Bulletin
February
2024

In this issue:

P2-4	News from the Executive Board
P5-6	Youth Justice Sector Improvement Partnership
P7	Youth Justice SEND Quality Award
P8	Challenges for Local Criminal Justice Boards
P9	Keeping Children Safe
P10	Academic Insight
P11	Youth Justice Statistics: 2022 to 2023
P12	Thematic Review of Alternative Provision in England
P13	Children in Police Custody
P14	Young Advocates for Youth Justice
P15-16	Vacancies
P17-19	Other News
P20-22	Dates for Your Diary
P23	How to Stay in Touch with the AYM
P24	AYM Regional Representatives

News from the Executive Board

AYM Chair, Jacqui Belfield-Smith, attended a meeting with the youth justice minister Edward Argar, along with representatives of the Alliance for Youth Justice, the Howard League for Penal Reform, and the Prison Reform Trust, to discuss concerns about the proposed use of PAVA spray in the youth secure estate.

The AYM also attended the Custody Expert Reference Group, hosted by the Alliance for Youth Justice which considered the placement of **young people aged over 18 years in the youth secure estate** and the recent announcement from the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) that all those young people aged 18 years or over who are sentenced and released from youth custody will be supervised and managed by the Probation Service. The meeting also discussed HM Prison and Probation Service development of a **Children and Young Person Custody Strategy** and what it should include to be child first.

The custody expert group also shared their thoughts about the MoJ's proposal to amend the Sentencing Bill to include the **diversion of children from short custodial sentences** of 12 months or less to youth rehabilitation orders. Additionally, the group agreed it was in support of the upcoming Private Members Bill aims to reduce the scope for joint enterprise prosecutions.

The next meeting of the Custody Expert Group will be considering members' individual and joint influencing plans for this coming year regarding custody, plans for a Children and Young People strategy, and shaping the agenda for the future.

Michael O'Connor and Nick Jeffreys, AYM's portfolio leads for custody and resettlement, provided evidence to the Ministry of Justice Youth Justice Policy Unit that is undertaking a scoping exercise into options available to youth justice services for post-release from custody accommodation. The scoping included asking about the types of accommodation children are typically released to where the child is not returning home, the types of accommodation most commonly used, and those that are most difficult to secure places in.

The scoping also included if accommodation could be financially secured prior to release and the extent to which social workers are involved in arranging placements.

If you have anything you would like us to include in this scoping, examples of practice that your service has that others don't have access to, please contact **lesley.tregear@aym.org.uk** so that the information can be passed on the researchers.

Michael and Nick will also be working with the MoJ's Implementation Unit to help them consider the use of release on temporary licence (ROTL). The unit is undertaking a time limited deep dive into ROTL as evidence suggests it supports effective resettlement. The research will identify how it is currently used any opportunities it presents as well as barriers to its use. If you have anything that you would like included in this research please contact:

moconnor@swindon.gov.uk or **nicholas.jeffreys@coventry.gov.uk**

The **Manifesto launch of the ATLAS 'Think Language First'** at the House of Lords took place on 30th January. The event was sponsored by Lord Boateng, Chancellor of the University of Greenwich, alongside the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT) and scholars from the ATLAS Leiden project. The launch introduced the #ThinkLanguageFirst manifesto, a bold new direction for tackling language and communication needs in our school system.

Over 50 organisations have endorsed the manifesto. The manifesto states that:

> *'Language and communication skills are the gateway to lifelong wellbeing and educational attainment. Yet language needs are often overlooked'*

The manifesto is calling for government to 'Think Language First' and ensure:

- all types of language needs to be recognised and understood;
- diagnosis for language difficulties that does not miss a single child or young person;
- language difficulties to be fully acknowledged as a disability wherever appropriate;
- every child who needs it, to have access to adequate language support throughout the school journey; and
- the removal of barriers that children and young people with communication difficulties face

Diz Minnit represented the AYM at the launch as one of the panellists and discussed the awareness in the youth justice sector of the role of language ability and the benefits of language support, before talking about how the Manifesto can contribute to raise awareness and affect policies.

If you would like further information about the ATLAS Think Language First **click here**

A Sad Farewell

It is with great sadness that we learnt about the death of our dear colleague, Mick Coleman, age 64, earlier this month.

Mick started his career in Youth Justice in Bolton, Greater Manchester, in Jan 1989, and served for 30 years until his retirement in Feb 2019, finishing his career as the Head of Service for the 15 preceding years. Mick was also an original member of the AYM at its inception in 2000, and was a strong supporter of the association.

Mick was a hugely popular friend and colleague, not just in Greater Manchester, but across the country given the many years that he had been in youth justice. He was well known for his wicked sense of humour, and many of us will be left with fond memories of the way he lightened the atmosphere in the room, and often had us in stitches with his acerbic wit and sharp observations; meetings were never dull when Mick was present and his banter was legendary.

Mick had a genuine interest in people and was well liked and respected both professionally and personally. He loved to engage in a range of discussions, whether it was a lively debate about the direction of government policy, or an in-depth case discussion about a young person. Mick's ability to be child-centred made him a force for good - he was all about young people, well before 'child-first' and our understanding of trauma was on the national agenda. He was a deep thinker, but prided himself on his determination to cut through bureaucracy, making sure that processes were as simple as possible and didn't detract from the important stuff, which was clearly aligned to his strong political beliefs and determination to fight for social justice. He was not a 'yes man' and had a unique ability to speak his mind without losing respect or co-operation of others.

Mick was devoted to his wife and sons, and welcomed the birth of his first grandchild in September 2023. His retirement allowed him to spend even more time with his wonderful family, travel to France more frequently, walk the dogs, visit all the local hostelries - and rate the quality of their real ale, and last, but definitely not least, spend more time going to St Andrews to support his beloved Birmingham City FC – as shown in the photo (see left).

Our thoughts are with his family at this difficult time. It was such a privilege to know him for so many years, he entertained us with his wit and humour, and was respected for his compassion, kindness and deep sense of integrity. Mick will be greatly missed by many of us – we know the youth justice community benefited greatly from having him in it.

Goodbye dear friend

Youth Justice Sector Led Improvement Partnership (YJSIP)

Receiving YJSIP Coaching

Are you a youth justice leader/manager looking for a coach?

We will be training a new group of skilled youth justice leaders to become YJSIP coaches and mentors this month and have a few remaining spaces for those wishing to be matched to receive coaching. You will be coached by a trained peer, likely 8 sessions over Teams from mid-February through to September (timings determined by you and your coach).

Are you looking for a safe and confidential space outside of your organisation to be able to explore and gain a different perspective/develop your leadership?

Do these sound like you...?

- You're struggling with a supervisory relationship?
- You're stuck with a work-related issue?
- You want to reflect on where you're at in your career and how you progress?
- You want to gain different insights about what you do, how you do it and what might enhance your youth justice leadership?

Coaching is

- ☑ A space to explore, reflect, reframe, and at times be appropriately challenged;
- ☑ Future focused;
- ☑ Based on a trusting relationship between coach and coachee;
- ☑ A place where you can explore what you want to explore – it is not directed by others.

Coaching is not:

- ✗ Being told what to do;
- ✗ Where you'll be given the answers;
- ✗ Therapy;
- ✗ A space where you need to have all the answers.

To apply to benefit from YJSIP coaching, please complete our application form by **clicking here**

Peer Review:

We are now taking applications from youth justice partnerships wishing to have a YJSIP peer review. If you are interested, in the first instance please speak to your regional YJSIP rep who can advise how to go about applying. Please note, we request that your strategic board agrees to the review prior to your application being sent.

YJSIP regional reps.

North-Wales	James Warr	james.warr@flintshire.gov.uk
South-Wales	Jay McCabe Alison Davies	jay.mcCabe@newport.gov.uk a.davies8@npt.gov.uk
London	Jane Bennett Ellanora Clarke Michelle Edwards	jane.bennett@islington.gov.uk eclarke@lambeth.gov.uk michelle.edwards@newham.gov.uk
South-West	Fiona Walker	fiona.Walker@prospects.co.uk
South-East	Bea Nigolian Nichola Maxwell	bea.nigolian@wokingham.gov.uk nicola.maxwell@eastsussex.gov.uk
North East	Emma Blackwell	EmmaBlackwell@Gateshead.gov.uk
North-West	Jacqui Belfield-Smith	jacqui.belfield-smith@stockport.gov.uk
Yorkshire and Humberside	Sam Taylor Rachel Schleicher	Sam.taylor@sheffield.gov.uk rachel.schleicher@eastriding.gov.uk
East Midlands	Carly Turner	carly.turner@leics.gov.uk

If you are in Mid-Wales, West Midlands or the East, please contact laura.kinsey@aym.org.uk

Youth Justice SEND Quality Award

Congratulations to Coventry Youth Justice and Education Area Partnership

Congratulations to Coventry Youth Justice Service and Education Area Partnership for attaining Youth Justice SEND Quality Lead Status redesignation with a Child First Commendation.

In January 2021, Coventry Local Area Partnership became the 22nd Youth Offending Team to gain Quality Lead status in early 2021 and was praised for the comprehensive assessments on every child. The assessor for this year's award stated that the:

> *'purpose, practice and outcomes have developed significantly over the past three years, as indicators show that first-time offending rates remain low and stable, and reoffending rates continue to fall'.*

Furthermore, the education lead within the youth justice service has made a significant impact, improving relationships with schools, the local authority SEND team, the Virtual Headteacher and the Prospects Team.

The assessor also found a growing movement to help education providers (Primary and secondary) to move from trauma awareness to trauma informed practice.

They also noted the development of a specific intervention around knife crime involving schools, parents and the police, aiming to reduce the marginalisation and criminalisation of young people

Coventry's commitment to child-first is demonstrated by the consistent theme of co-construction in its practice, and note its '***Inspire Programme (designed to give young people a tangible opportunity to reimagine positive futures through motivational talks, new experiences and introductions to new possibilities) has rightly been acknowledged through a John Hawkins Award'.***

Coventry demonstrates a city-wide commitment to changing young people's life outcomes which demonstrates strong and productive relationships built on the foundations of common purpose that ensure that Coventry continually moves forward.

Well done Coventry!

AYM Association of YOT Managers

microlink people focused solutions

Challenges for Local Criminal Justice Boards?

Launch of Call for Evidence

The Ministry of Justice launched a Call for Evidence on Local Criminal Justice Boards (LCJBs) on 8th January 2024. Local Criminal Justice System (CJS) partners are crucial to driving improvements across the system, and this Call for Evidence presents a real opportunity for the Ministry of Justice to better understand the challenges that LCJBs face and inform future policy.

The Call for Evidence is live until 23 February 2024 and can be accessed by **clicking here**

The Ministry of Justice state that understanding the local aspect of the CJS is a key issue and there has been an increased interest in the role of local groups and local leaders to drive improvements, particularly LCJBs. The Ministry of Justice advise it has made steps to address this, including publication of renewed guidance for LCJBs in March 2023 and holding the first LCJB conference in April 2023, but it wishes to go further. Evidence gathered from this Call for Evidence will be considered in conjunction with other ongoing work relating to LCJBs, and used to better understand local CJS challenges and inform future policy and support for local leaders.

This Call for Evidence is seeking evidence from all parties with an interest in LCJBs to better understand the challenges that LCJBs face and how they can best be supported. Therefore, it is important that the views of the whole of the local criminal justice system and associated sectors are reflected in this Call for Evidence.

Where possible, respondents should answer questions as individuals, rather than as a collective LCJB or organisation. Where individuals are part of, or have an interest in, multiple LCJBs they are free to respond in relation to one or multiple LCJBs and can indicate which LCJB(s) their response relates to in the 'About You' section. Respondents are only required to respond to questions they feel are relevant to them.

I
f you have any questions or queries relating to this Call for Evidence, please direct them to the Criminal Justice Insights team via the following email address:

lcjb.evidence@justice.gov.uk

Keeping Children Safe

Safeguarding Childhood and Addressing Child Exploitation

Action for Children, a charity that delivers services across the UK to improve outcomes in the lives of children and their families, together with partners Barnardo's, NSPCC, National Childrens Bureau and the Children's Society, has launched its ***'Children at the Table'*** initiative, in the hope that more children will have safe and happy childhoods. The aim of the campaign is to ensure ahead of the upcoming general election, that politicians have a plan to put 'Children at the Table' and ***'to ensure that the next Prime Minister does more to make good childhoods a national priority'***

Action for Children report that England's Children's Commissioner has estimated that up to 27,000 children in England may be affiliated with criminal gangs with approximately 120,000 potentially at risk of exploitation and have launched a review, chaired by Professor Alexis Jay OBE, aims to:

- Better understand how exploitation happens.
- How services respond to it.
- What support is available to young people who have been victims of exploitation.

The review aims to learn about what has been working well and to enable understanding of what more could be done.

Action for Children deliver services around the country that help prevent vulnerable young people from becoming involved in criminal activity, and report that since 2012, the Serious Organised Crime Early Intervention Service has helped young people at risk in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee, Newcastle and Cardiff.

Professor Jay will be supported in the review by Simon Bailey QPM, the former Chief Constable of Norfolk and member of the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel, and Charles Geekie KC, a barrister specialising in areas of the law relating to children, and an Action for Children Trustee.

The review panel has heard from professionals in children's services, education, local government, charities, academia, the police and youth justice systems, and will be working closely with young people, to make sure that their experience is at the heart of the review.

A report will be published next spring that will include recommendations for changes to national policy, legal frameworks and local practice.

For more information about Children at the Table **click here**

For more information about the Jay Review of Child Criminal Exploitation **click here**

Academic Insight

Trauma Informed Diversion

HMI Probation has published its latest Academic Insight – '***The 'Sequential Intercept Model' – a trauma-informed diversionary framework'.*** This publication, written by Dr Suzanne Mooney, Dr Stephen Coulter, Professor Lisa Bunting and Dr Lorna Montgomery from the School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work at Queen's University Belfast, introduces the Sequential Intercept Model (SIM) which was developed in the USA as a cross-systems framework to consider the interface between the criminal justice and mental health systems.

The report highlights that it is well established in international literature that young people and adults involved with the justice system are disproportionately affected by adversity and trauma, with exposure to childhood adversity identified as a key risk factor for subsequent justice involvement.

The authors highlight evidence that demonstrates that contact with the youth justice system is in itself trauma inducing.

The authors highlight how the SIM can be used more widely as a trauma-informed framework which identifies key stages and opportunities for diverting children and adults with complex needs from the criminal justice system or from penetrating deeper into the system (Intercepts). These intercepts are identified as:

- Community services;
- Law enforcement and emergency services;
- Initial detention/court hearing;
- Courts/prison;
- Re-entry
- Community corrections and supports.

Looking at these Intercepts, there are a number of key messages, including information sharing between agencies, the importance of cross-systems collaboration and service co-ordination, and the benefits from strengthening positive relationships around the individual.

The authors conclude that with concerted collaborative efforts, there are opportunities to improve the life chances of children and adults by ensuring earlier access to the services required to meet their individual needs. However, they do acknowledge that the key messages within their report are consistent with current UK policy and initiative developments.

To read the report **click here**

Youth Justice Statistics: 2022 to 2023

The Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB) has published the latest statistics for youth justice that looks at the data for the youth justice system in England and Wales for the year ending March 2023. It considers the number of children (those aged 10 to 17) in the system, the offences they committed, the outcomes they received, their demographics and the trends over time.

Amongst the findings are that:

- Arrests of children increased by 9% compared with the previous year;
- The number of children in custody has decreased by 3%. However, Black children remain overrepresented in custody, accounting for 26% of the youth custody population compared with 6% of the 10 to 17year old population.
- The reoffending rate increased by 0.9% compared to the previous year, the first increase since the year ending March 2014, but the second lowest rate in the time series;
- First time entrants increased by 1% compared with the previous year, the first increase in the last ten years;

Stop and searches of children increased by 13%, and 77% of stop and searches of children resulted in no further action; 10% resulted in an arrest. Black children accounted for 20% of stop and searches 14% higher than the proportion of Black 10 to 17 year olds in the 2021 population and the only ethnic group to be over-represented compared with the population.

73% of arrests, where ethnicity was known, were of White children. Arrests of Black children accounted for 12% the third consecutive year this proportion has decreased, and arrests of Mixed ethnicity were 8% with Asian and 'Other' accounting for 7%.

The number of first time entrants aged 10 to 14 years increased by 7%, the first year-on-year increase in the last ten years. However, the number of first time entrants aged 15 to 17 years decreased by 1%, continuing the year-on-year decreases of the last decade.

Summary offences accounted for the highest group of offences for first time entrants, followed by weapon offences and then violence against the person for the latest period and the comparator period.

The report shows that 4% fewer children were cautioned or sentenced compared to the previous year and 72% lower than ten years ago, concluding that the decrease is likely in part due to an increase in the use of diversionary outcomes in recent years.

To read the report **click here**

Thematic Review of Alternative Provision in England

First Review Published

Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission have published a report of the review of alternative provision (AP) to consider the commissioning, oversight, practice of these establishments and the impact of the arrangements on children and young people.

This was the first review undertaken and the inspectorates carried out visits to 6 local areas, Bracknell Forest, Dudley, Hampshire, Leeds, Lincolnshire and Barking and Dagenham, with the aim of:

- finding out the extent to which AP arrangements are meeting the health, care and/or educational needs of children and young people
- better understanding the purposes for which AP is used
- identifying the enablers and barriers to local area partners working together to commission and oversee AP placements
- highlighting good practice in commissioning and oversight arrangements for AP.

The inspectorate report that

> *'Overall, we found that issues such as a lack of national standards and a lack of clarity on responsibilities for AP commissioning and oversight are leading to inconsistent and ineffective practice. This is often made worse by underdeveloped strategic planning, an insufficiently clear purpose of AP and a lack of monitoring of children's outcomes.*
>
> *Too often, agencies do not strategically collaborate with each other. There is a worrying lack of involvement from health partners in particular. Decisions about placing children in AP are often not rigorous enough and placements are not monitored effectively. As a result, children's outcomes are extremely inconsistent, both across and within local areas.'*

However, the inspectorate found examples of good practice and encourage local authorities and schools to adopt these practices:

> *'We saw some examples of AP working well for children. Local area partners could demonstrate success through improvements in attendance and behaviour, reductions in suspensions and successful reintegration into mainstream education. Partners tended to place greater emphasis on immediate impact than on longer-term outcomes and academic attainment. However, many local authority leaders could not show a positive impact.'*

The inspectorate recommend that to improve the experiences and outcomes of children in AP, there needs to be better commissioning and oversight of AP. This is the case both at a strategic and area-wide level, and at the level of individual placements.[1]

To read the report **click here**

Children in Police Custody

All Party Parliamentary Group Seek Evidence

An All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) is looking into the treatment of children in police custody. In order to inform its inquiry, the APPG is seeking to hear from children and young people between 16 and 20 years of age, about their experiences in police custody or when being strip searched, in order to consider how things can be improved.

To respond as a young person **click here**

To respond as an appropriate adult **click here**

Young Advocates for Youth Justice

Final Showcase

The Young Advocates project is a youth-led project delivered by the Alliance for Youth Justice and Leaders Unlocked, with the generous support of BBC Children in Need.

The project is led by children and young people between 14 and 20 years of age who have lived experience of the youth justice system, and who want to be part of a movement to drive positive change in youth justice around issues that are important to them. The project supports the Young Advocates to play a leadership role and represent children and young people across the country.

A core group of Young Advocates was recruited over the summer of 2020, despite the challenges posed by COVID-19. The young people involved in the project represent diverse backgrounds and experience, and are from different parts of the country.

The Young Advocates have had a busy year carrying out peer research on topics important to them, finding out children and young people's experiences of policing, criminalisation, intervention and diversion; they will shortly be publishing their final report.

As the project draws to a close, the Young Advocates are holding a final event to showcase their findings and recommendations. The event will also provide an opportunity for them to share their achievements and to highlight their impressive personal accomplishments. They will also be able to share with delegates the changes they would like to see going forward.

The event takes place on Zoom on:

Wednesday 28th February,
at
4.00-5.30pm

To register for a place to hear from the Young Advocates **click here**

To find out more about the Young Advocates Project **click here**

Vacancies

Practice and Performance Manager Required

Birmingham Childrens Trust is seeking a Practice and Performance Manager to join the youth justice service.

As a valued member of the service, you will be joining a dedicated management team and have a key role in improving and developing practice and performance across the service. Responsibilities will include quality assurance activity, supporting practitioners on a one to one and group basis to improve and develop their practice, overseeing induction and training and development activities; delivery of internal training; creating and contributing to process and practice expectation documents.

The successful candidate will be someone who is:

- passionate, motivated and enthusiastic about delivering high quality, creative services to children, families and victims;
- experienced in youth justice services with skills matched to the job description and person specification; and
- committed to work with and alongside others, to learn, innovate and drive forward improvements.

For more information and to apply for the role **click here**

For an informal discussion about the role contact

BirminghamYOS@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk

Closing Date for applications is 11th February, 2024

Interviews take place week beginning 26th February, 2024

HMYOI Wetherby – Leeds City Council Seek Two Social Workers

Due to an expansion in the team the dedicated social work team at HMYOI Wetherby is looking for two full-time social workers

This is an exciting and unique opportunity to work directly with young people to promote their wellbeing, ensure their voices are heard, and that they are kept safe in custody.

HMYOI Wetherby currently holds both boys and girls aged 15-18 years of age, who are either remanded to youth detention accommodation or sentenced to custody. Due to the nature of the work, the successful candidates will be working with young people with some of the most complex needs in the country and will form part of multi-disciplinary teams involving (amongst others) Prison Officers, Youth Justice Services, Health, Education, CAMHS, Forensic Psychology and Barnardo's.

The social workers at Wetherby drive restorative practice and the successful candidates will have the opportunity to build positive relationships with young people, to advocate for them and to share expertise in young people's rights and entitlements when in custody.

There is also the opportunity to be creative in bringing best practice from outside into the prison; the Social Work Team has led on the introduction of a parkrun within Wetherby, the Clear Approach Programme for care-experienced young people and a 'Time Out for Dads' parenting course.

If you are considering applying for this position, you are strongly encouraged to visit the team at HMYOI Wetherby to hear more about the work and understand the role.

HMYOI Wetherby is open to considering these posts as an initial 12-month secondment, but ask that you have the support of your line manager for this.

For an informal discussion about the role, or to arrange an informal visit contact:

Nicole Woodward, Service Delivery Manager, on 0113 3784822

For more information or to apply for this role **click here**

Closing Date for applications is 11:30pm on 7th February, 2024

Other News

Safety in the Children and Young People Estate

The Ministry of Justice, HM Prison and Probation Service and the Youth Custody Service have published the latest statistics for safety in the youth secure estate - Safety in the Children and Young People Secure Estate: Update to September 2023.

The report covers statistics regarding assaults, self-harm, use of force, separations, and deaths in the youth secure estate in England and Wales. The report shows that assaults between July and September 2023 decreased by 7% compared to the same period last year, although young people involved in incidents as assailants or fighters increased by 5% and assaults on staff increased by 5%.

Self-harm incidents decreased by 5% overall but the number of children self-harming increased by 19%. No child deaths occurred in custody.

To read the report **click here**

Integrated Care System

The Children & Young People's Health Policy Influencing Group (HPIG), hosted by the National Children's Bureau and the Council for Disabled Children, has launched a new report examining the extent to which the needs of babies, children and young people are reflected in the new Integrated Care Systems' strategic planning.

The report, the first of its kind, acknowledges the good work developing in a challenging context of increased demand and stretched budgets. It identifies areas for improvement around:

- Integration with children's social care and education settings;
- Clearly identifying leadership and accountability for babies, children and young people;
- Engaging with babies, children and young people and setting out how their feedback has been actioned;
- Addressing the needs of children with major and long-term conditions, as well as other minority and vulnerable groups.

The report makes a number of recommendations to national government on where it can offer greater support and guidance to ICSs, and it includes examples of good practice, highlighting some of the great work underway in ICSs.

To read the report here **click here**

Children's Commissioner Concerned for Children with SEND

The latest statistics on the number of tribunals for people appealing against local authority decisions about Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) for children with special educational needs has been published that show the number of appeals has hit an all-time high of 13,700.

In response to the publication, the Children's Commissioner Dame Rachel De Souza stated in a blog that:

> *'I am extremely concerned by these statistics, which indicates a distinct lack of support for children with Special Educational Needs. Data published earlier this year showed that children and families are experiencing long waiting times for EHCPs as demand reaches new highs.*
>
> *These appeals represent children and families who are unable to get the support they need, the vast majority of whom are then successful in challenging a local authority's decision. The proportion of cases found at least in part in favour of the appellant has also reached a record high of 98%, up from 96% in both 2021-22 and 2020-21.*
>
> *Over a quarter (28%) of appeals were against refusals by local authorities to conduct an education, health and care assessment in the first place, which is the necessary first step towards getting an EHCP.*
>
> *Despite only 32% of pupils with EHCPs having autism, almost half (45 per cent) of appeals were related to autistic children and young people – suggesting that autistic children may find accessing support particularly challenging.'*

To read the blog **click here**

Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel

The fourth annual report (2022 – 2023) of the independent Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel. Has been published which looks at the child safeguarding system, based on serious child safeguarding incidents occurring between January 2022 and March 2023.

Ther report sets out patterns in practice for national government and local safeguarding partners to better protect vulnerable children.

To read the report **click here**

Inspection Report – Parc YOI

HMI Prisons Inspectorate of Prisons has published a report on its latest inspection of HM Young Offender Institution Parc in which the Chief Inspector states:

> *'As this report and our recent visits show, the YOI at Parc is the best in England and Wales, and something of a benchmark for the four others currently in operation. When we last inspected in 2022, we found outcomes for young people against all four of our healthy establishment tests to be good, our highest assessment. At this inspection, we found purposeful activity had deteriorated and was now not sufficiently good. However, the quality of outcomes in safety, care and resettlement had been sustained, and remained good, a significant achievement.'*

To read the report **click here**

Comparison of UK Criminal Disclosures

The **'Fair Checks Campaign'**, a movement led by Transform Justice and Unlock, and funded by abrdn Financial Fairness Trust, is calling for a fresh start for the outdated criminal records disclosure system in England and Wales. Fair Checks' mission is to make criminal record checks fairer so that everyone can contribute their talents to society. The campaign builds support for change, empowering affected individuals to take action, and persuading the government to act.

Fair Checks has published a report that shows that the UK criminal disclosure system is more punitive than criminal record checks in five US states - California, Connecticut, Utah, New Jersey, and Oklahoma, when tested against five specific scenarios in each jurisdiction.

To read the report **click here**

#FairChecks

Local Government Finance Settlement

The government has announced additional funding for local authorities which the ADCS has said:

> *'is hugely welcome after the disappointing autumn statement. It will help to offset some of the sharp challenges and make a massive difference in the short-term, however, the need for sustainable core funding remains, particularly in the context of the discussion about family help.'*

However, as part of the announcement the minister advised that local authorities will be required to produce productivity plans that set out how they will improve service performance and reduce wasteful expenditure.

To read more about the provisional settlement **click here**

Dates for Your Diary

CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR AYM 2024

Title	Date	Venue
Executive Board meeting	5th March, 2024	MS Teams
Executive Board meeting	19th June, 2024	MS Teams
AYM Summer Conference	20th June, 2024	To be confirmed
Annual General Meeting	20th June, 2024	To be confirmed
Executive Board meeting	18th September, 2024	MS Teams
Executive Board meeting	11th December, 2024	MS Teams

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**

Supporting Racially Minoritised Young People as they Transition to Adulthood

As part of the 'Young people in transition in the criminal justice system project', funded by Barrow Cadbury Trust, the Alliance for Youth Justice (AYJ) is holding an launch event for its new research which examined the experiences of racially minoritised young people, what good support looks like, and the role of organisations in supporting young people during the transition.

There will be two panel discussion, with AYM Vice Chair, Charlie Spencer talking in one of them about the work of youth justice services in supporting children transitioning to adulthood.

The event takes place on:

Thursday 8th February,
at
11.00am-12.30pm

To register for a place at the event **click here**

To find out more about the project **click here**

Children, Anonymity and Sentencing

The National Association of Youth Justice (NAYJ) and the Youth Practitioners Association are holding a half day seminar to discuss children's rights in sentencing.

The event takes place:

8th February, 2024

2-6pm

at

Doughty Street Chambers
54 Doughty Street, London WC1N 2LS

To find out more about the seminar, and to register for a place **click here**

Free Assistive Technologies Training

Microlink is offering all ETE specialists in youth offending teams a second opportunity to join an Assistive Technologies training programme.

Assistive Technologies can transform outcomes for young people with communication needs, a barrier common to many young people in youth justice pathways.

Through the generous sponsorship of HSBC, a full training programme is being made available free.

The online induction events are scheduled for either:

13:30 or 15:30 on
Thursday 29th February, 2024

Find out more by **clicking here**

To book a place **click here**

For more information, contact Marius Frank: **marius.frank@microlinkpc.com**

Evaluation, Evidence & Impact Conference

Children and Young People Now is holding the annual Evaluation, Evidence and Impact Conference on:

Wednesday 20th March, 2024
at
The Hallam Conference Centre, London.

Join the conference to hear from some of the country's leading experts in research and evaluation, who will be sharing the latest methods, key challenges and practical tips to help you demonstrate your impact in improving outcomes for children, young people and families.

The conference will cover key topics including strategies to build organisational capacity for evaluation, becoming an evidence-based charity, evaluating access to mental health services.

The conference is designed to all professionals with an interest in service evaluation

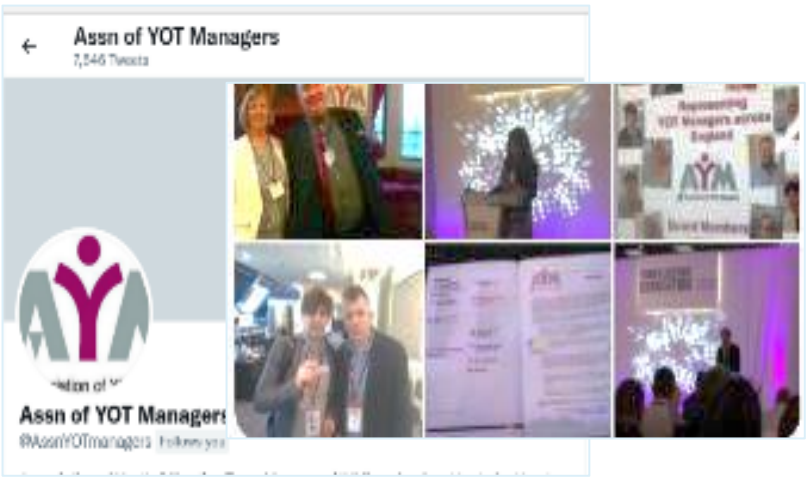
To register for a place at the conference **click here**

Early bird rates expire on 24th February, 2024

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***

Email our Editor ***lesley.tregear@aym.org.uk***

This AYM Bulletin shares items which we feel may be of interest to members and other interested parties, but this should not be taken as endorsement of individuals, organisations or their products or views.

Association of YOT Managers

If you do not wish to receive this Bulletin, please email ***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.

East	**Pat Jennings** ***Bedfordshire YOS***				
pat.jennings@bedford.gov.uk					
East Midlands	**Carly Turner** **Leicestershire YJS**		**West Midlands**	**Celia Payne** ***Wolverhampton YOS***	
carly.turner@leics.gov.uk			***celia.payne@wolverhampton.gov.uk***		
South East	**Anna Harbridge** ***Southampton YOS***		**South West**	**Mike Rees** ***North Somerset YOT***	
anna.harbridge@southampton.gov.uk			***mike.rees@n-somerset.gov.uk***		
North East	***Kay Dargue*** ***South Tees YOS***		**North West**	**Kathy Gill** ***Wirrall YJS***	
kay_dargue@middlesbrough.gov.uk			***kathygill@wirral.gov.uk***		
London	**Michelle Edwards**		**Yorkshire & Humberside**	**Sarah Goddard** ***Bradford YJS***	
michelle.edwards@newham.gov.uk			***sarah.goddard@bradford.gov.uk***		