



# Bulletin August 2023



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## News from the AYM Executive Board



### ***Assuring the voice of the sector***

We are pleased to advise members that, following the appointment of Roni Checksfield to the role of AYM Secretary, Kay Dargue (pictured right) has been elected to the role of North East Regional Representative and Samantha Starmer as the Deputy Regional Representative – congratulations to both Kay and Sam.

In order to enable the AYM to represent all its members, we continue to seek nominations for the role of East and South East Deputy Regional Representative roles. If you are interested in undertaking one of these roles, please contact Roni at [secretary@aym.org.uk](mailto:secretary@aym.org.uk)

### ***Working with external stakeholders***

Our chair, Jacqui Belfield-Smith represented the AYM at a parliamentary roundtable, organised by the Commission on Young Lives and Manchester Metropolitan University, to discuss trauma-informed approaches in the youth justice system.

Jacqui has also been busy attending meetings with Keith Fraser and Steph Bibby-Roberts of the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB), Ed Cornmell of the Youth Custody Service (YCS) and Alan Webster of the Ministry of Justice. She also attended the 'External Stakeholders Liaison Group', hosted by the YJB which covered a range of issues, including YCS and the secure estate.

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Tom Dooks and Celia Payne, portfolio leads for **out of court disposals**, met with Joanne Parsons, Senior Policy Advisor at the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) with the aim of finding a national solution to the variation that exists across the country in respect of how courts deal with children appearing before them who have missed out on pre-court diversion. The reason for such omissions varies, but is most typically because the children had not admitted the offence in police interview. In some areas, children who admit the offence prior to, or at the first court appearance, are referred for an out of court assessment. It was agreed that a set of nationally agreed principles, drafted by CPS, could be incorporated into the Youth Bench Book.

Tom, and a number of other AYM members across the country, met with Kate Langley from the YJB and provided feedback on the draft **Case Management Guidance for Out of Court Disposals**. The YJB is aiming to publish this section of the guidance in the early Autumn

Tom Dooks will also be meeting with the Centre for Justice Innovation which has been asked by the Youth Endowment Fund to undertake a light-touch project to explore the opportunities and challenges around implementing the YJB's new **data recording requirements** for diverted children and young people. If any AYM members have views they'd like to inform this project please can they email them to [tom.dooks@youthjusticeservices.org.uk](mailto:tom.dooks@youthjusticeservices.org.uk)

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Nick Jeffreys and Michael O'Connor, AYM portfolio leads for custody and resettlement, attended the **YCS) Governance Board** and engaged with the **Accommodation Standard Working Group led** by YCS this month; the latter was also attended by HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS), Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS) amongst others.

They also attended a workshop on '**Working towards 'Child First' assessment**', the focus of which was to conduct an initial table top exercise to look at how agencies, beyond youth justice services (YJS) and the YCS, can further the child first agenda, through a self-assessment tool.

Professor Neal Hazel, Chair of Criminology and Criminal Justice at the University of Salford and YJB Board member, and Jamie Bennet YJB Chief Strategy Officer, led the workshop. The two advised attendees that the proposal is to develop an organisational self-assessment tool that can be used to improve practice. The YJB would offer participants time bounded recognition as 'Working towards Child First' and it is anticipated that the primary audience would be organisations that work with children in the youth justice system including police, courts, education and work settings, health services and voluntary and community organisations. YJS' could also engage but it was noted that practitioners in YJS already undertake more extensive monitoring, self-assessment and inspection specifically reflecting Child First approaches.

The workshop considered the first rough draft of the standards which were intended to provide a starting point for discussion. The general consensus of the workshop attendees was that:

- a scored self-assessment would not be useful,
- the focus needs to be initially on police, probation and other relevant statutory partners, and
- that a space for a good practice/evidence base may be more useful

If you have any issues that you would like Nick or Michael to bring to any of these ongoing discussions, please contact them at:

[nicholas.jeffreys@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:nicholas.jeffreys@coventry.gov.uk)    [moconnor@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:moconnor@swindon.gov.uk)

To view the YJB guide to child first [click here](#)

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**The AYM and YOT Managers Cymru (YMC)** have written a joint letter to Stephanie Roberts-Bibby, Chief Executive Officer of the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB), regarding the submission of **quarter one data returns**, which include the **new key performance indicators (KPIs)**. We have advised her of the difficulties youth justice services will experience in meeting the required deadlines, due to the necessary software updates which may not be completed in readiness for quality return of data. We have requested that quarter one data on the new KPIs be postponed until the end of October and be submitted alongside quarter two data, which will provide valuable time for youth justice services to familiarise themselves with the data extract process and ensure accurate data submission.

Stephanie has written to all Heads of Service agreeing the extension and thanking the AYM and YOT Managers Cymru for raising the issue with the YJB.

To read the joint letter and the response from Stephanie [click here](#).

The AYM has also become a signatory, along with more than 30 others, to a letter sent by the Alliance for Youth Justice (AYJ) to Damian Hinds, Minister of State for Prisons, Parole and Probation, highlighting grave concerns about the treatment of **children and young people in young offender institutions (YOIs)**; the proposed rollout of PAVA spray to the children's secure estate; and the significant increase in the number of young people aged 18 years and over being held in the children's secure estate.

To read the letter [click here](#)



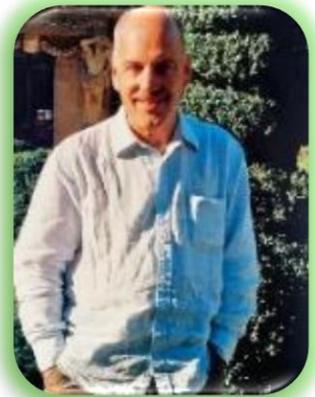
The AYM, and other stakeholders have now received a response to this letter from Ed Cornnell, Executive Director of the Youth Custody Service providing an update on work being undertaken in the youth secure estate and advising that work has been undertaken with specialists across HM Prison and Probation Services (HMPPS) and externally to consider any additional implications of using PAVA based on age, including medical advisors and legal experts. Ed advises that YCS is carefully considering all available evidence and taking the time to make an informed decision balancing all considerations. He advises that YCS and HMPPS are now seeking further legal and expert advice and are due to make a recommendation to ministers by the end of summer 2023. A response to this letter is currently being agreed by the AYM Executive. members will shortly be able to read this by visiting our website [aym.org.uk/aym-reports-and-documents](http://aym.org.uk/aym-reports-and-documents)

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## The AYM's John Hawkins Award

### ***Nominations open for the 2023 Award***

In memory of John Hawkins previous AYM Treasurer and Head of Service, East Sussex YOT, John's family agreed to support this AYM award to a youth justice service that demonstrates creativity or innovation in its' work with children. John's family are always very keen to visit the winning service and meet with the children benefitting from the work of the project/intervention.



Do you have a programme or project that you feel demonstrates innovation or creativity, and which provides positive outcomes for children you work with in youth justice?



Nominations are now open for the 2023 Award which will be presented at our Autumn Conference in Rugby on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023; the **winners will receive £500 for their service.**

**Deadline for nominations is Friday 27<sup>th</sup> October, 2023.**

To nominate your service for the award please email [secretary@aym.org.uk](mailto:secretary@aym.org.uk)

## AYM Management Training Courses

The AYM management training courses are delivered in partnership with Solace our training provider which is the representative body for Chief Executives and senior managers working in the public sector in the UK.

The courses are unique in that they offer participants from youth justice to training and develop together, discussing issues that pertinent to practice in youth justice services.

### **Aspiring Future Leaders Course**

The AYM in partnership with Solace our training provider is delivering a further cohort of the Aspiring Future Leaders course in September, AYM's highly successful development programme designed for future leaders in youth Justice.

This is an Institute in Leadership and Management (ILM) endorsed development programme at level 5.

The programmed is currently delivered virtually over 9 days:



Introductory Workshop (1 day) 10 – 3.30	15 <sup>th</sup> September, 2023
Module 1 (2 days): Leadership and Change	10 <sup>th</sup> & 11 <sup>th</sup> October, 2023
Module 2 (2 days): Strategic Thinking in Public Services	15 <sup>th</sup> & 16 <sup>th</sup> November, 2023
Module 3 (2 days): Working Collaboratively across organisations	12 <sup>th</sup> & 13 <sup>th</sup> December, 2023

### **Aspiring Future Leaders Programme**

The programme is aimed at managers in youth justice services and is of particular interest to those who are contemplating making applications for more senior roles.

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

Feedback from previous delegates has been excellent and many have secured promotions to more senior positions following completion of the course.

**The next cohort is due to start on 15<sup>th</sup> September, 2023.**

For more information on the course and to register for a place [click here](#)

## **ILM 7 - Training for Heads of Service**

The ILM Level 7 Certificate programme in Leadership and Management is designed to develop individuals who are, or aspire to, senior leadership within public sector organisations. It covers aspects of leadership and management within a strategic context and is delivered through a combination of workshops, tutorials, personal coaching, individual learning and work-based learning projects.

Each programme is tailored to the needs of individuals within the cohort. The course outcomes can be linked to the organisation's strategic aims and strategies and the priorities of key political, organisational or community stakeholders, as well as to internal people and organisational development approaches.

Individuals or groups within the cohort work on one mandatory project for the certificate. Actual project titles can be tailored to local need. They will focus on key strategic aspects, such as the organisation, directorates or divisions within them or allied organisations.

The next cohort of this training course for youth justice heads of service will commence on 11<sup>th</sup> September and applications are now open for those wishing to participate.

All sessions will be held virtually via Zoom and will take place in the afternoon unless otherwise stated:

Introduction and Launch	11 <sup>th</sup> September, 2023
Module 1 - Session 1	14 <sup>th</sup> September, 2023
Tutorial	5 <sup>th</sup> October, 2023
Module 1 – Session 2	10 <sup>th</sup> October, 2023
Tutorial	2 <sup>nd</sup> November, 2023
Module 2 – Session 1	9 <sup>th</sup> November, 2023
Enquiry Proposal Submission	30 <sup>th</sup> November, 2023
Module 2 – Session 2	11 <sup>th</sup> January, 2024
Module 3 – Session 1	8 <sup>th</sup> February, 2024
Tutorial	7 <sup>th</sup> March, 2024
Module 3 – Session 2	8 <sup>th</sup> March, 2024
Tutorial	4 <sup>th</sup> April (am)
Presentation	w/c 29 <sup>th</sup> April, 2024

For more information about the course and qualification [click here](#)

To enrol for a place on this course [click here](#)

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## Youth Justice SEND Quality Awards

### ***Congratulations to Islington Area Partnership***

Islington Area Partnership has attained the Youth Justice SEND Quality Lead Status with a Child First Commendation.



Islington was one of the very first to join the Youth Justice SEND Quality Assurance Framework in 2016 and after studying the Needs Assessment Framework, to identify areas of development, achieved the Quality Mark in 2018.

Assessors report that the quality of the submission and the evidence presented in support of redesignation was outstanding:

- The inter-relationships between service panels (such as Education Panel and Clinical Specialist Panel) are evidence-based and robust, leading to holistic consideration of emerging cases and their complex needs;
- Front-line staff benefit from reflective supervision sessions with specialists such as the assigned Education Psychologist, constantly sharing experiences and developing knowledge and practice;
- Co-located professionals such as a speech and language therapist and nurse provide critical and immediate support to emerging and existing cases
- Proactive and preventative information exchange is strong, leading to early identification and early help, including targeted support to reduce the possibility of permanent exclusion;
- Locally developed trauma-informed court reports (which include a communication passport) have been acknowledged and featured in YJB new case management guidance;
- Negotiated collaborative payment plans to support resettlement into education, training and employment pathways;
- Developing and supporting a network of peer advocates to contribute to service evolution.

### ***Well done Islington!***

*The Youth Justice SEND Quality Award lasts for a period of three years, after which redesignation is possible.*



## Youth Justice Lunchtime Webinars

Over the last six months our partners Microlink delivered a highly successful series of free lunchtime webinars.



These highlighted some of the successful work of local youth justice partnerships who have attained the higher level award, 'Quality Lead', in our long-running Youth Justice SEND Quality Award programme.

Over 200 individuals signed up for the webinars, either attending on the day or watching the recordings. We are grateful to colleagues in the areas that agreed to showcase their work and to YJB's Board Member, Sharon Gray. The webinars were as follows:

<b>22nd February</b>	Working with Schools: Free Speech and Language Assessments for every primary and secondary child at risk of exclusion presented by <b>Milton Keynes Youth Offending Service</b>
<b>22nd March</b>	Featuring 'upstream' diversion and prevention in <b>Staffordshire</b> through local SEND networks, and Highly effective multi-agency practice in <b>Blackburn and Darwen</b> .
<b>24th May</b>	Prevention as a partnership responsibility: Colleagues in <b>St Helens and Camden</b> talked about their partnership systems and processes.
<b>28th June</b>	2030 Vision: The future of Child First Partnership Practice. <b>Sharon Gray and Marius Frank</b> reflected on some of the latest advances in systemic thinking, assistive technologies and brain sciences that could have a dramatic impact on the numbers of children entering youth justice pathways in the next decade.
<b>19th July</b>	<b>Swindon</b> , where the Child First agenda is being used to drive a vision of Swindon becoming a Centre of Excellence for Child First Practice, with the YJS driving education, police, health and wider partners to aspire to the framework, and <b>East Sussex</b> , where ERM panels (Education Review Meetings) are designed to prevent repeat suspensions and exclusions from schools, securing attendance and impacting on ETE outcomes.



We plan to support Marius Frank and his team at Microlink in delivering a second series of webinars in the autumn details of which we will provide in a future bulletin. In the meantime, if you wish to see the recordings of any of the first series of webinars, contact [phil.sutton@aym.org.uk](mailto:phil.sutton@aym.org.uk)

## Cookham Wood YOI



### **HMI Prisons Report Published**

HMI Prisons has published a report following an unannounced inspection of Cookham Wood Young Offenders Institution in April this year in which it found **'Demoralised and hesitant staff failing to keep children'**. The concerns of the inspectorate resulted in the Chief Inspector of Prison invoking an Urgent Notification.

The inspection found evidence indicating outcomes for young people were poor for safety and purposeful activity, and not sufficiently good in care and resettlement.

The inspection found a 'near total breakdown in behaviour management' with almost a quarter of boys reporting they felt unsafe. The report argues this is *'perhaps unsurprising in view of the prevalence of delinquent behaviour and the number of weapons found – more than 200 in the months leading up to the inspection.'*

Inspectors also observed a lack of confidence among staff suggesting they too may have felt unsafe, and also witnessed *'repeated examples of intimidating and threatening behaviour by children towards staff'*. Responses to poor behaviour were separation and confinement in some cases for prolonged periods, with 90% of boys separated from others and almost 600 'keep apart instructions.'

In a tweet responding to the publication of the report, the YJB stated:

*'This is a damning summary of the serious & fundamental issues facing children and staff in the youth secure estate. We'll offer support to the YCS to address the failures set out in the report, but again it shows the need to overhaul our whole approach to custody for children.'*

*In response to the inspection of Cookham Wood, Ed Cornmell, Executive Director of the Youth Custody Service (YCS) advised the AYM and other stakeholders that in May, following the issuing of an urgent notification for Cookham Wood in April, by the Chief Inspector of Prisons, YCS published an action plan outlining how YCS will resolve the issues identified and that some of these actions have already been initiated. Remedial actions have been taken to support the staff on site and to ensure Cookham Wood is a safe environment for all. Ed advised that staff and children have taken part in a 'Safety Summit', searches of the site will be carried out to combat the prevalence of weapons, and the number of children separated from their peers has already reduced substantially from when the urgent notification was invoked.*

The AYM will also be looking to support improvements in the care of children in custody through participation in the YCS Governance Board and other stakeholder meetings.

To read the report [click here](#)

# Safety in the Children and Young People Secure Estate

## ***'Update to March 2023' Published***



The government has published the first iteration of the enhanced '**Safety of Children and Young People in the Youth Secure Estate**' bulletin, which now includes annually, the use of force and separations across all sectors of the youth secure estate, in addition to assaults, self-harm incidents and deaths that have been published quarterly since April 2021. The analysis includes data from all sectors of the youth secure estate, young offender institutions (YOIs), the secure training centre (STC) and secure children's homes (SCHs). It presents data up until March 2023 across each sector. The latest reporting quarter is annualised for comparison to the annualised data for 2022.

The authors report that due to the small population size, individual children and young people can significantly impact statistics and that this is evident in the impact of the placement of girls in Wetherby YOI (since July 2021) and Oakhill STC (since November 2022).

The report shows an overall decrease in the rate of incidents per 100 children per year across assaults, self-harm and use of force across all sectors of the estate, and for separations within both SCHs and the STC when comparing the 3 months January to March 2023 to the same period from last year.

The annualised rate of assault incidents per 100 children decreased by 12% compared to 2022. However, there was a slight increase in YOIs. The largest decrease was in the STC (48%). The number of individual children involved increased by 7% between January and March 2023 compared to 2022, from 317 to 339.

Self-harm incidents show a decrease of 39% in the rate of incidents per 100 children per year between January and March 2023 when compared to the same period last year, and a substantial decrease of 68% when compared to the previous 3 months October to December 2022. However, the number of individuals self-harming increased from 81 to 83.

The rate of the use of force slightly increased in SCHs, whilst decreased in YOIs and the STC, with the STC seeing a 45% decrease between January to March 2023 compared to the same period in 2022.

The number of separations per 100 children per year have decreased in both the STC and SCHs by 26% and 63% respectively when comparing the 3 months January to March 2023 to the same period from last year. Separation data is unavailable for children in YOIs.

The report shows a 25% decrease in the rate of assault incidents on staff per 100 children per year compared to the same period last year.

No child deaths have been reported since June 2019, including any related to COVID-19.

For more information [click here](#)

## Developing Future Youth Justice Inspections

### **HMI Probation Commence Consultation Events**

HM Inspectorate of Probation's (HMIP) current programme of youth inspection is due to finish in 2024.

The planned end of the programme represents a timely opportunity to review the HMIP approach to youth inspections and as such has commenced development of the next youth inspection programme. HMIP is keen to build in sufficient time for consultation and collaboration with youth justice services.

The inspectorate is therefore offering the opportunity for consultation and discussion on the draft standards and inspection proposals at a series of roadshows – **all events take place between 11:00-16:00. Please note**, refreshments but not lunch will be included:

<b>17<sup>th</sup> August</b>	<b>Manchester, Civil Justice Centre:</b> 1 Bridge Street West (floor 6), Manchester, M60 9DJ
<b>22<sup>nd</sup> August</b>	<b>Birmingham, Radisson Blu:</b> 12 Holloway Circus, Queensway, Birmingham, West Midlands, B1 1BT
<b>12<sup>th</sup> September</b>	<b>Bristol, Future Inn City Centre:</b> Cabot Circus, Bond Street South, Bristol, BS1 3EN
<b>14<sup>th</sup> September</b>	<b>Wrexham, Lion Quay Resort:</b> Weston Rhyn, Wrexham, SY11 3EN
<b>19<sup>th</sup> September</b>	<b>London Double Tree by Hilton Marble Arch:</b> 4 Bryanston Street, Marble Arch, London, W1H 7BY
<b>26<sup>th</sup> September</b>	<b>Newcastle Leonardo Hotel:</b> St James Gate, Scotswood Road, Newcastle- Upon-Tyne, NE1 4AD
<b>28<sup>th</sup> September</b>	<b>Via Teams</b>

The AYM would encourage heads of youth justice services to attend these roadshows in order to ensure that your feedback can be properly considered.

For details of the roadshows, and to book a place at a location near you, please [click here](#)

## **'Tidal Wave of Youth Crime'**

### **Centre for Social Justice Prediction**



Analysis undertaken by the Think Tank 'Centre for Social Justice' (CSJ) reveals that the '*soaring rate of school absences*' will result in 9,000 more children committing offences by 2027 and argues that the 'post-COVID surge in school absences risks producing an additional 2,000 young violent criminals'.

The analysis undertaken by CSJ is based on Department for Education (DfE) and Ministry of Justice (MoJ) study 'Education, children's social care and offending: Descriptive Statistics' together with the DfE's school population and annualised persistent absence data to inform its findings.

The CSJ estimates that the cost of this increased youth crime could be as much as £100 million per year.

School absences have increased since the first COVID-19 restricted school closure in 2020, with persistent absence in Year 11 pupils (those missing school more than 10% of the time) rising 16% pre-pandemic to 32% in 2022. CSJ report that 'the number of persistently absent children rose by over 800,000 since 2019 to 1.7 million in Autumn 2022.'

Data from the MoJ and DfE shows that children who are persistently absent from school are three times more likely to commit an offence than those attending school full time. CSJ report that DfE data shows that the number of children missing more than 50% of school has more than doubled since 2019.

CSJ analysis focused on those children who will leave school in Year 11 in 2025 and who began their secondary education during the lockdown which they estimate could be 200,000 pupils.

The CSJ is calling for a radical upscaled government response to school absence with some of the £114 million underspend on the National Tutoring Programme to be redirected to a national roll out of attendance mentors.

To read the report [click here](#)

## What ‘Every Young Person Should Have ‘

### **‘Someone to Talk To, Something to Do, and Somewhere to Go’**

Lucy Frazer, who attended the AYM’s 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Event at the House of Lords in 2020 when she was Minister for Youth Justice, is now the Culture Secretary, and at the recent Conservative Think Tank ‘Onward’ event dedicated to young people, she presented her vision for the youth sector. In her speech she outlined her ambition that every young person should have *‘someone to talk to, something to do and somewhere to go’*.

She commenced by thanking organisations that support young people naming, amongst others, the National Youth Agency, UK Youth, and the Youth Endowment Fund.

In a personal reflection she spoke of her grandmother, Yetta Fazer, describing her as a ‘remarkable woman’ who became the first female barrister in Leicester, and who would quote Robert Browning *‘A man’s reach should exceed his grasp or what’s a heaven for’*.

The focus of Lucy’s speech was therefore on the importance of investing in *‘maximising the potential of young people across the country’*. She outlined the work undertaken by the government to date which she stated has resulted from:

*‘thoughtful consideration of how and where money ought to be spent. Based on evidence about what makes the most difference.’*

She outlined, funding provided from across government departments to support children, such as those aiming to prevent children offending and avoid exploitation, support mental health, improve employment opportunities, and reduce homelessness.

Lucy outlined the ways in which funding and services can support her aim of enabling all young people to have someone to talk to, something to do and somewhere to go. Closing by saying:

*‘These should not just be the preserve of the kids of pushy parents or tiger moms, but available to every young person everywhere.’*

To read Lucy Frazer’s speech [click here](#)

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport’s (DCMS) Youth Impact Study report published in March this year details the work of the DCMS funded UK Youth Parliament and the Youth Policy Development Group (YPDG) which provide young people with opportunities to have a voice on issues that matter to them.

The study found that policy makers felt both programmes were important for promoting the voice of young people in local and national government policy decision, and participants generally reported positive programme experiences. However, the study recommended both programmes could benefit from greater promotion, particularly amongst young people in areas that are currently less represented and that barriers to participation should be addressed.

To read the Youth Engagement Impact Study report [click here](#)



## Supporting Children in the Youth Justice System

### **Local Government Association Publish Report**

The Local Government Association (LGA) has published an online resource '**Supporting children and young people in the youth justice system**' in it which explores, through the provision of case studies, the way in which different local authorities are supporting children in the youth justice system.

The LGA raises the changing 'landscape' of youth justice resulting from the reduction of children entering the system as a result of work undertaken by youth justice services providing prevention and diversionary interventions.

The LGA discusses the varying and complex reasons for children entering the youth justice system who present with:

*'more complex and overlapping education, health and social care needs' and whose 'offending behaviours often mask underlying vulnerabilities: from early childhood trauma and neglect to school exclusion, poor mental health and growing up in poverty.'*

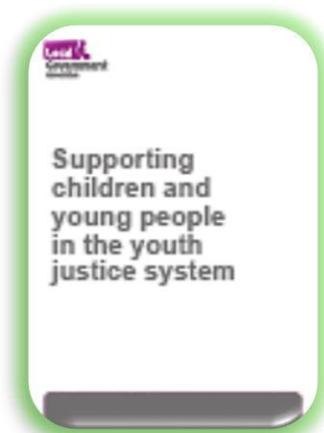
The LGA also considers the change in severity and types of offences committed by children resulting in (on average) longer custodial sentences and high levels of violence and self-harm, whilst in custody.

The online resource contains a number of case studies that aim to provide a range of examples of ways in which to work effectively with children and their families. The case studies include:

- **Avon and Somerset's** resettlement and practice development enhanced case management project;
- **Cheshire** using social prescribing to reduce reoffending among young people;
- **Coventry** taking a whole-family approach to youth justice;
- **Greater Manchester** using police data to support 'invisible' children at risk of offending;
- **Kirklees council's** 'right worker, right support, right time' approach;
- **London** tackling the use of custodial remand for young people;
- **Swindon** supporting identity shift as a pathway out of the youth justice system, and;
- **West Berkshire** focusing on education and positive activity to support children in the youth justice system.

The LGA also provides a number of other related resources to help agencies and services that are looking for ways to improve their provision to children at risk of entering, or who have entered the criminal justice system.

To access the resource [click here](#)



## Keeping Girls and Young Women Safe

### **Report Published**

**COMMISSION  
YOUNG LIVES**

**MCYS** The Manchester  
Centre for Youth  
Studies

The Commission on Young Lives and Manchester Metropolitan University have published a report '**Keeping Girls and Young Women Safe Protecting and supporting the girls and young women at risk of exploitation, violence, gangs and harm**' in which the authors consider the factors resulting in girls and women becoming vulnerable to sexual or criminal exploitation

The authors argue that despite the effect of COVID-19 restrictions increasing the risk of exploitation, their protection and diversion from such activity has:

*'not received the same level of attention as those for boys and young men at risk of county lines and serious violence.'*

The authors argue that estimations indicate more than 200,000 children in England aged 11-to-17 are vulnerable to serious violence; between 20% and 30% of these are girls  
The authors argue that '

*'most of these girls are not 'gang members' themselves, but some are involved with or affected by gangs, and they are being exposed to environments where there are very high levels of control, sexual exploitation, and criminal activity.'*

The report highlights the success of the Manchester-based Getting Out for Good project, a multi-partner collaborative approach to changing the lives of gang affected girls and young women which worked with over a hundred girls.

The report makes a series of recommendations to improve support for vulnerable girls and young women, including amongst others the introduction of:

- The prioritisation of protection for girls and women from exploitation and harm in gang related contexts within frameworks for safeguarding, violence against women and girls and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport's Youth Promise funding;
- Educational programmes in primary, secondary schools and alternative provision to identify and address issues that place girls at risk of exploitation, including the provision of a 'Girls Practitioner' based in local 'Youth Practitioner Teams';
- Awareness training for teachers, health professionals, the police, and children's services on the impact of vulnerability and trauma on girls and young women.
- Multi-disciplinary teams in secondary schools to provide integrated support for girls and families, and data collection and information sharing to support this;
- Specialist girls and young women practitioners in Accident and Emergency Departments in violence hot spot areas, and the prioritisation of specialist support for vulnerable girls in preventative work in youth justice services.

To read the report [click here](#)

## Racial Disparity in Diversion

### **Literature Review Published**



A research project funded by the Nuffield Foundation and undertaken by the University of Bedfordshire and Keele University which is exploring ethnic disparities at the gateway to the youth justice system and the impact of increased use of diversionary mechanisms in that context, has published a literature review, ***Race, disproportionality and diversion from the youth justice system: A review of the literature***; the first stage of the project.

The review shows that evidence from the United States and from the United Kingdom that discusses the progressive shift towards a more child centred, less punitive, approach to dealing with children's offending behaviour, resulting from a greater understanding of vulnerability and trauma experienced by children entering the youth justice system. The authors argue that

*'Central to this emerging philosophy is the idea that whenever possible children in trouble should be diverted from the criminal justice system because of its tendency to worsen the problems to which it is the purported solution.'*

The authors report that pre-court work had expanded considerably with prevention and diversion cases accounting for 52% of youth justice service caseloads in England and 72% in Wales. However, they state:

*'diversion shares with other youth justice mechanisms a tendency to manifest disproportionality'.*

The review considers the factors resulting in disproportionality of diversionary offers. These include the impact of lack of trust in the police and other authority figures, *'a product of the fact that individuals from minority communities believe themselves to be unfairly targeted through stop and search and other measures'* which results in children not admitting offences. They also report the differences between diversionary interventions and statutory orders, citing a failure of practitioners to identify and address previous experiences of racial discrimination and structural challenges in the child's life. The authors also highlight that 'adulthood' of minoritised children results in the denial of their status as innocent and vulnerable.

To read the literature review [click here](#)

The project will be soon be launching a national survey to support the research.

AYM Vice Chair, Charlie Spencer is chair of the Strategic Advisory Board for this research, if you have any issues you wish to raise to support this research contact Charlie at:

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

For more information about this research project [click here](#)



## Other News

### Child Care Review



Department  
for Education

The first wave of the 'Family First for Children' pathfinders have been launched in Dorset, Lincolnshire and Wolverhampton councils following the government's response to the recommendations of the Care Review which called for a reform to every part of the children's social care system; helping children to stay with their families in safe and loving homes, whilst protecting vulnerable children where needed.

The pathfinders will test a move towards locally based, multi-disciplinary family help services, and includes the introduction of specialist child protection social workers in children's services and a scheme to strengthen data sharing amongst partner agencies to improve safeguarding partnerships.

The aim is to keep families together through an increased use of family group decision-making. Local authorities taking part will also see the introduction of family network support packages to remove any financial or practical barriers faced by families accessing services.

The pilots will run until March 2025; a second wave of pilots is planned to commence in spring 2024, details of the criteria for this will be made available by the Department for Education in the autumn (2023).. Four local authorities, Brighton and Hove, Sunderland, Gateshead and Telford and Wrekin, have also been chosen as part of wave one of the family networks pilot.

To read more [click here](#)

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### HM Chief Inspector of Ofsted Recommendation

The Secretary of State for Education, Gillian Keegan, has announced that she is recommending Sir Martyn Oliver for the post of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills at Ofsted.

Sir Martyn is currently the Chief Executive of Outwood Grange Academies Trust (OGAT), a large multi-academy trust (MAT) comprising 17 academies and 41 primary, junior, secondary and alternative provision academies in the North of England. He is also a Trustee of the Education Endowment Foundation, the National Institute of Teaching, and the Office for Students and was a founding trustee of the Confederation of School Trusts.

For more information [click here](#)

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Department  
for Education



## Unitas Courses



Unitas offer academic progression routes for youth justice practitioners.

Have your staff already attained the **Foundation Degree In Youth Justice (FDYJ)** and want to progress further?

Unitas offer Level 6 top-up modules to attain the BA (Honours) Youth Justice at an attractive and affordable price. Practitioners will further develop strong analytical, reasoning and reflective skills in the context of youth justice practice.

### **Route 1: Social Policy and Youth Justice + Independent Research Module**

- Explore the policy context for youth justice, what the drivers are and what impact different approaches have on children and their families.

### **Route 2: Managing and Coaching in Youth Justice + Independent Research Module**

- Moving into a managerial role or want to develop existing management skills
- Gain an overview of policy developments regarding staff development within the sector and their intended impact.

#### **Cohorts start in September**

---- CONTACT UNITAS NOW ----

TO RESERVE YOUR PLACE!

Phone: **01603 570365**

Email: [contact@unitas.uk.net](mailto:contact@unitas.uk.net)

Web: <https://unitas.uk.net>

#### **Independent research module**

Conduct a mini-research project in the context of youth justice

Create a written report and an artefact to share with colleagues and other interested audiences

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## Self-Generated Child Abuse Images

Children, and Young People Now has published an article reporting a study by 'Nominet', the official registry for UK domain names, and the online safety organisation 'Internet Matters' to examine the 'four fold rise in self-generated child abuse images.'



The article reports that data shows a more than 400 per cent increase in such imagery in the UK – from 38,500 cases in 2019 to 199,000 in 2022. Last year 127,732 incidents were linked to 11-to 13-year-old girls.

The latest research will focus on how best to prevent the creation and distribution of self-generated images among young people.

To find out more [click here](#)

## [A Tripartite Strategy for Unpaid Work in the Community](#)

HMI Probation has published the latest in its Academic Insight series of papers in which the authors, Dr. Eoin Guilfoyle, a Lecturer in Criminal Law and Criminal Justice at Brunel Law School and Dr. Louise Kennefick a Senior Lecturer in Criminal Law at the University of Glasgow, consider the use of unpaid work in the community.



Using findings from a report commissioned by the Irish Probation Service, the authors propose the advancement of a tripartite strategy, based on the principles of desistance, restorative justice, and social justice, to guide policy and operational developments relating to unpaid work in the community.

To read the report [click here](#)

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## [Serious Youth Violence Research Programme](#)

Co-leaders of the serious youth violence research programme, the Department for Education and the Youth Endowment Fund have published two new reports, '**The 'role of systems support'** report that collates evidence and insight on vulnerability to serious violence and the role the system plays, and the '**Serious violence foundational system mapping'** report that considers how the current system is perceived to work.



To read the reports [click here](#)

A '**Systems evidence and gap map'**, that highlights where relevant research is available, is also available on the Youth Endowment Fund website - [click here](#) for more information.



## [CONTEST 2023](#)

The Home Secretary, Suella Braverman, has launched the United Kingdom's updated counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST 2023. The last formal update of the strategy was 5 years ago she said:

*'we have seen nine declared attacks and 39 disrupted attacks. The terrorist threat is enduring.'*

The updated CONTEST will maintain its four pillars: Prevent, Pursue, Protect, and Prepare

To read more about CONTEST 2023 [click here](#)

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## Dates for Your Diary

**For Your  
Diary!**

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR AYM 2023-24



<b>Title</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Venue</b>
Executive Board meeting	5 <sup>th</sup> September, 2023	MS Teams
Executive Planning meeting	28 <sup>th</sup> September, 2023	Warwick
Executive Board meeting	5 <sup>th</sup> December, 2023	MS Teams
AYM Autumn Conference	6 <sup>th</sup> December, 2023	Rugby
Executive Board meeting	5 <sup>th</sup> March 2024	MS Teams
Executive Board meeting	June 2024	To be confirmed
Annual General Meeting	20 <sup>th</sup> June 2024	To be confirmed

***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)*

## Effective point-of-arrest diversion for children and young people: what the evidence tells us.

CLINKS and the Centre for Justice Innovation are holding an online event, part of the 'A matter of fact: what the evidence tell us' series in which delegates can ask questions of leading academics and members of the Centre for Justice Innovation team regarding the effectiveness of point of arrest diversion.

This free online event takes place on:

**Monday 4th September 2023,  
2-3pm**

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



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## The Vulnerable Accused in the Criminal Justice System

This two-day conference, looking at the vulnerability of suspects and defendants in criminal proceedings brings together a range of contributors to explore different aspects of the criminal process, to critically interrogate the safeguarding, protection, and participation of vulnerable suspects and defendants across jurisdictions.

The event takes place on:

**10am Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> September - 4pm Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> September, 2023**

at

**University of Birmingham, Edgbaston.**



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

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## WHY ME?: Restorative Justice from a Children's Right Perspective

This two-day training course brings together themes of restorative justice, children's rights and trauma informed practice in relation to children. The training takes place on:

**20<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> September at:**

**The Gestalt Centre,  
15-23 St Pancras Way,  
London  
NW1 0PT**

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

## Early Help: Policy, Practice and Supporting Wellbeing

Hallam Conference Centre, London  
on

Wednesday 27th September, 2023

Join experts and leading professionals from across the sector at Children and Young People Now's 10<sup>th</sup> annual Early Help Conference.



For more information [click here](#)

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## Community Care Live

Community Care Live will take place this year at

The Business Design Centre in London

on

10<sup>th</sup> -11<sup>th</sup> October 2023



This event is free for all registered social workers, and those with closely associated role. There is also a chance to attend one of 8 legal learning sessions on topics such as the Public Law Outline, coercive control and contact, and deprivation of liberty (*charges applied*)

To register for a place [click here](#)

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## Pre-Sentence Reports: Best Practice

This online event, one in a series of many, will update delegates on the key messages in the recently updated statutory guidance? What do examples of best practice from around the country look like? What do lawyers for children find most helpful?



Delegates will hear a range of perspectives and join the conversation about what good looks like in practice.

The event takes place on **8th November, 2023 at 1pm**

**YJLC online seminars, are free with YJLC membership.** To enquire about membership, please [click here](#).



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

Then follow the AYM on Twitter.....

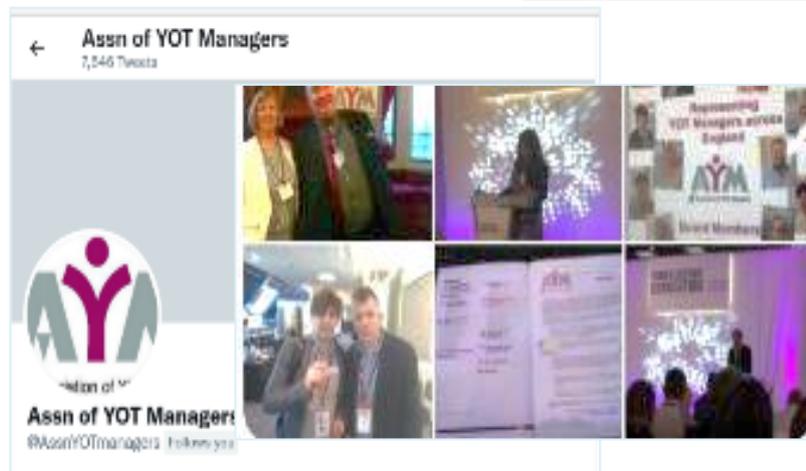
**We have more than 3,000 followers** who receive frequent updates on issues relating to youth justice and YOT Managers.

It's easy to sign up - our username is:

**@AssnYOTmanagers**



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



Via our website **<https://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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If you do not wish to receive this Bulletin, please email **[lesley.tregear@aym.org.uk](mailto:lesley.tregear@aym.org.uk)** and you will be removed from our records. Non-Member email addresses are only used for circulating this newsletter.

## 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> <i>Bedfordshire YOS</i>				
<i>pat.jennings@bedford.gov.uk</i>					
<b>East Midlands</b>	<b>Carly Turner</b> <i>Leicestershire YJS</i>		<b>West Midlands</b>	<b>Celia Payne</b> <i>Wolverhampton YOS</i>	
<i>carly.turner@leics.gov.uk</i>			<i>celia.payne@wolverhampton.gov.uk</i>		
<b>South East</b>	<b>Anna Harbridge</b> <i>Southampton YOS</i>		<b>South West</b>	<b>Mike Rees</b> <i>North Somerset YOT</i>	
<i>anna.harbridge@southampton.gov.uk</i>			<i>mike.rees@n-somerset.gov.uk</i>		
<b>North East</b>	<b>Kay Dargue</b> <i>South Tees YOS</i>		<b>North West</b>	<b>Kathy Gill</b> <i>Wirral YJS</i>	
<i>kay_dargue@middlesbrough.gov.uk</i>			<i>kathygill@wirral.gov.uk</i>		
<b>London</b>	<b>Awaiting Nominations</b>		<b>Yorkshire &amp; Humberside</b>	<b>Sarah Goddard</b> <i>Bradford YJS</i>	
			<i>sarah.goddard@bradford.gov.uk</i>		