



The Association of Youth Offending Team Managers (AYM) response to consultation on HMPPS YCS Resettlement Guidance and Resource Pack.

About the AYM

The AYM is a professional association representing the majority of youth offending teams (YOT) and their managers in England.

Section 39 (1) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 requires the co-operation of the named statutory partners to form a YOT. Section 38 (1, 2) identifies the statutory partners and places upon them a duty to co-operate in order to secure youth justice services appropriate to their area. These statutory partners are the local authority, police, the probation service, and health. To support the YOT, additional partners may also be recruited to the joint strategic effort to prevent offending by children and young people.

The Association is able to draw on the wealth of knowledge and the breadth of members' experience to promote public understanding of youth crime issues and to play its part in shaping the youth crime agenda.

Our members run services providing community-based supervision for children and young people who offend. We also work with children in custody and work closely with staff in secure units and young offender institutions to ensure that young people receiving custody experience as smooth a transition as possible into custody and back in to the community.

Responding to your document

The AYM welcomes the opportunity to provide a response to this HMPPS YCS Resettlement Guidance and Resource Pack.

The document is comprehensive and the AYM is pleased to see that the focus is on delivering constructive resettlement as identified by the YJB following the research of Beyond Youth Custody.

We appreciate the acknowledgement that this guidance needs to support Resettlement Practitioners in the secure estate and YOT staff in the community, and that it demonstrates the need for active participation of the children whose resettlement is being planned, and actioned.

Resettlement starts at the commencement of a sentence, and as this document recognizes at the point of remand where this is a custodial remand. Arrangements for the child and the resultant plans therefore should be led by the YOT and we would therefore like to see the inclusion of YOT in days 1-9 of the Resettlement Schedule.

We see the work of Secure Stairs, as suggested by this guidance, to be central to this. The AYM values the work of Secure Stairs but feels without much closer working relationships between the YOT, Secure Stairs and Resettlement Practitioners, much of the work undertaken whilst a child is in custody may be lost and resettlement therefore invalidated on their return to the community.

The AYM would also like to see greater integration between the Secure Stairs arrangements and the YOT, we feel this is particularly important in the case of resettlement. As your guidance notes at 3.9, the YOT is responsible for sentence planning and as such we would want this guidance to

consider how Secure Stairs and the YOT can work more closely. We are particularly concerned regarding those children who require enhanced support services (ESS), some of whom due to their shorter sentence, or chronic conditions, may continue to require similar support in the community.

We would also like to see more 'room' for the YOT to call review meetings where they are concerned about the plan or its progress, including a YOTs ability to review a plan will ensure suitable scrutiny, enhance confidence and we believe improve relationships between those working in the secure estate and those within the community. We are pleased to see the requirement for the Resettlement Practitioner to attend the first community review meeting which we think is important where a child has developed a trusting relationship with the practitioner.

We are pleased to see the inclusion of ROTL within the guidance

The guidance considers education, training and employment but we can see no reference to the role of careers advice and would like to see something included to support those of near/employment age; research shows how effective employment can be, the receipt of sound advice is therefore something that we feel would be particularly beneficial.

The AYM would like the guidance to include something of the way in which Resettlement Practitioners develop a good relationship with the children in their care and we are surprised to see that there is no mention of the relationship-based practice framework which is integral to the training of custody support staff, encouraging staff to demonstrate behaviours that promoted engagement on all levels.

We also believe that by including something about this framework, practitioners will be encouraged to use their learning regarding the barriers to change and adopt a pro-social identity. We consider this to be a missed opportunity to endorse the training of Resettlement Practitioners and apply it to their daily practice.

The inclusion of the Toolkit is useful and we consider this to be a positive support for Resettlement Practitioners.

Thank you once again for offering us the opportunity to comment on this draft guidance. If you wish to discuss anything further, please contact me.

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