received from the YOS, and one of the young people had enquired about the possibility of future employment at the club.

Derbyshire YOS

The victim liaison officer had worked with a number of businesses, including large supermarkets, and had developed a protocol with them which set out what they wished to happen when they became victims of crime.

Pembrokeshire YOT

S, a 17 year old male, had committed an offence under the influence of alcohol. He received a referral order and completed 24 hrs of reparation, a combination of a restorative justice conference, a letter of apology and community reparation at a local church and a park.

The victim's experience of the restorative justice conference was so positive that he felt that the young person did not need to complete any more reparation. The young person's experience of reparation was so positive that he enquired about becoming a volunteer.

Bracknell Forest YOS

Jane had been assaulted by a young person who had stolen her daughter's mobile phone. She did not want to meet the young person at first but agreed to put her comments on paper and these were conveyed to him at the youth offender panel. Jane was kept informed of what progress the young person had made on the referral order and at the three month stage agreed to go to the panel and meet with the perpetrator face to face. The meeting enabled Jane to explain to the young person the impact of his offending and to achieve an element of closure in relation to the crime.

Kirklees YOT

A group of students, two from other European countries, were victims of a domestic burglary committed by a group of young people. The students lost a large number of their possessions, including their computers. To assist the victims in coming to terms with the offence, a restorative justice conference was held and arrangements were made for all the students to attend. This included helping one return to Liverpool, and providing a translator for the conference. As a result, the students felt that they would safely return to the city on another occasion.

Liverpool YOS

CP was on a supervision order. He had subjected his girlfriend to sustained domestic abuse. The YOT had instigated good inter-agency cooperation with appropriate referrals to the police. The case was also referred to and discussed at a domestic abuse MARAC meeting, which was attended by the case supervisor and the victim/offender mediation worker, who maintained close contact with the victim, offering her continual support. Appropriate plans were put in place to reduce the risk the offender posed to the victim.

Bridgend YOT

JM had been convicted of a racially aggravated offence. The offence was committed with others over the age of 18. Prior to this conviction he had already been the subject of a number of ASBO referrals for unacceptable behaviour in the community. The VOM and reparation worker together with the ASBO young people's worker and ASB Problem Solving Group involved the offender, other young people and community groups in putting on a diversity awareness week with events in local schools, girls' and boys' clubs and a community centre. The week ended with a final day of displays, demonstrations and sharing. The poster and flyer were designed by JM as part of his reparation and he was required to attend the final day's event, which was also attended by 200 people from the local community and some dignitaries.

Bridgend YOT

In response to a number of questions raised by victims, the VLO was preparing a series of leaflets for victims, explaining the different types of orders that the children and young people were subject to. An appropriate development in response to an identified need.

Southend YOS

Management and leadership

General criterion: 5.1 – The Management Board works actively with others, including the YOT Manager, in an integrated way to maximise the likelihood of improving outcomes for children and young people.

YOS staff were regularly invited to attend the PMG to give presentations on their work. This had a number of positive effects for both the PMG and the staff, who felt able to contribute in a significant way to strategic management.

Bracknell Forest YOS

The YOT Manager and his staff had taken the lead in helping the local newspaper to prepare a week long series of articles about the youth justice system and the work of the YOT. The articles were well researched and written and gave an accurate picture of the challenges posed by youth offending. Importantly, the articles also described the constructive work the YOT was doing to prevent and reduce youth crime. In doing this, the series of articles helped to inform and promote public confidence in the work of the YOT.

Kirklees YOT

General criterion: 5.2 - Partner organisations and the YOT work together effectively to protect the public, reduce antisocial and offending behaviour and deliver positive outcomes for children and young people.

Following the death of young person a Gold Group was convened by the borough police commander. The YOS was among the relevant local authority partners invited to participate. Active information exchange between agencies assisted the investigation and the management of safety issues in the community. The YOS played a full part in this process and contributed to the activities geared at preventing additional attacks in the community and supporting the wider youth population to come to terms with the murder.

Hammersmith and Fulham YOS

Effective negotiation with the local LSC had resulted in some training providers having contractual obligations to offer places to young offenders. A Merseyside consortium of YOTs was hoping to extend this through the Merseyside ETE strategy.

Knowsley YOS

The Mayor's Traineeship Programme worked with children and young people who were unclear about career paths. The young people were identified at year 11, in collaboration with Connexions, and joined the programme on a self-referral or voluntary basis. Traineeships were currently available in Millwall football club, the council, the youth service, team sport and Connexions. After an intensive three week programme, including Curriculum Vitae preparation, interview techniques and one week at the local authority residential centre, four young people were offered traineeships; three with the youth service and one with Connexions. They were paid £9,000 per year and were to continue training within the local authority.

Lewisham YOT

The YOS had worked with community safety and children's services to develop a retraction protocol for children and young people who had committed offences that would categorize them as 'a risk to children' on a life-long basis. Such a classification could preclude them from certain activities and employment. It was accepted that the context in which some offences were committed by children did not merit this response. As a result the protocol outlined the procedures to remove them from this list of offenders, providing that appropriate assessments had been undertaken.

Liverpool YOS

Gloucestershire YOT worked with a variety of statutory and non-statutory agencies to widen the range of services on offer to children and young people. As part of this approach the YOT was represented on the Arson Task Group and worked with the Fire and Rescue Service on programmes for dangerous drivers and fire setters.

Gloucestershire YOT

The effects of Bolton's national pilot youth health programme were being felt by children and young people in the YOT. The healthy eating project, in particular, was opening up new dietary experiences for them, challenging less healthy foods through a combination of an information campaign coupled with making fruit and healthy snacks directly available. Funding for these had been provided locally and a coordinated effort was made to target hard-to-reach groups, through the YOT and RAP.

Bolton YOT

Problematic levels of reoffending, coupled with data analysis and police intelligence, encouraged the senior managers of criminal justice and community safety agencies to pool their efforts. This resulted in regular meetings focusing on a problematic group of PPOs. This assisted all agencies in tracking and evaluating the activities of this group, leading to more effective planning interventions and tasking in a coordinated way. This was an example of effective inter-agency coordination and collaboration towards meeting shared objectives.

Bolton YOT

General criterion: 5.3 - Positive outcomes for children and young people are enhanced by effective staff.

Excellent work was demonstrated between the YOT, Bourne County Primary School and Hailsham Community College. As a result of this joint working, the number of fixed-term exclusions had fallen by over 50% and the number of antisocial incidents at playtime had been greatly reduced. In the college, which benefited from a full-time youth justice worker, permanent exclusions were down from 11 to one over the past year. Attendance levels improved and the incidents of antisocial behaviour had greatly reduced.

East Sussex YOT

The local council's approach to the delivery of diversity awareness was named Richmix. It provided a thoughtful, simple and focused way of delivering training for its entire staff, including those in the YOT. This was mandatory for all workers from an early stage of their employment with the authority. It had a clear impact upon the staff, related well to the day-to-day work and was valued by everyone who had undertaken it. Workers were able to identify various ways that it had positively informed their work practices.

Richmond upon Thames YOT

In order to increase the numbers of referral panel members from black and other minority ethnic communities, an advertisement had been placed into the *Guide for Black and other Minority Ethnic communities Living in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight*. This was a yearly guide that was targeted specifically at these communities.

Wessex YOT

A comprehensive foundation training programme, consisting of eight modules requiring 16 days attendance plus distance learning, was provided to new caseworkers, much of the programme being compulsory.

Modules covered an introduction to youth justice and the YOT, restorative justice and victims work, the organisational culture (multi-agency working), working with adolescents, working with children and young people who sexually offend, child protection in youth justice, use of the information systems and enforcement.

All modules were also available to existing staff.

Wessex YOT

The YOT held a weekly multi-agency business meeting, which gave opportunity for new and problematic cases to be discussed and joint plans developed to meet need. They also facilitated communication between agencies and collaborative working.

Pembrokeshire YOT

The YOS was the first local authority department to complete an equality impact analysis on a key policy. This was judged by the Director to be a good example and was circulated to all departments to assist them in this work.

Southend YOS