



- making it work in Glasgow

Newsletter

Issue No.17 May 2009

Can we predict which young people might become involved in violent offending?

The Youth Justice Research and Development Team carried out a profile of young people who had been charged with at least one of three types of violent offences between April and December 2008. The purpose of this profile was to increase our understanding of the risks and needs of young people involved in violent offending, and also to begin to assess whether there are any risk factors or triggers that might predispose a young person to become involved in violence. This work was designed to complement work being undertaken nationally for the Violence Champions Group.

The young people

The report found that there were 129 young people who had been charged with Murder, Attempted Murder or Serious Assault during the period. The vast majority of young people (87%) were male and were 16 years old on average at the time of the offence.

Needs and risks

The analysis produced some interesting results. Many of the young people followed the common characteristics that we see in young people involved in offending i.e. a long history of involvement with social work, usually originating from welfare concerns from a young age, experience of being looked after and accommodated and multiple needs and risks.

However a noticeable minority of young people did not appear to fit the 'usual' profile, as the figures below suggest:

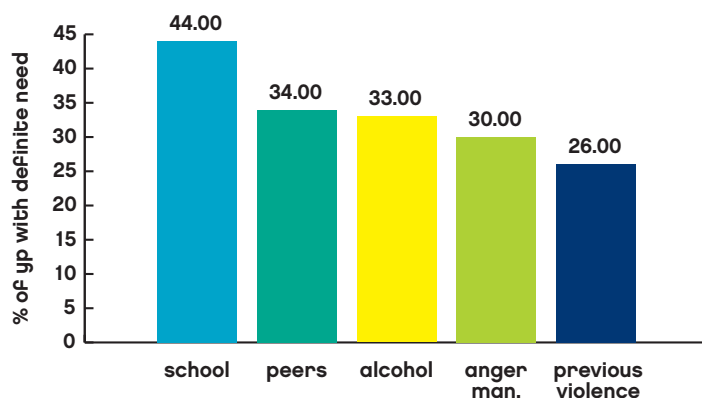
24 young people (19%) were not known to Social Work at all prior to their offence

53 young people (41%) were not an open Social Work case at the time of their offence

99 young people (77%) were not looked after or looked after and accommodated at the time of the offence

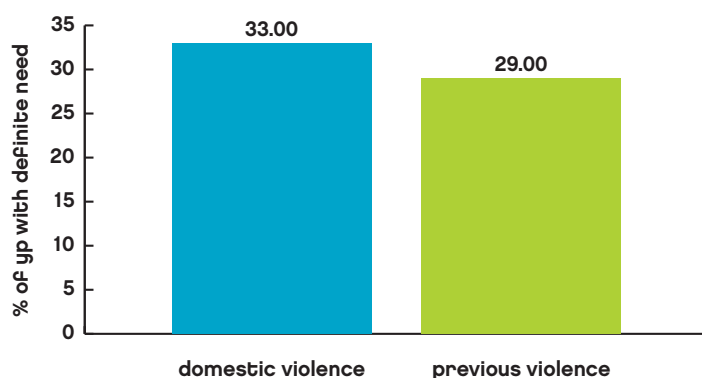


However looking at the young people's needs and risks over the previous 12 months highlighted several common needs and risks, however often at lower level than is usually seen in offender profiles. The chart below outlines the five most commonly occurring needs and risks:



Historical issues

Two areas were hypothesised to possibly increase the likelihood of a young person becoming involved in violent acts: being a victim of, or witnessing, domestic violence and also a history of serious or frequent violence in the past. Thus careFirst records were scrutinised for the occurrence of either issue, and the findings are outlined in the chart below:



Thus the graph shows that 1 in 3 young people had witnessed or been a victim of domestic violence in the past, and this violence was often serious or sustained. Almost as many young people had been the perpetrator of a violent act in the past. However it is likely that both of these figures are an underestimate, as historic case records were very sparse or non-existent for many young people, due to their limited prior involvement with Social Work.

What does this mean?

Our work in increasing our understanding of violence is just at an early stage, however the analysis points at several areas for further exploration or research.

Firstly it appears that it can be quite difficult to predict violence, as several of the young people had not required any formal intervention prior to their offence. For those with a known history it appears that many young people had a high level of exposure to violence, either in the home, or among their peers or communities, and this provides support for the assumption that 'violence begets violence'.

It also appears that many of the young people had been victims, as although levels of bullying and victimisation were not specifically looked at in this report, indications are that this was a fairly frequent occurrence, especially among young people without many other risk factors for offending. These problems often first became evident in school.

Alcohol was also a common factor in the violent offences, as was anger management.

Thus the evidence suggests that possible triggers might be: previous experience of violence; previous violent acts; anger management; being a victim of bullying and alcohol misuse. We will continue to explore this area in more detail over the coming months, and will work closely with our colleagues on the Violence Champions Group to further expand our knowledge of violence across the country.

The full report is available on the Research and Development pages of Youth Justice Connect.

http://connect.glasgow.gov.uk/YourService/SocialWorkServices/Sections_Teams/Children_FamilyServices/YouthJustice/ResearchAndDevelopment/

ISMS: Providing an 'alternative to remand'

The background

Over the years the ISMS service has been comprehensively evaluated and has been proven to be effective at reducing offending and reducing the number of admissions to secure care. The latest ISMS evaluation, looking at longer-term outcomes, and also the impact on young people to access the service more recently is available on connect and has shown that these outcomes are sustained over time.

http://connect.glasgow.gov.uk/YourService/SocialWorkServices/Sections_Teams/Children_FamilyServices/YouthJustice/ResearchAndDevelopment/

Unfortunately our reduced use of secure care has increased the availability of secure placements available to sentencers when considering young people for remand, and thus the use of secure establishments for young people in remand has increased to fill the spare capacity. This was an unintended consequence of the service, and does not result in positive outcomes for young people nor is it a cost effective use of the budget.

What do we intend to do?

The ISMS service has shown that we can successfully manage high risk, chaotic and vulnerable young people in the community. Thus it seemed logical to translate our experiences from the Children's Hearings System to the Courts.

A small practice team is being created to deliver this service, which will work with young people aged under 18 for whom the Procurator Fiscal has indicated they will be opposing Bail. The young person will be screened for their suitability for the service, and information will be provided to the Court. Should the Sheriff agree to Bail with a condition of ISMS the young person will undergo further multi-agency assessment and will receive an individually tailored package of support designed to address their needs and risks.

The service will look similar to the current ISMS package, however it will be slightly streamlined and usually shorter in timescale than the average ISMS order is at present. Young people will not be electronically monitored, unless this is also imposed by a Children's Hearing, however many will also be subject to a curfew as part of their Bail conditions.

What do you need to know?

The service will formally launch in Summer 2009 and more information will be provided nearer to the time so that all staff are aware of the aims and objectives, target group and referral process.

Young Person's Update

Horse Riding

All young people at North and West CLASS are encouraged to participate in various sports in order to promote healthy living. The horse riding at Kenmure Stables is part of this programme of encouraging a healthy lifestyle. An added benefit of this activity is that it helps young people to develop their empathic response. They need to learn to ride the horse and also to respect it.



Young people have horse riding lessons each week and each block of lessons lasts for six weeks. During each session the young person receives an hour's tuition on the key skills involved in learning to ride a horse. After the riding lesson the young people help in a range of livery chores. They learn that their horse needs to be cared for after each activity. All of the pupils have their own horse and during the six-week block strong bonds are formed between the young person and their horse. Many of the young people at North and West CLASS have passed a course in stable management...
...so well done to them all!

SQA Examinations

The SQA exam diet for 2009 is now underway across Scotland. CLASS is the registered SQA centre for Intensive Services and is also the approved examination centre. This allows us to hold exams in our own centres and we have 30 young people sitting exams including Standard Grade English, Maths and Social Vocational Skills and Intermediate 1 English and Maths. Candidates are from across the service including North, NorthEast and NorthWest CLASS, ISMS, Interrupted Learners Service and EVIP. Candidates have all been working hard to complete Polios and their coursework and have been busy revising past papers. Good luck to all our young people as they sit their exams! Candidates will all receive their results from SQA on Wednesday 5th August.



ISMS Education

ISMS education have 8 young people sitting both English and Maths Standard Grade exams this session. Below is piece from Kieran Tominey's English Standard Grade Folio- Discursive Writing.

Evolution theory

Evolution theory first thought of by Charles Darwin who came up the theory of the survival of the fittest and natural selection. These theories were taken the wrong way by the Americans and the most famously by Germany's Adolf Hitler in the Second World War. What he meant was that if something survived because it was faster or smarter, it would be able to reproduce and keep its genes in the gene pool, not if it were stupid not to be allowed to reproduce. Darwin used his famous Darwin's tree that said, "At the root was a single organism that split at one branch". For example, a small creature like a fish or some sea animal developed into a bird, and so on until it evolved into an ape, then a hominid, which is part of the Neanderthal family, then human beings. This is proven by DNA.

Now the reason we evolved the way we did is because we had to adapt to our environment. For example a worm that had the advantage, let's say eyes that helped it have the edge to get away from predators'. This worm survived and its gene was kept in the gene pool and the ones that did not have the advantage of evolution died off. The others flourished and this is supported by a number of great scientists as it is based on that we all started as single organisms.

The single organisms were made from simple gases like CO₂ and H₂O plus other gases. Lately this theory was proven in the University of Glasgow. This does not mean we started this way, it is just a theory but what the scientists did say was that we came from a fish or some kind of other organism such as a bird and eventually into something like a monkey and then we then we evolved from the ape species then into Neanderthal man approximately 150,000 years ago. The last Neanderthal man lived around 50,000 years ago.

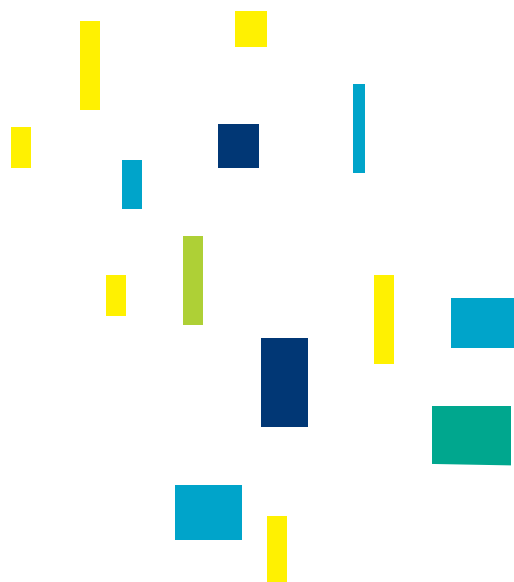
Another part of Darwin's evolution theory is that humans, birds or whales become what they are today through evolving. For example, the human race has a nose because we had to smell for what kind of food we are meant to eat and or not. An animal like a shark for example can smell its prey from more than a mile away it needs this sense to hunt and feed. So did it get this by coincidence or did its ancestors adapt by evolving so they could hunt their prey? Therefore, do we look the way we are because we were meant to be this way or did we have to adapt like the shark?

Remember, this is just a theory. I am not saying god does not exist I am just saying what if.

Theory of the big bang

This is my favourite theory of all. There are a few different theories of how the earth came about but I am sorry to say I have not studied these but I know a small amount about the theory of the big bang. It is hard to find a good book on the subject but I like it so much I will tell you what I know.

Two atoms collided with each other and created black matter and other different substances. That eventually created stars, planets and suns that are in fact just big stars. This theory is now being put to the test by scientists in Switzerland. A huge machine will smash two atoms together and then take pictures of what happens afterwards. When this happens they will have to take hundreds of these pictures to find the answers we all seek.



Quarterly Update Performance

Criminal Justice

CHCP teams should now be aware of the regular joint Youth Justice and Criminal Justice Performance meetings. In areas where Youth justice PTL attendance has been good, there have been some significant improvements in performance however there have been recent drops in certain areas. Again these meetings have also identified some common Factors that affect the performance indicators. These are outlined below:

Employment Status

The employment status field is the key performance indicator, therefore it is vitally important to complete this along with barriers to employment and/or any other employment fields.

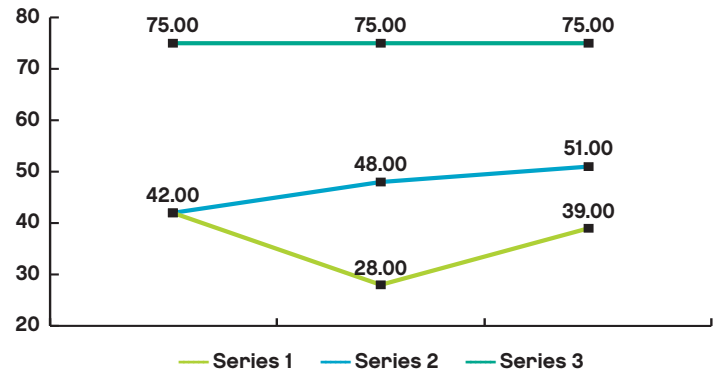
Risk assessment

It is important to make sure that the date for the risk assessment is at least one day after the request dates and a day before the date of submission to court.

Main Preferred option

When selecting a preferred option from the drop down list you also need to select the tick box to show that this is the main preferred option.

Percentage reports meeting target



SCRA Reports

Glasgow Youth Justice continues to measure performance as per the Former National Standard of 75% of reports being submitted on time. The chart below details the monthly performance, as reported by SCRA, for offence based reports being requested by, and submitted to SCRA between January and March 2009.

Performance in Glasgow matched that of national performance in January however this took a significant dip during February. This has again improved by 11% during March although remains lower than the national average and 36% below the national standard.

To see the Full reports from SCRA follow this link to access the performance pages on the Intranet site.

http://connect.glasgow.gov.uk/YourService/SocialWorkServices/Sections_Teams/Children_FamilyServices/YouthJustice/Performance/Scramonthly.htm

Service Profile: Youthpoint



For much of Glasgow's youth the lure of teenage gang culture, which often appears to offer them status, support and influence, remains strong. The Youthpoint programme was launched by Scottish children's charity Aberlour to try and tackle this problem in 'hotspots' identified by Police and other agencies within Govan and Pollok. The project aims to help young people access information, advice and support by providing an information service, detached streetwork, programme based activities and volunteer training.

Alex Cunningham, Service Manager, explains how Youthpoint workers initially engage with young people in these troubled areas: "The main goal of our streetwork teams is to build up trust with young people. Young people might be reluctant to speak with workers for a number of reasons; they may mistake them for the police or peer pressure might prevent them from engaging. The key thing at this stage is to overcome those obstacles and get them interested in what we have to offer."

With Youthpoint staff going into areas plagued by gang violence safety must be a concern, however as Alex explains precautions are taken to ensure workers are as safe as possible: "We have a team of 16 and we never send someone out alone to do streetwork, there are always at least two workers. We also contact the CCTV people and let them know our routes and when the workers will be on those routes."

Once a young person has become involved with Youthpoint, workers will enrol them in Youthpoint programmes as well as directing them towards other useful services. According to Alex it often takes some time for a young person to feel comfortable: "we once had a lad who didn't say a word for eight weeks, just came and sat in silence. Eventually though he began to open up and that's the way it works a lot of the time. They might ask you to meet them privately for a chat. We also have a textback system that we run through a website so they know they can get in touch with us anytime".

Youthpoint programmes range from creative workshops and conflict resolution training to sporting events. Rival gangs are often encouraged to interact through sport and there have been football tournaments in the past between gang members without any incidences of violence.

Feedback from young people who have been involved with the project has been largely positive: "We quite often get young people who have worked with us in the past popping in to see how we're doing. I think they appreciate our approach to working with them. We listen to them and respect them and ultimately the project is voluntary so they know we're not forcing them to do anything. We don't use physical restraint or anything like that. Quite often our staff are the only positive role models in a young person's life and I think they realise the value of the relationships they form here".

While Youthpoint has experienced some success, Alex acknowledges there are many challenges ahead for the project: "In a practical sense our biggest challenge is definitely funding, especially in the current economic climate with the squeeze on voluntary organisations. I also feel negative perceptions of young people need to be addressed. The negative stereotyping of young people, perpetuated by the press, of hooded thugs is very much at odds with what we see here and think it's important to counter that image with positive stories".

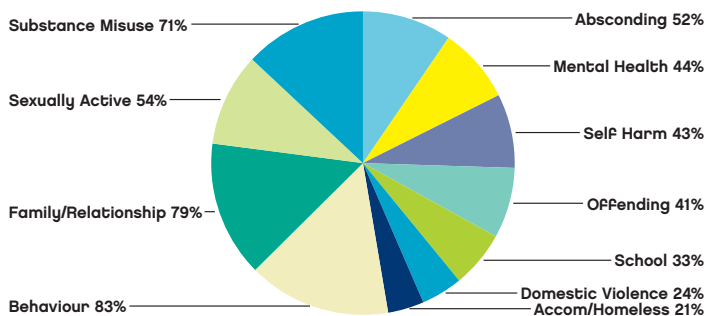
Contact: youthpointglasgow@aberlour.org.uk

Girls Research into Risks and Needs

Research recently conducted by the Youth Justice research team into the risk and needs of 66 girls and young women subject to Glasgow's vulnerable young person's procedures (between 1st April 2007 and 31st March 2008) revealed that;

- Girls and young women subject to VYP procedures have complex and multi-faceted risks and needs.
- Chaotic behaviour and behavioural issues such as aggression & violence are found to be particularly pertinent issues for these girls. The following chart illustrates the most commonly identified issues noted in case records. On average girls/ young women were found to exhibit 5.8 of the following identified risk categories;

Chart 1:
Most commonly identified issues noted in case records



Findings from this study are being used to inform the work of 'The Vulnerable Girls and Young Women's Champions Group' a national group set up to share and improve practice across Scotland for working with girls/ young women posing a high risk to themselves and/ or others. The group is currently undertaking work to determine the scale and range of needs and risks experienced by girls and young women across all 32 local authorities in Scotland.

The full report entitled '**Vulnerable Young Females Glasgow: Needs and Risks Profile: April 07 – March 08**' is available on the Research and Development pages of Youth Justice Connect.

http://connect.glasgow.gov.uk/YourService/SocialWorkServices/Sections_Teams/Children_FamilyServices/YouthJustice/ResearchAndDevelopment/



Youth Justice News

ISMS and Beyond...

A snapshot of the service in the last two years and a longer term Follow-up

The latest ISMS evaluation is available on Connect http://connect.glasgow.gov.uk/YourService/SocialWorkServices/Sections_Teams/Children_FamilyServices/YouthJustice/ResearchAndDevelopment. This short report looks at the effectiveness of the service over the last two years, and also revisits the original cohort of young people who started with ISMS in the early days, to begin to assess what the longer-term outcomes have been.

The findings are very positive, and point to substantial success in reducing offending, both in the short and longer-term. For more recent ISMS young people, offending was reduced by more than 50% while on the ISMS order, and the volume of offending was still 45% down in the six months after leaving the service, compared to offending rates prior to ISMS. For the original group of young people, the volume of offending between 18 and 24 months after leaving, was 58% lower than it was prior to ISMS.

These are excellent outcomes for the young people and the partners involved are to be congratulated on their hard work and achievements.

ISMS - celebrating success



ISMS was shortlisted for the Council's Flourish Team Excellence Awards in the Category 'Making Glasgow a Cleaner, Safer City'. A small group of staff from the team attended the awards ceremony at the City Chambers on the 11th March, and a good time was had by all. Unfortunately the team did not win, with the award going to Glasgow Community & Safety Services' Nite Zone, however reaching the Finals was an excellent achievement in itself and all the staff and agencies involved in the service should be congratulated for their hard work and effort. The service is also pleased to announce that they have been shortlisted for the MJ Public Sector Awards and also the SSSC Care Accolades. Good luck to ISMS team in these awards!

Youth Justice Strategy Group Update

The Youth Justice Strategy Group met on the 24th April to progress the Youth Justice Strategic workplan for the city. The group signed off the latest ISMS evaluation, after praising the service on its success and discussed the findings from the profile of young violent offenders. The Group also agreed to establish an MST Steering Group as a subgroup in order to take forward the implementation and development of the service.

National Update

The Scottish Government has been busy implementing its strategy, 'Preventing Offending by Young People: a Framework for Action' and the accompanying Performance, Planning and Improvement Framework. This performance framework is a voluntary model for monitoring Local Authority performance, and covers all the key themes in the strategy: prevention and diversion; early and effective intervention; managing high risk and victims and community confidence.

Glasgow will be implementing the PPIF in 2009 as it is a clear and comprehensive way of measuring our performance, and clearly sits with our reporting requirements within the Single Outcome Agreement. The responsibility for this will mainly fall on to the Research & Development Team, and also partner agencies who have responsibility for sharing information, and thus should not impact on practitioners unduly.

The Youth Justice Co-ordinators Group also meets quarterly, bringing together Youth Justice Co-ordinators from all 32 Local Authorities. This group not only provides a useful opportunity to network and share ideas between areas, but has a direct link to Government and also has oversight of the 'Champions' Groups and practitioners networks across the country. These thematic Champions groups have been established with the aim of sharing knowledge, expertise and driving forward research and practice development in several priority areas for young people: Sexually Harmful Behaviour; Violence and also Vulnerable Young Women.

Securing Our Future Initiative (SOFI)

This group was commissioned by the Government and tasked with considering how to make best use of Scotland's secure care resources to improve outcomes for young people and their communities. The recommendations of the group were published on the SIRCC website <http://www.sircc.org.uk/> in February 2009.

In April the Scottish Government and COSLA published their response to the report and have accepted in full the nine recommendations from the SOFI group. These include reducing the capacity of secure to 18-bedded units, and supporting Local Authorities to expand their provision of alternative to secure care. Read the full response here.

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/04/23163903/3>

Youth Justice Forums Evaluation

The Youth Justice Forums, in their first year of organising CHCP-based services to direct young people away from offending, have seen over three hundred of the most high-risk and prolific young offenders in Glasgow discussed. Having passed the anniversary of their inception, the effectiveness of the Forums is now due for assessment. Therefore, the Youth Justice Research Team have now embarked upon the first full Youth Justice Forum evaluation. The evaluation will use research methods involving quantitative offending statistics and measures of services delivered as well as qualitative interviews of forum members and some practitioners involved with the young people. The evaluation will be conducted over the summer period and published in the latter part of 2009.

Training and Events Update

YLS Master Classes

Following the successful delivery of the first YLS-CMI training we will now be delivering master classes to support staff who have previously undertaken YLS training but who would like to reflect on their practice and hone their skills.

The first of these master classes is taking place on Thursday 30th April and was a huge success! More will follow so watch this space!

Pro Social Modelling

We are now delivering Pro-Social Modelling training in-house as a means of ensuring expedient access to mandatory training as well as saving the service significant money. The first delivery of this course took place on Thursday 7th May. Further information, including the application form, is available online.

Motivational Interviewing

Motivational interviewing is a directive, client-centred counselling style for eliciting behaviour change by helping clients to explore and resolve ambivalence.

There are still places on the next course 19th & 20th May 09.

Apply online on the Youth Justice pages of the Connect Website.

SASSI

The SASSI is the 'Substance Abuse Subtle Screening Inventory' which looks at the impact of alcohol and other substances on a young person's life. Youth Justice Services are currently piloting the use of the SASSI across CHCPs and ISMS. As a part of the pilot three staff are currently undergoing training to become competent at the completion and scoring of the SASSI. Should the pilot prove to be successful then full briefings will be offered.

Further information about Training & Events including application forms can be found on the Training and Events pages of Youth Justice Connect.

http://connect.glasgow.gov.uk/YourService/SocialWorkServices/Sections_Teams/Children_FamilyServices/YouthJustice/TrainingAndEvents/

If you have any suggestions or questions regarding training or learning events please contact the **Youth Justice Senior Learning and Development Officer on 0141 276 3891 or at Marie.Gannon@sw.glasgow.gov.uk**

Update

If you have anything you would like included in this section please Forward to Graeme Mason via outlook or call 0141 276 3883

EVENTS

Glasgow School of Social Work Research Seminars

04/06/09 "Ethics of Assistive Technology" Andrew Eccles,
Glasgow School of Social Work

Email: kelly.docherty@strath.ac.uk
0141 950 3180

PUBLICATIONS

The Youth Justice Journal, including back copies is available online <http://yjj.sagepub.com/>

The Probation Journal including back copies is available online <http://prb.sagepub.com/>

Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice including back copies is available online <http://yvj.sagepub.com/>

Criminology and Criminal Justice including back copies is available online <http://intl-crj.sagepub.com/>

BOOKS

All titles are available at Willan Publishing

Understanding Youth Offending: Risk-Focused research, policy and practice

Steve Case and Kevin Haines

This book aims to provide an understanding of youth offending and policy responses, focusing particularly on risk-focused approaches which have underpinned much recent academic research, youth justice policy and interventions designed to reduce and prevent problem behaviour.

Available June 2009

Lost in Transition? Young adult offenders in the criminal justice system

Friedrich Losel, Anthony Bottoms and David Farrington

Young adults aged 18-21 are at the peak age for offending, but they have been neglected in comparison with young people under 18, they have few programmes designed specifically for them, and they are increasingly held in adult prisons rather than young offender institutions. This latest volume in the Cambridge Criminal Justice System focuses upon young adults and their treatment in the criminal justice system.

Available July 2009



- making it work in Glasgow

Contributions to the newsletter

For those who are interested in
contributing an article to the
newsletter or any comments in
relation to its content,
please contact Graeme Mason
on 0141-276-3883.

