



# Bulletin

April

# 2021

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## News from the AYM Executive Board



### **Executive Board**

Well spring is officially here and signs of a return to some sort of normality are also emerging. In the meantime, the work of the AYM continues and the Executive Board met on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March and covered another large agenda including a presentation from **Alan McDonald, Assistant Chief Inspector and Head of YOT Inspections in HMI Probation** who outlined the changes within HMI Probation, which include Andrea Brazier, former YOT Manager at Wiltshire YOT, becoming the new Head of YOT Inspections; replacing Alan when he retires at the end of May.

***We would like to thank Alan for his work and his engagement with the AYM on YOT Inspections over many years, and wish him all the best for the future.***

Alan advised the Executive that whilst the new YOT inspections will begin in April, the youth to adult thematic inspection has been delayed to later in the year to allow for the probation reforms to bed in. An inspection into BAME boys will be undertaken, and a similar inspection for girls is planned. An inspection on girls in custody will take place jointly with HMI Prisons.

The Executive also received a presentation from **Lisa Durkin and Pauline Burke of HMI Probation on the development of the HMIP Effective Practice Case Management Guide**, an interactive guide available on the HMI Probation website. The two outlined the rationale for developing the guide – to ensure that effective practice, evidenced in YOT inspections against the YOT inspection standards, can be made available to other YOTs.

Feedback from children was used to inform some of this work and their comments on practice were enlightening and included a call for more home visits, an increase in the number of contacts for supervision as well as a plea to accompany them to external meetings rather than signposting them to attend alone.

The Executive were pleased to receive a walkthrough of the guide and as a result of feedback from the Executive, Liza and Pauline will ensure that YOTs are offered an opportunity to see a demonstration in HMIP hosted seminars. If you wish to view the system before that time [click here](#).

If you are being inspected and want to know how the approach HMI Probation is taking to reviewing practice will benefit children in the future, they are keen for you to ask so that your thoughts can be considered and inspections improved.

As the work of the **Youth Justice Sector Improvement Partnership (YJSIP)** moves toward a new year of work, the Executive welcomed Kay Davidson to the meeting. Kay and Tania Riedel as joint chairs of YJSIP, have now assumed the portfolio lead for sector led improvement within the AYM Executive, bringing YSJIP and the sector even closer.

The Executive is keen to ensure that its work reflects and takes account of the views and perspectives of youth offending services nationally. We are therefore keen to ensure all regional representative roles on the Executive are filled and are looking for a representative from the North East to join colleagues from other regions.

**If you are interested in becoming the regional representative for the North East** please contact Ian Langley our secretary at [secretary@aym.org.uk](mailto:secretary@aym.org.uk)

## Speech Language and Communication

The AYM in partnership with the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists and 'I CAN' (the children's communication charity) supported Amendment 92 to the Domestic Abuse Bill. The amendment was put forward in the House of Lords by Lord Ramsbotham, a long-time advocate for improving identification and support for those with speech, language and communication needs and the provision of speech and language therapists. The government acknowledged during Committee Stage the importance of speech, language and communication needs, and how these needs can act as a barrier to accessing support, and made a commitment to consider how the issues can be properly addressed in statutory guidance.

Amendment 92 seeks to strengthen this commitment by **inserting specific references in five chapters of the guidance, to speech, language and communication needs and the role of speech and language therapists in supporting people experiencing domestic abuse, their children and the professionals working with them.**

Amendment 92 has four aspects designed to ensure that guidance highlights:

- the links between domestic abuse and speech, language and communication needs;
- the impact of witnessing domestic abuse on children's speech, language and communication;
- the services available to support people with speech, language and communication needs who are experiencing domestic abuse and their children; and
- how support provided by local authorities can be made inclusive and accessible to people with speech, language and communication needs.

The AYM was mentioned by Lord Ramsbotham's in proposing Amendment 92 to the Bill, which had its final day of hearing on the 17th March. As a result of the amendment, the government stated it will make an explicit reference to speech, language and communication needs in the statutory guidance.

**Diz Minnit, AYM's portfolio lead for speech, language and communication**, who was active in the engagement of AYM with Amendment 92, was also approached by the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists to seek **AYM support for an open letter to the Prime Minister.**



The letter cites positive and negative experiences of those with speech, language and communication needs during the pandemic and and urges the government to ensure:

- **national and local recovery policies:**
  - identify and provide appropriate response to an individual's needs and specifically to support for children and young people's communication and language development and education recovery plans, and
  - recognize speech and language therapy as an integral part of the of the recovery plan for mental health services
- **speech and language therapy services are appropriately resourced** to respond to the increase in demand for speech and language therapy services as a result of the pandemic.

The letter calls for the government to

*'ensure that **building back is not just about catching up.** It really must be about building back better – securing a real, sustained improvement in the lives of the people we work with, support and represent and their families and carers.'*

## ***Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill***

The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill was introduced to Parliament on the 9<sup>th</sup> March and had its second hearing a week later. The bill contains many provisions which will impact the youth justice system and young people involved with it.

Concerningly the government's equalities statement identifies that the level of disproportionality of children of black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds (BAME) within the criminal justice system will increase as a result of this bill, but states the legislation is a 'proportionate means' of protecting the public.

Whilst there are some positive proposals within the bill, such as the proposed reforms to custodial remand and criminal records, the AYM believes these should be developed further. Identified areas of negative impact on children in contact with the law include:

- a more punitive approach to offending,
- an increase in the number of children in custody,
- increased disproportionality,
- treating older children as adults,

The AYM has joined other organisations in signing an open letter to the Prime Minister, calling for the government to withdraw the elements of the Bill which it concedes will exacerbate racial inequalities, and to launch a proper public consultation.

[Click here](#) to read the open letter

To access the Bill [click here](#)

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## ***Quality of Advocacy***

Jessica Edwards, Portfolio Lead for Courts will be attending the Quality of Advocacy Working Group on the 27<sup>th</sup> April, the first meeting for quite some time due to the resource implications for services as a result of the pandemic.

The meeting which considers the quality of legal representation and provides a forum for improving the standard of advocacy provided in courts involving children. This meeting will hear from some of the Youth Justice Board (YJB) Youth Ambassadors who will share their experiences and observations and will be co-chaired on this occasion by Keith Fraser, chair of the YJB.



A number of issues are being considered:

- standards/guidance on advocacy for children,
- specialist training for those representing children,
- the status of youth justice and criminal advocacy for children
- the impact on advocacy during the pandemic.

If you have anything you would like to share from your locality, please contact Jessica at

[jessica.edwards@hackney.gov.uk](mailto:jessica.edwards@hackney.gov.uk)

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## Consultations

The AYM continues to respond to consultations as a membership organisation, recognizing that youth offending services will also wish to respond on behalf of their service and youth justice partnerships.

**HMI Probation** is consulting on its inspection framework and programmes for 2021-2022 and the AYM would like to submit a shared response, in addition to the individual response youth offending services may wish to submit.

To support this our portfolio lead for Monitoring and Inspections Celine Galos has created a short questionnaire which was sent by our business support to members. We encourage members to complete this, the **deadline for completion is 15<sup>th</sup> April 2021**.

If you have any queries please contact [Celine.Gafos@knowsley.gov.uk](mailto:Celine.Gafos@knowsley.gov.uk)

To access the HMI Probation consultation [click here](#)



The Department of Health and Social Care is consulting on its proposed **reform of the Mental Health Act** and Mike Rees Portfolio Lead Mental Health, has provided an outline for members to consider in order for the AYM to provide a shared response.

Mike is asking for all responses to be sent to him at:  
[mike.rees@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:mike.rees@n-somerset.gov.uk)

To access the consultation document [click here](#)

*All consultation responses will be made available to members and published on the AYM website [www.aym.org.uk](http://www.aym.org.uk)*

***Do you have anything you wish the AYM Executive to consider in their next meeting?***

If you do, please let your regional representative know so that it can be discussed at an Executive meeting – you may even wish to attend yourself in order to present on the issue, just let us know.



## Aspiring Future Leaders Course

### **AYM Training for Front Line Managers**



We are pleased to announce our next round of training for front line managers which will be of particular interest to managers in YOTs who are contemplating making applications for more senior roles.



## **Aspiring Future Leaders Programme**

The programme is run in partnership with Solace and is an ILM development programme at level 5. The course consists of an introductory workshop and four two-day modules (9 days).

Due to the restrictions imposed by COVID-19 we are offering the course online but we have the option to change this if face to face training is allowed and preferred by participants.

Introductory Workshop (1 day) <b>10 – 4 on Zoom</b>	Monday 12 July 2021
Module 1 (2 days) Leadership and Change	7/8 September 2021
Module 2 (2 days) Strategic Thinking in Public Services	21/22 October 2021
Module 3 (2 days) Working Collaboratively across organisations	8/9 December 2021
Module 4 (2 days) Coaching for High Performance	19/20 January 2022

### **Optional timings for modules (dependent on training method):**

<b>Zoom training</b>	All dates	10am-4pm
<b>Face to face training (for each module):</b>	Day 1	10:30am - 5pm
	Day 2	9am - 3pm

Each module will include a session with a guest speaker who has a leadership role within our sector.



For more information or to apply for a place on this cohort please contact

[adminsupport@aym.org.uk](mailto:adminsupport@aym.org.uk)

## Youth Justice Sector Led Improvement

***Update from the co-chairs;  
Kay Davidson and Tania Riedel***



We are delighted to announce that further funding has been secured from the YJB for the sector-led improvement programme. This is a partnership between YJB, AYM and the sector, including managers of services in Wales. We are grateful to all partners for their continued support and look forward to working with colleagues on an important programme that is run “*for the sector, by the sector and always with the sector*”.

Our vision is to see all managers in youth offending services having the opportunity to demonstrate a commitment to system improvement; to improve not just their own services, but to contribute regionally and nationally through the various workstreams of the programme. We have an active board, over 40 trained coaches, over 100 trained peer reviewers, 14 operational manager trainers. Come and join us!

### **AYM to administer the Youth Justice Sector-Led Improvement Partnership (YJSIP)**

The Association is proud to announce that it is now the administering body for YJSIP. We will support the existing YJSIP Board and help it continue to make the improvement programme available to all YOTs across England and Wales.

***The Youth Justice Sector Improvement Programme (YJSIP) is a tripartite partnership between the YJB, that funds the programme, the AYM, that administers the programme, and senior leaders in the youth justice sector that deliver the programme.***

### **A proven track record of success**

Thanks to the hard work of the YJSIP board, the commitment of the YJB and the enthusiasm of a large number of managers across England and Wales, the programme has developed and delivered a number of successful projects, including:

- Peer Reviews
- Operational Manager Training
- Coaching and Mentoring

These activities will be expanded and developed under the new arrangements.

***The Youth Justice Sector Improvement Programme (YJSIP) was established in 2010. The high level of engagement with the programme over the past 10 years, demonstrates the commitment of the sector toward continuous improvement.***

## **Improvement support for the sector, by the sector and always with the sector**

Uniquely, YJSIP is led and delivered by serving youth justice staff, committed to sector improvement for no financial reward, on top of their day job. They bring relevant and up-to-date knowledge and experience, and ensure that all the services provided by the partnership give great value for money. All services provided to YOTs are free to access helping create a 'virtuous circle' in which managers deliver and receive performance improvement activity without charge.

***The Youth Justice Sector Improvement Programme (YJSIP) delivers continuous improvement. It is managed and delivered by the sector, to support sector; providing opportunities for development for all involved in every activity – enabler and recipient.***

### **Peer Reviews**

Peer reviews, are voluntary and entirely separate from both formal inspections by HMI Probation and the YJB's performance improvement processes, and are conducted at the request of the local YOT partnership board who with the review team agree the scope of the review. They can be a whole service review, or focus on a specific issue. Peer reviews began in 2012 and since then 41 and four bespoke peer challenge reviews have been completed. 171 peer reviewers, and 38 peer review leaders have been trained. The peer review process was the subject of a positive, independent evaluation in 2019. YJSIP is currently reviewing its delivery programme in light of COVID restrictions but has a number of commitments to local partnerships for 2021/22

***Peer reviews are a respected cornerstone of self-improvement activity. Provided at the request of a youth offending service, peer reviewers act as critical friends; not inspectors. Peer reviews provide a unique opportunity for a YOT to gain fresh perspectives from peers; identifying strengths and highlighting areas for potential improvement.***

### **Operational Manager Training**

Operational manager training is delivered by serving managers and aims to support those colleagues whose job it is to quality assure AssetPlus assessments and develop assessment skills of front-line practitioners. YJSIP has 14 trainers and has trained 144 managers. In 2021/2 an independent evaluation of the training will be commissioned and we will deliver a further six courses.

***The YJSIP operational manager training is provided to YOT managers and first line supervisors, providing new skills to support the quality of assessment and intervention planning undertaken by their staff.***

### **Coaching and Mentoring**

We now have a group of 42 managers trained to act as coaches and mentors to colleagues in youth offending teams. Ideal for those managers entering the sector from a different organisation, or experienced managers grappling with a particular issue. In 2021/22 we are committed to delivering a further eight coaching assignments as well as developing the skill of our coaching community.

***The YJSIP coaching and mentoring course is offered to managers and supervisors in YOTs, providing skills of coaching and mentoring to enhance and improve the performance of their supervisees.***

## ***Operations Managers' Training***



**Additional trainers are needed:**

Do you share our passion for developing assessment skills in order to improve outcomes for children?

Are you a serving manager in a YOT with a commitment to passing on your skills and knowledge?

If so, you may be interested in joining our small band of managers who deliver the YJSIP Operational Manager Training course. This is a course that consists of two day-long training days separated by a period of guided, on-line learning. It was developed by YOT managers and has so far been delivered to nearly 150 of their peers who have responsibility for overseeing the quality of assessment.

Courses consist of up to 20 managers from YOTs across England and Wales. These courses are currently delivered via Zoom and Teams, but may include some regionally based, non-virtual events in the future.

The commitment would be as follows:

- Attendance at a two-day workshop in Warwick on June 8/9 (subject to COVID-19 restrictions) where you will join existing trainers in reviewing the course materials and learning lessons from the feedback so far,
- Co-training two day-long workshops (one course) during the following 12 months.

If you are interested in getting involved, please contact [phil.sutton@aym.org.uk](mailto:phil.sutton@aym.org.uk)

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## **Vacancies**

### ***Knowsley Youth Offending Service Recruiting Social Worker***



Knowsley Youth Offending Service is seeking a qualified social worker to join their service. Applicants should have knowledge of current children's and youth justice legislation and have a strong understanding of the impact of exploitation, trauma and adverse childhood experiences.

As a quality case manager, the postholder will be responsible for ensuring the safeguarding of children and families, completing assessments and reports, delivering strength-based interventions and managing risk of serious harm, re-offending and the safety and well-being of the child.

**For an informal discussion** about the position, contact one of the operations managers:

[Fleur Hann \(0151 443 2872\)](tel:01514432872) or [Mark McCausland \(0151 443 5556\)](tel:01514435556)

**Closing Date is 5pm Friday 13<sup>th</sup> April, 2021.**

For more information and to apply for the position [click here](#)

## Offending and Developmental Language Disorders

### Southwark practitioner identifies research

At a recent workshop that Marius Fank from Achievement for All was conducting, a practitioner from Southwark YOT provided him with a reference to an article in the Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, which Marius states describes the 'collision between offending and speech, language and communication needs'.



The article '***The Developmental language disorders and risk of recidivism among young offenders***' by Winstanley, Webb and Conti-Ramsden (2020) looked at the records of 145 young people supervised by youth justice services in the North West of England.

Researchers compared the risk of reoffending between individuals with and without developmental language disorders (DLD) and measured recidivism as the first subsequent conviction to the current order. 66% of young people had offended for the first time, as the researchers found some of those in the sample had re-offended since triage and some had already received a caution. The young people were subject to a number of disposals including diversionary, out of court and conviction.

A speech and language therapist tested all participants, using the Wechsler Abbreviated Scale of Intelligence, in a private session; parents and youth offending team staff were encouraged to attend the session. Levels of adversity and deprivation were also considered, as was the index offence.

60% of the young people were assessed as having undiagnosed DLD, two participants (1.3%) reported seeing a speech and language therapist during their primary school years.

Young people with DLD were found to be at greater risk of reoffending than those with no DLD (62% compared to 25%); with no significant differences for gender identified.

The authors state there is a need to reliably identify young people entering the youth justice system with DLD in order to ensure that assessments and interventions take account of this and enable effective participation of the young person in these processes. This is particularly important where verbal interventions, which are the most commonly used in youth justice, are utilised.

To read the publication [click here](#)

***Does your youth offending service include speech and language therapists? If so, perhaps you can share your journey to securing such a valuable resource.***

## Youth Endowment Fund



### **Online workshop for YOTs**

**Caleb Jackson, Head of Change for Youth and Criminal Justice, says:**

We're pleased to be able to share that the theme of **our next grant round is Another chance: Diversion from the criminal justice system**. Thank you to everyone who joined our stakeholder roundtables to help us set our themes and priorities – your insights were really valuable.

This diversion grant round will be **open for applications on April 19th**, and will help build our understanding of what makes diversion programmes effective. We released our prospectus in February which has more details about the scope of the round and how to apply, which was shared with you by the team at AYM.

To view the prospectus [click here](#)



We are running an online workshop specifically aimed at YOTs to share more information about the diversion grant round and other upcoming plans.

We'll provide more information and answer questions on:

- what we're aiming to fund in this grant round
- the application process
- what it's like to partner with us to build the evidence of what works in preventing children and young people from becoming involved in violence

The session will be held on **Friday 9<sup>th</sup> April, 2021 from 12pm - 1pm**.

***We would like YOTs to participate:*** to register for a place [click here](#)

**Applications for the fund close on 14<sup>th</sup> May, 2021.**

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to get in touch by sending an email to

[antoinette.kwegan@youthendowmentfund.org.uk](mailto:antoinette.kwegan@youthendowmentfund.org.uk)

## Youth Justice Legal Centre Summit 2021

### ***'Bias. Discrimination. Fear'***



The Youth Justice Legal Centre (YJLC) held its fourth annual Youth Justice Legal Centre Summit: Bias. Discrimination. Fear on the 25<sup>th</sup> March with a full day of virtual presentations and panel discussions.

The conference highlighted the impact of discrimination on children within the criminal justice system and the fear they experience as a result. Delegates of the summit heard from those that had been sentenced as children as a result of bias and discrimination, including a powerful presentation from Ryan Matthews who in 2004 was exonerated for murder, after having spent five years on death row at the Louisiana State Penitentiary at Angola.

The presenters called for radical change in the way children in contact with the law are managed, and how girls, those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds, and those of the working class can be dealt with fairly.

Presenters highlighted the need to ensure that all those working with children actively consider the wider needs of children in order to identify exploitation, adversity and trauma and the impact of these.

The summit comprised five topics with presentations and panel discussion on five areas where children can experience discrimination, bias and fear and shared their experiences:

- Girls
- Race
- Class
- Kids
- Fear

Presenters included young adults who had previously experienced contact with the youth justice system, and professionals working in the criminal justice system, all of whom shared experiences, ideas and techniques to confront discrimination and improve representation for children who experience it.

In addition to the presentations, an active 'comment board' was available in which delegates raised some significant observations and suggestions.



If you missed the summit you can access a replay video by making a donation of £10 to YJLC by [clicking here](#)

For more information on YJLC [click here](#)

## Justice Committee ‘Shocked and Appalled’

### **At treatment in Rainsbrook Secure Training Centre**



Members of the House of Commons Justice Committee have published a report in which they state they ‘were shocked and appalled’ in evidence given to them in their committee of the 9th March 2021.

MTC has run the Rainsbrook secure training centre for five years under contract to the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and has been consistently rated ‘in need of improvement’ by inspectors: despite this, the committee notes that the MoJ extended MTCs tenure to June 2023. Concerned about the ongoing worsening treatment of children the inspectors issued an Urgent Notification in December 2020./

The Justice Committee took evidence from MTC, the Secretary of State for Justice and inspectors about the conditions at Rainsbrook that led to the Urgent Notification being issued and were so ‘shocked’ they published the rapid report calling for action to resolve the issues. The committee states:

***‘The litany of inaction and what one inspector called “utter incompetence” at Rainsbrook year after year provides a cautionary tale of how badly an arms-length relationship between the Ministry of Justice as a client and MTC as the company hired to deliver on contract can fail to deliver basic standards of care to vulnerable children’***

The committee places joint responsibility on MTC, the Youth Custody Service (YCS) and the MoJ for the failure to deliver safe and quality services to children in the establishment, over the past five years. Evidence to the committee showed the most recent concerns, identified in February 2020, resulted in 19 recommendations; the report states these were ‘largely ignored’. In October 2020 inspectors from Ofsted, Care Quality Commission and HMI Prisons returned and identified new, serious concerns including separation that was ‘tantamount to solitary confinement’ and ‘highly likely to be damaging to children’s emotional and physical well-being.’

The report includes a number of recommendations and calls for a report from MTC, YCS and the MoJ by June 2021, stating that, if substantial improvement is not apparent, the MoJ ‘should consider taking Rainsbrook back in house.’

Chair of the Justice Committee, Sir Bob Neill, said:

*‘The children held at places like Rainsbrook have committed serious crimes and are not always easy to care for or handle. We know that. But these are children – and some of the most vulnerable members of our society. They deserve to be treated with dignity and respect. It is clear this was not happening, and that is unacceptable in the extreme.’*

To read the report [click here](#)

## Young People Peer Research

### *Seeking views of young people*

'Young Advocates', who are part of the **Youth Participation** project which is being delivered in partnership between the Alliance for Youth Justice and Leaders Unlocked, have just started their peer research into the youth justice system.



### *Amania Scott-Samuels, Policy and Engagement Assistant for the project explains....*

For this research, the Young Advocates are carrying out one-to-one interviews with children and young people across England and Wales that have also been affected by the youth justice system on the following three topics:

- **Stereotypes** – As it affects young people e.g. because of their age, race and ethnicity, and gender.
- **Education and early warning signs** – Acknowledging the importance of identifying the signs someone is at risk and needs help, particularly in education settings.
- **Jail** – To capture experiences of jail and how to break the cycle.

Those of you that have heard the Young Advocates speaking or presenting will know how important work in these areas is to them and I know that many of you share their passions in these topics so it would be great to have your organisations represented in the research's findings!

The interviews are being held on Zoom and will last approximately 30-45 minutes, **all answers will remain anonymous and confidential** and the **opinions and recommendations for change will feed into the Young Advocates' engagement with policy makers** and other justice sector stakeholders, as well as informing the changemaking work the Young Advocates do in the second phase of the project. We are happy to conduct the interviews at times that suit you and your young people, and we hope to have them **completed by the end of April**.

We are also looking to recruit some new Young Advocates to the project, so if you have any young people that are eager to influence youth justice policy at a national level, this is the opportunity for them!

If you are working with a young person that you think would be well suited to this opportunity please contact Amania Scott-Samuels, Policy and Engagement Assistant at:

[amania.scott-samuels@ayj.org.uk](mailto:amania.scott-samuels@ayj.org.uk)

For more information about the Youth Participation project [click here](#)

## Next Phase for Vulnerable Families Announced

### ***'Supporting Families', replaces 'Troubled Families'***

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has announced £165 million funding for 2021-22 to help 400,000 vulnerable families 'build brighter futures'



The programme 'Supporting Families' replaces the Troubled Families programme introduced in 2015 and which was first national programme aimed to improve outcomes for families with complex needs. A second phase of Troubled Families was introduced in 2015 and concludes this year with a reported 401,709 families benefitting, including fewer children becoming looked after, and a reduction of adults going to prison. The government states the change in name will *'better reflect the role that keyworkers play.'*

Many authorities adopted alternative names for services delivered as part of the Troubled Families programme which it was argued negatively labelled families. In many authorities Heads of Youth Offending Services managed, and continue to manage these programmes, as part of an integrated service; recognizing the skills of the multi-agency youth justice professionals in adopting a whole family approach to managing complex needs to support individuals and the family.



In announcing the new programme, Rt Hon. Robert Jenrick, Housing Secretary said Supporting Families:

*'is a critical part of our moral mission to tackle intergenerational unemployment, crime, domestic abuse and family breakdown.'*

The government in its announcement of the Supporting People programme, also cites research published on the 21 projects funded between 2018 and 2020 by the £9.5 million Supporting Families Against Youth Violence fund, aimed to combat knife crime, that found whole family approaches are effective in preventing youth crime.

### ***Further funding***



In addition to the Supporting Families programme funding, the government has also announced an additional £7.9 million new fund, the Data Accelerator Fund, that aims to improve how councils use data to support families, and provide key workers with the information that they need.

To read more about the new programme and the funding available, including the essential programme delivery and policy guidance for Supporting Families, [click here](#)

### Duty to Prevent Serious Violence

The Serious Violence Unit in the Home Office has issued a presentation on the serious violence duty within the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill to prevent serious violence which the AYM has circulated to members. The intention is for the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to be amended, citing tackling serious violence as an explicit priority for Community Safety Partnerships.

The bill places this duty on the police, local authorities, youth offending teams, probation, fire and rescue services and health authorities, with a duty to co-operate on educational institutions and prisons/youth custodial institutions.



The bill has received its second reading and the presentation provides an indicative timeline for the bill to be enacted and the duty to come into force no sooner than early 2022.

To read the bill [click here](#)

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### Feltham YOI Inspection

As a result of an inspection in February 2021, HMI of Prisons has reported that rates of violence have reduced in Feltham YOI compared to their last inspection in 2019. In his introduction the Chief Inspector, Charlie Taylor, notes *'progress had been made and, remarkably in the middle of a pandemic, outcomes in some areas had improved.'*



The inspectors found that quality of relationships between children and staff had improved, more children feel cared for, or are being encouraged to attend education.

Incidents of self-harm had reduced dramatically with only five incidents recorded in the previous six months compared to 242 in the same period prior to the previous inspection, as too had the number of violent incidents. The inspectors identified a *'concerning rise in multi-perpetrator assaults as friction between different groups increased'* and one in five of those children interviewed reported feeling unsafe.

Inspectors argue that improvements need to be ensure that children can maintain contact with family and friends and in their meaningful engagement with their sentence plan.

Charlie Taylor comments that:

*'While the improvement made at Feltham A is commendable, some of this reflects how bad things had been at the time of the Urgent Notification.'*

## Alliance for Youth Justice Launch Event:



### ***'How could we reimagine justice for children?'***

The Alliance for Youth Justice was officially launched on 3<sup>rd</sup> March with more than 100 participants attending an online event to celebrate the work of the organisation.

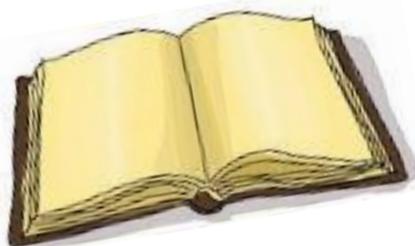
The Alliance for Youth Justice (AYJ) is the new name of the Standing Committee for Youth Justice which was established as a membership organisation in the early 1990s and has become an important vehicle in advocating for improvements in youth justice.

The launch heard from a panel of speakers who explored youth justice from a variety of perspectives including children's rights, access, equity and participation. Three of the AYJ Young Advocates also formed part of the panel and were able to respond to some of the presentations given, providing enlightened feedback from the perspective of children and young people.

To read more about the Alliance for Youth Justice [click here](#)

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## New Bench Book for Crown Court Judges



The Judicial College has published 'Youth Defendants in the Crown Court bench book', designed to bring together everything a crown court judge needs to know when hearing young defendants.

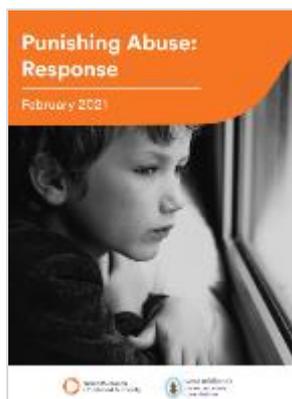
The 'toolkit' updates and expands on the previous publication which is almost five years old and takes account of the significant developments since April 2016 in relation to practice and procedure concerning young defendants. Mr Justice William Davis Judicial, Lead on Youth Justice for England and Wales, states in the preface:

*'Probably the most notable of those developments has been the introduction in April 2017 by the Sentencing Council of the Sentencing Children and Young People Definitive Guideline. There have also been significant decisions in the Court of Appeal Criminal Division and the Divisional Court in relation to such diverse topics as reporting restrictions and case management, with particular reference to ground rules hearings and provision of intermediaries.'*

The bench book is described by the college as *'an essential judicial reference tool'*.

To read the publication [click here](#)

## Punishing Abuse



The report from a study commissioned by the West Midlands Combined Authority and the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner, and undertaken by Dr. Alex Chard, was launched at an online event on the 12<sup>th</sup> March. 'Punishing Abuse', provides an in-depth analysis of the profile and circumstances of eighty children known to YOTs from across eleven local authorities.

The study builds on work previously undertaken by Alex in Tower Hamlets and Warwickshire and considers the experiences of trauma, loss, attachment disorder and abuse of the children considered and their journey into the criminal justice system.

The report provides a number of recommendations and proposals that focus on implementing a system-wide approach across public organisations to support disadvantaged children who have experienced adversity, abuse, loss and trauma.

To read a summary of the report [click here](#), or to read the full report [click here](#)

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## Call to Ban Handcuffs on Children

An article by Children and Young People Now (CYP Now) has highlighted the work of the 'Hope not Handcuffs' campaign, led by care services provider 'Serenity Welfare' a secure transport service which is calling for the government to ban the use of handcuffs to restrain young people both when being transported in the youth justice system and when being moved between care placements.



The campaign is calling on the government to ban the use of handcuffs, restraint and caging of children, unless there is considerable risk of harm to the child themselves or others and for the requirement for instances of handcuff use to be reported. Additionally, the campaign is calling for responsibility for supporting the mentoring of vulnerable children to be allocated to a named government minister.

Emily Aklan, founder and chief executive of Serenity Welfare, said:

*“Handcuffs and restraints are deeply damaging to children – both physically and mentally. All children should be treated with kindness, respect and be offered support like high-quality mentoring so that they can reach their potential and lead safe, fulfilling lives.”*

To read the article [click here](#)

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## Items of Interest



## Calendar of events for AYM 2021

<b>Title</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Venue</b>
Executive Board meeting	23rd March	Virtual Meeting
Executive Board meeting	15 <sup>th</sup> June	Virtual Meeting
Executive Board and AGM	September, date tbc.	Warwickshire Youth Justice Service, Rugby <i>(subject to COVID-19 arrangements)</i>
Executive Board meeting	30 <sup>th</sup> November	Youth Justice Convention

***Please contact your regional representative (see below) if you wish the Executive Board to consider a particular issue, or if you have an item you would like to bring to their attention at one of their meetings.***

***To keep up to date with this calendar between Bulletins, please look at our website:***

**[aym.org.uk](http://aym.org.uk)**

## The Tipping Point: Practical steps to assist young people in exiting gangs

**SOLVE** is also offering two interactive online webinars that will enable professionals to explore both the insights and develop the skills required to support young people's desistance from street gangs. Delegates will take part in a thought-provoking discussion on gang exit strategies, and have the opportunity to raise their own concerns related to their practice.

The webinars are taking place on:

**15<sup>th</sup> April, 2021**

**11am – 1pm**

or, alternatively

**3pm - 5pm**

For more information and to book a place [click here](#)

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## Alliance for Youth Justice



The next meeting of the Alliance for Youth Justice will be the:

**AYJ Member's Meeting and Annual General Meeting**

and will take on

**Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> April**

at

**2pm**

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## Want to stay up to date with YJ issues?

Then follow the AYM on Twitter.....  
**We have more than 3,000 followers** who receive frequent updates on issues relating to youth justice and YOT Managers.  
It's easy to sign up - our username is:

[@AssnYOTmanagers](https://twitter.com/AssnYOTmanagers)



See also the **'latest news'** section at <http://aym.org.uk>



Via our website <http://aym.org.uk/about-us/contact-us>

Via Twitter [@AssnYOTmanagers](https://twitter.com/AssnYOTmanagers)

Email our Editor [lesley.tregear@aym.org.uk](mailto:lesley.tregear@aym.org.uk)

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The views expressed in this Newsletter do not necessarily represent those of AYM or its membership.

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## AYM Regional Representatives

Below is the list of regional representatives across the country, with email addresses. Please contact your regional representative if there are issues you want to raise; we welcome your input.

[Click here](#) for details of all Executive Board members.

<b>East</b>	<b>Pat Jennings</b> <b>Bedfordshire</b> <b>YOS</b>				
<b><i>pat.jennings@bedford.gov.uk</i></b>					
<b>East Midlands</b>	<b>Karen Manville</b> <b>Leicester City</b> <b>YJS</b>		<b>West Midlands</b>	<b>Celia Payne</b> <b>Wolverhampton</b> <b>YOS</b>	
<b><i>Karen.Manville@leicester.gov.uk</i></b>			<b><i>celia.payne@wolverhampton.gov.uk</i></b>		
<b>South East</b>	<b>Charlie Spencer</b>  <b>Surrey</b> <b>YOS</b>		<b>South West</b>	<b>Mike Rees</b> <b>North Somerset</b> <b>YOT</b>	
<b><i>charlie.spencer@surreycc.gov.uk</i></b>			<b><i>mike.rees@n-somerset.gov.uk</i></b>		
<b>North East</b>	<b>VACANT</b>		<b>North West</b>	<b>Celine Gafos</b> <b>Knowsley</b> <b>YOS</b>	
			<b><i>celine.gafos@knowsley.gov.uk</i></b>		
<b>London</b>	<b>Brendan Finegan</b>  <b>Hackney</b> <b>YOT</b>		<b>Yorkshire &amp; Humberside</b>	<b>Samantha Matthews</b> <b>East Riding</b> <b>YOS</b>	
<b><i>brendan.finegan@hackney.gov.uk</i></b>			<b><i>Samantha.T.Matthews@eastriding.gov.uk</i></b>		