



AYM Activities at a glance...

- Review of the YJB
- Review of secure placement options for girls
- Children's Commissioner's report on the 2024 riots
- Chair's roundup with the YJB, HMIP, MOJ and the NHS
- Executive Board Members activity



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News from the Executive Board -

A summary from our Chair - Jacqui Belfield-Smith MBE



I wanted to take the opportunity to wish you all a healthy and productive 2025. This preceding month has been packed with stakeholder engagements and consultations for the Executive, as we do our best to represent the voice of our membership. Before you read on and see some of the activity undertaken by the wider team, a brief summary from me, highlighting some of the regular meetings I have had with our key stakeholders in recent weeks:-

YJB:

- National Standards: No National Standard reporting this year. The report on the last round (courts) is due to be circulated and will be discussed at the regional development forums. National Standards are 'under review' and YJB will soon be engaging partners.
- Young Future Hubs/Prevention Partnerships: AYM & YJB are among a range of partners involved in these roundtables. Year 1 is likely to be 'scoping and mapping' exercise, and it is unclear at this stage what funding will be attached to the programme.
- YJ Plans: YJB have advised that these are due to be submitted again by 30th June, guidance will be circulated in due course. The report on the headlines from last year's plans is due to be circulated imminently.
- Serious Incident Reports: The overall findings report is due to be circulated in quarter 4 this year.

HMIP:

- New Framework 2025: CARAG and associated documents have just been distributed.
- Thematic Inspections: We discussed the current *Out of court disposals* inspection, and considerations for thematic in the pipeline.
- AYM liaison: Andrea Brazier (Head of Youth Inspections) is due to attend the Next AYM executive on 10th March, your regional reps will reach out to members to collate your pressing questions!

MoJ (Youth Justice Policy Unit)

- Funding: Confirmation that Turnaround funding allocations should be circulated imminently
*UPDATE - now sent out. No update on YJB Main Grant allocation as yet.

NHS England:

- We discussed the need for clarity from the centre in consistency of health funding and the expectations of the health offer in YJS. AYM agreed to collaborate on a multi-agency working group to look at drafting national guidance to assist YJ partnerships. *Any interested AYM members who would like to join in this work please contact your regional representatives.*



Jacqui Belfield-Smith MBE, Chair of the AYM

Finally, you may recall that Jacqui was nominated by colleagues and received an MBE as part of the Kings 2024 birthday honours. As her picture suggests, Jacqui confirmed "it was a truly amazing day and I continue to be extremely proud to serve in the youth justice sector and lead for the AYM"

Probation resources within Youth Justice under scrutiny



Kay Dargue,
Regional Rep for
the NE

Kay Dargue (North East Rep) and one of the Probation portfolio leads summarises that The National Probation Service have started to consider how they will review the efficacy of the existing Probation input to Youth Justice provision. Still in early stages, AYM have already been looped in and will be included in forthcoming stakeholder engagement alongside HMIP, YJB, YJ Policy, MOJ and Ministers. As tangible recommendations can be shared and engagement initiated, AYM will reach out to members.

The Government is consulting on a proposal to widen the range of responsibilities for Virtual School Heads (VSHs) to include children in custody, on remand and those sentenced. Our executive board member, Diz Minnitt, responded in support of the proposals before Christmas. A round table discussion was held on 22 January to discuss the issue further with representatives of youth justice services, virtual school heads, the DfE and MoJ. We appreciate the evidence provided by Merton, Dorset, Southampton, Sheffield, Stockport and Hillingdon Youth Justice Services who, like Diz, gave a warm welcome to the proposal and described the advantages that they are already seeing from joint work.



Diz Minnitt -
SEND / Speech &
Language
therapy

Diz has also been integral in the recently tabled #Invest in SLT petition (driving to improve the provision and access to SLT Services and increase their number). Initiated by Miley Akers who then teamed up with RCSLT and 48 organisations as part of the #SEND. The minister committed to continued meetings to explore next steps.

Review of secure placement options for girls



Sarah Goddard -
Regional Rep for
Yorks & The
Humber

Sarah Goddard (Yorkshire and Humber Regional Rep) and Lisa Harvey-Messina (Policy and Comms lead) joined the recent roundtable alongside key representative from secure children's homes, policy leads, education YCS YJB and researchers. The formal report prepared by Suzannah Hancock, is currently under consideration with Minister Dakin and is expected imminently. Whilst we await our copy, we wanted to share that we were impressed with key drafted recommendations including:- a call to end placements for girls in YOIs, alongside creation a proposed consortia of SCH to support this diversion; focus on building remand options in the community and initiation of a girls national pathway with the YCS, Women's Justice Board and DfE (mapping, appropriately diverting and establishing effective practice for girls subject to welfare and justice pathways).

A published outcome and action plan is anticipated this Spring. Updates as we receive them, will be proactively shared.

Public Body Review of the Youth Justice Board:

The AYM Exec team used the most recent National Policy Development Group (NPDG) to pool thoughts collated via many of our membership, aiming to share a unified view in response to key questions, exploring the ongoing efficacy of the YJB.

We were pleased to have Tom Lang (NW Deputy Regional Rep) and Jacqui Belfield-Smith MBE (Chair) representing the executive group alongside a number of youth justice services at the first roundtable event last week.

With another event to come (which other AYM Exec members will attend) we will provide a summary in the next newsletter. If you have been unable to attend, please complete the short survey that remains live at time of this publication. [YJB Review – YOT Survey](#)



**Tom Lang -
Deputy Regional
Rep for NW**



The Children Commissioner team met with the AYM exec early last month to discuss the outcomes from *a child informed view* of the motivations behind those involved in riots, after the Southport murders. A huge thanks for all services that supported the report. Key findings are summarised below, but for more valuable detail download the report [here](#).

1. 147 children were arrested by 4 September 2024, 84 were charged, and 73 had finalised outcomes, as of 31 October 2024 (according to information provided to the office by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) and National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC)). More arrests and charges are expected as police continue to review footage.
2. Children's involvement was largely spontaneous and unconsidered.
3. Many children spoke strongly about their hatred of the police, describing previous bad experiences and community mistrust. These children viewed the riots as an opportunity to retaliate.
4. The need for a definitive response to public disorder led to the rapid charging and sentencing of many children. With some missing out on the rehabilitation that we know works best to ensure all children can grow up to become independent, productive adults.
5. Children's experience with the youth justice system and their outcomes depended on where they lived.
6. To improve the lives of children in England, these children wanted the government to address poverty and provide more opportunities. This included more youth activities and employment. They explained that without addressing these issues, children are vulnerable to exploitation and crime.



Research:

Arts based research- quest for volunteers

Are you delivering arts-based interventions with children and young people?

The University of Manchester have been commissioned by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) to conduct a short piece of research on the impact of programmes that use arts and culture to address and prevent knife crime and serious youth violence.

They are mapping current programmes (custodial and/or in the community) that are being delivered in England that are aimed at children and young people to prevent/reduce knife crime, violence and/or offending, and use arts/culture wholly or in part.

We are asking Youth Justice Services and Violence Reduction Units in England to send brief details of programmes fitting the criteria (e.g. the organisation, programme title, aims, delivery setting, location, activities, age group & contact). The details of mapped programmes will be submitted to the DCMS and may be described as part of a published report.

We are also recruiting commissioners, designers, managers and practitioners of programmes to take part in a short online interview (around 30 minutes) beginning 9th February, 23rd February and 2nd March.

Please send details of current programmes and/or requests for further information about participating in interviews to heather.smith-6@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk as soon as possible and no later than **Friday 7th February 2025**

Academic Insight: Effective relational working in Youth Justice

The latest (24 January 2025) Academic Insight publication from HM Inspectorate of Probation presents an evidence-informed model and guide for effective relational working in youth justice

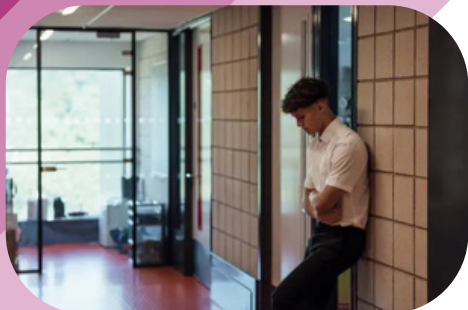
An excellent article following a three-year study in Ireland which examined effective relationship building between youth justice practitioners and crime-involved young people.

Table 1: Seven characteristics of effective relationship building

Characteristics	Description
1. <i>Being fully committed</i>	Practitioners are dependable and will not give up on the young person.
2. <i>Communicating with empathy</i>	Active listening and practitioners' choice of words are important.
3. <i>Making connections and advocating for young people</i>	A 'wraparound effect' supports the young person and provides them with a voice if needed.
4. <i>Being flexible</i>	Being able to adapt to needs at a given time – adapting programmes, interventions and meeting schedules for example.
5. <i>Reflecting and using themselves or their own experiences</i>	Self-awareness and using 'personality' or life experiences in a controlled safe way to connect with a young person.
6. <i>Being honest and challenging constructively</i>	Being honest, genuine and supportive comes with constructive and safe challenging.
7. <i>Guiding, inspiring hope, and building agency</i>	The relationship is a vehicle for the young person's development. Practitioners give a clear message that change is possible.

The model does not attempt to account for every eventuality, recognising that relationships by their nature are dynamic and diverse, but crucially it does provide evidence-informed signposts and pointers for youth justice practitioners to follow when trying to build successful and effective relationships.

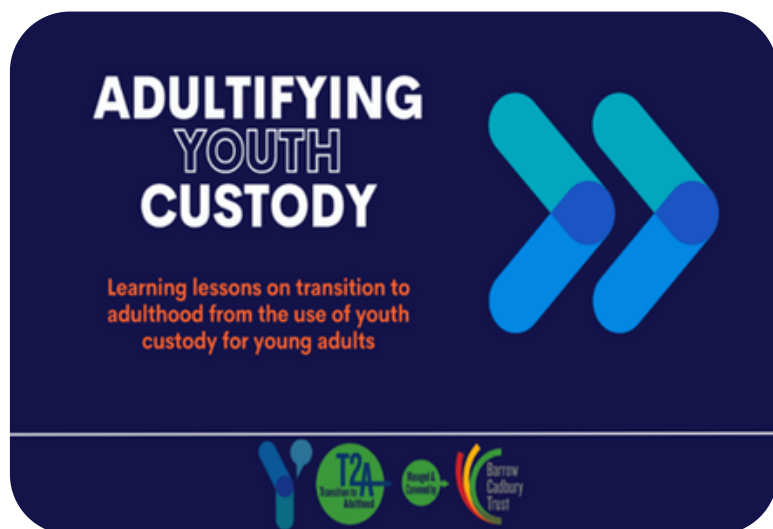




Ofsted 

Children not in school

Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) have published **new information** about how they will conduct SEND thematic visits in local areas focusing on **children who are not in school** and the support they receive. Guidance on this thematic focus is now available.



Last month, the **Alliance for Youth Justice** (AYJ) launched a new policy briefing, Adultifying Youth Custody: Learning Lessons on Transition to Adulthood from the Use of Youth Custody for Young Adults.

The report urges the government to protect the distinct, child-centred norms of the children's secure estate and to develop tailored approaches to in custody for young adults.

Key recommendations:

1. Custody as a last resort
2. Remove the Youth Custody Service from HMPPS and create a Department for Children
3. Ensure the distinct character of the Children's Secure Estate
4. Develop a comprehensive plan for Young Adults in Custody
5. Supportive Transitions on a case-by-case basis

Training, Events & Resources:

Free Virtual Accredited CPD Event

By Halliwell Specialist Restorative Parenting® Recovery Programme

Halliwell Delivering Recovery From Childhood Trauma For Looked After Children.

Join us for our free continuous professional development course and discuss with our multidisciplinary team how our Restorative Parenting® Recovery Programme (RPRP) delivers stability to children who have suffered childhood trauma and improves their psychological wellbeing.

Our CPD events are suitable for Education, Social work, Clinical and Placements Teams working with children in a care setting.

Learning objectives:

- To discuss relevant theoretical frameworks which underpin the Restorative Parenting® Programme.
- To explore the child's journey through the Restorative Parenting® Programme.
- To display how it is monitored and progress measured.



Halliwell's Accredited Virtual Restorative Parenting CPD: 6th February 10am-1pm

Halliwell's Accredited Virtual Restorative Parenting CPD: 27th February 10am-1pm



A ground-breaking animation and deep-dive podcast shine a light on adultification bias – the harmful practice of perceiving and treating certain children as adults, particularly Black and Mixed heritage children. The content has been commissioned as part of the London Accommodation Resettlement Partnership which receives funding through the Youth Justice Board.

The adultification animation has been written and narrated by Jahnine Davis, director and co-founder of [Listen Up](#), an organisation established to amplify lesser heard voices in child safeguarding practice, policy and research.

The animation is designed to raise awareness and deepen understanding of adultification bias among professionals working in the youth justice system. For more information on this topic see [here](#).



careKNOWLEDGE
Live

CareKNOWLEDGE



On 22 November, seven high-profile guest speakers and panellists came together for an online conference focusing on the lives of children and young people who use violence – and how service leaders can collectively play a part in creating the systemic conditions for real change.

Hosted by CareKnowledge and Dr Alex Chard, the day's agenda included:



- **Young Futures: Origins, Aspirations and Strategic Responses** - Anne Longfield CBE, Executive Chair and Founder, Centre for Young Lives
- **Young Futures: Developing Local and Regional Strategic Responses** - Paul Marshall, Deputy Chief Executive, Manchester City Council
- **Violence Prevention and the Background Trauma Narrative** - Professor Gwyneth Boswell, Director of Boswell Research Fellows, and Visiting Professor at the School of Health Sciences, University of East Anglia.
- **Girls, Harms and Gendered Responses to Crime and Violence** - Dr Gilly Sharpe, Lecturer in Criminology, University of Sheffield, in conversation with Wendy Tomlinson, former Head of Safeguarding at the Youth Custody Service.
- **Young Futures: Lessons from the Past, Messages for the Future** - Professor Rod Morgan, Professor Emeritus, University of Bristol
- **Reflections on the Evidence, Culture, Causes and Responses to Violence** - Elie Godsi, Consultant Clinical Psychologist, in conversation with Dr Alex Chard
- **Building the Villages to Enable Systemic Resilience for our Children and their Communities** – Dr Nahim Ahmed MBE, Head of Strategic Engagement - Youth and Community, Poplar Harca, Spotlight Youth Services, in conversation with Dr Alex Chard

You can catch up on all of these sessions in either video or audio podcast format [here](#).

Note: Replays of all the sessions above are free to view. If you'd like access to the rest of CareKnowledge AYM Members can request a FREE trial [here](#).

ILM Level 7 - Certificate Programme in Leadership and Management course 2025:

The AYM will be running the next cohort of the ILM 7 course from September 2025. The introduction and launch event will be held on the 25th August 2025 at 1pm (Online via MS Teams) and the course begins on the 4th September 2025.

For information about the course see [here](#).

You can find the course dates [here](#).

To enrol on the course, please see [here](#).



AFL - Aspiring Future Leaders training - September 2025:

Our latest cohort of the Aspiring Future Leaders began this week but if you have been unable to join this time then our next cohort starts in September 2025.

For information, course dates and to add your name to our waiting list then please see [here](#).

SEND Awards:



Congratulations to Warwickshire Youth Justice Service Area Partnership for attaining Youth Justice SEND Quality Lead Redesignation with Child First Commendation.

Warwickshire Local Area Partnership was one of the first areas in the country to receive a Quality Lead Award.

The following features are highlighted:

- YJS and SEND Protocols and single-point-of-contact, reviewed regularly
- The active role SaLT (Speech and Language Therapist) provision plays at all stages of process and practice,
- A comprehensive rolling programme of staff development
- High impact prevention work, led by the Pathways Team, This includes tailored challenge and support to education settings in terms of restorative practice and tailored programmes (an example being around harmful sexual behaviours)
- Currently YJS is benefitting from resources from an NHS England Vanguard-positive direction service, this has introduced a social prescribing/wellbeing worker who has the sole focus of YJS transition/resettlement cohort.
- The Child First Commendation is for work has taken place alongside Warwickshire Police to make the custody environment more child-friendly within Nuneaton and Leamington cells.



**OXFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL**

Congratulations also to the Oxfordshire Youth Justice Service Area Partnership for attaining Youth Justice SEND Quality Mark.

We are delighted to celebrate the successful conclusion of benchmarking activity, and award Oxfordshire Area Partnership a Youth Justice SEND Quality Mark.

The following are just some of the highlighted developments:

- Relationships, underpinned by Protocols and data sharing agreements, between the SEND and Youth Justice Teams.
- Pathway for remanded children: Oxfordshire YJS is working closely with partners across Children's Services to embed an expedited pathway for children remanded into youth detention to ensure swift initiation of processes to ensure the child's rights and entitlements are responded to at the earliest opportunity.
- Turnaround: The Turnaround project within Oxfordshire YJS monitors rates of SEND and exclusion/suspension indicators and Turnaround data highlights that the cohort are disproportionately represented in relation to SEND and school exclusion.
- Youth Justice Safety Panel: Representation from SEND colleagues.
- Joint Decision-Making Panel: Out-of-court assessment and decision-making practice is closely aligned with the CAMHS Youth Liaison & Diversion team.
- Educational Psychology placement: In December 2024 Oxfordshire YJS hosted an Educational Psychology trainee on placement to support the service in self-assessment activity of SEND knowledge and skills .
- The Director for Education and Head of SEND are members of the Youth Justice Management Board enabling strategic alignment and coordination of activity.
- Oxfordshire YJS has a well-embedded and long-standing clinical offer for YJS practitioners from Forensic CAMHS including clinical supervision and Case Formulation approaches.
- The Local Area Partnership's SEND transformation programme.



Stockport are recruiting for a Youth Justice Team Leader

Youth Justice Team Leader

MB4 (£43,693 - £49,764)

37 hours, Full-time (including evening, weekends, bank holidays as part of the duty management cover)

Permanent

Central House, Stockport

Application Deadline: 19 February 2025 11:59pm

Shortlisting Date: 21 February 2025

Interview Date: 27 February 2025

Interview Type: Face to face

Your Role:

We are looking for a Youth Justice Team Leader who will act as one of the operational management leads for the delivery of youth justice, serious violence reduction and targeted youth support services and delivery of associated services, including complex safeguarding. The post will lead and manage a multi-agency team of staff to ensure services are delivered in accordance with evidence-based practice, legislative and statutory requirements.

For more information and to apply for this role then please see [here](#).

To submit a vacancy to the AYM for our Bulletin or to add to our website then please complete the form [here](#).



Dates for Your Diary

Title	Date	Venue
Executive Board meeting	10th March 2025	MS Teams
Executive Board meeting	17th June 2025	Warwick Conference Centres
Annual General Meeting	18th June 2025	Warwick Conference Centres
Annual Members Day	18th June 2025	Warwick Conference Centres
Executive Board meeting	17th September 2025	MS Teams
AYM Autumn Conference 2025	October 2025 - TBC	In person - TBC



To keep up to date with this calendar between Bulletins, please see our website -

www.aym.org.uk

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

AYM Regional Representatives

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.

We welcome observers at our Executive Board meetings, if you wish to attend one, please contact our secretary at adminsupport@aym.org.uk

NORTHWEST

Regional Rep: Kathy Gill
(Wirral YJS)
Deputy Reg Rep: Tom Lang
(Manchester YJS)

NORTHEAST

Regional Rep: Kay Dargue (South Tees YOS)
Deputy Reg Rep: Sam Starmer
(Cumbria YJS)

YORKS & THE HUMBER

Regional Rep: Sarah Goddard
(Bradford YJS)
Deputy Reg Rep: Chris Sweeting
(Kirklees YJS)

WESTMIDLANDS

Regional Rep: Celia Payne
(Wolverhampton YJS)
Deputy Reg Rep: Nick Jeffreys
(Coventry YJS)

EAST MIDLANDS

Regional Rep: Carly Turner
(Leicestershire YJS)
Deputy Reg Rep: John Evans
(Nottinghamshire YJS)

SOUTHWEST

Regional Rep: David Webb (Dorset Combined YJS)
Deputy Reg Rep: Michael O'Connor
(North Somerset YJS)

EAST OF ENGLAND

Regional Rep: Pat Jennings
(Bedfordshire YOS)
Deputy Reg Rep: VACANCY

LONDON

Regional Rep: Michelle Edwards
(Newham YOT)
Deputy Reg Rep: Alison Sabaroche
(Hammersmith & Fulham YJS)

SOUTHEAST

Regional Rep: Ruth Hayles (Isle of Wight YJS)
Deputy Reg Rep: Bea Nigolian
(Wokingham YJS)



Get in touch...

Visit our website here - www.aym.org.uk



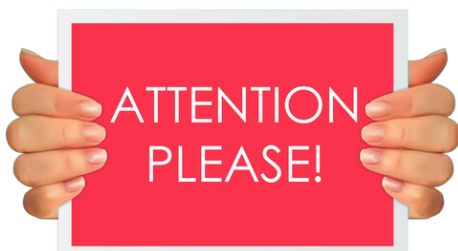
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