Local policing guide for early intervention and prevention of youth crime and anti-social behaviour

Practitioners
## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Partnership working</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Youth engagement</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Practical problem solving</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Vulnerability and victims</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Tackling anti-social behaviour and</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>an introduction to the Youth Justice System</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annex</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tackling youth crime and anti-social</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>behaviour: a guide to statutory powers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introducción

Los niños y jóvenes son una parte integral de las comunidades. La mayoría de los niños y jóvenes siguen la ley, pero hay un pequeño sector que cometerá delitos y participará en comportamiento antisocial (ASB). La prevención es vital para abordar este delito juvenil y ASB. Es una parte importante del triple enfoque establecido en el Plan de Acción contra el Delito Juvenil (YLCP), que se centra en abordar delitos y ASB a través de la prevención, apoyo inamovible y desafío, y cumplimiento.¹

Este guía da consejo práctico sobre los siguientes cuatro principios básicos que todos deben tener en cuenta cuando trabajan con jóvenes:

1. **La cooperación efectiva es vital.** La prevención y el abordaje de los delitos juveniles y ASB no es exclusivamente responsabilidad policial, y trabajar con otros servicios (escuelas, servicios infantiles, etc.) dará una solución más sostenible a los problemas. Involucrar a los padres y a la familia más amplia en el trabajo con la persona joven también ayuda a garantizar una solución a largo plazo.

¹ www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/youth-crime-action-plan/
2. **Listen to and engage with young people.** Good contact with young people can build trust and legitimacy in the police, and greater compliance with the law. A youth-focused approach to policing should involve young people so that they can shape the way that policing is done and be included in decisions that affect them.

3. **Problem solve to get long-term solutions.** Identify problems early and work with others to solve them to reduce crime and ASB, and the perceptions of crime and ASB, involving young people. This will also help to improve community confidence, especially as young people can make up around 25% of the community.

4. **Safety is paramount.** When dealing with an incident, you need to consider the safety of the young people involved when responding. You should always be on the lookout for signs of vulnerability or risk factors when gathering intelligence. Support for victims and witnesses must also be at the heart of your work.
Practical examples of how to put these core principles into practice are outlined in this guidance. Other sources of information are identified for you to find out more about how you might approach particular situations. Putting these principles into action will help you to improve public confidence and to meet key parts of the Policing Pledge, for example involving the community in setting local priorities.

In dealing with the small number of children and young people who commit crime or ASB, a proportionate response will be required involving informal action or civil or criminal powers. For the purpose of this guidance we have put crime and ASB together because they involve a similar strategic approach with partners, but the tools and powers and supportive measures will be different. The annex to this document provides a list of all the civil and criminal powers available to police officers and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) to tackle youth crime and ASB.

This guidance is linked to the Local policing guide for early intervention and prevention of youth crime and anti-social behaviour – Managers, which follows similar themes but is focused more on developing and delivering youth policing strategies.

For the purposes of this guidance, the terms ‘children’ and ‘young people’ refer to persons under the age of 18. The age of criminal responsibility is 10, and this should be considered when deciding your approach to a situation. Some of the approaches and techniques outlined in this guidance will also be appropriate for work with young adults over 18, though at 18 a young person leaves the Youth Justice System and enters the adult criminal justice system.
1. Partnership working

This section aims to:

• demonstrate how working in partnership delivers long-term solutions and makes your contribution more effective

• provide an introduction to the range of people who work in your area to improve outcomes for children, young people and their families.

The advantages of working in partnership are as follows:

• You can gather information from a wider range of sources, providing much better intelligence, and can then respond to an incident more effectively, and identify risks and vulnerabilities.

• There is less likely to be duplication of effort or variation of approach around any one individual, incident or family.

• Solutions to some of the problems you will come across do not lie with the police. Partnership working makes it easier to access the specialist support that a young person may need. This will free up your time to respond to broader neighbourhood priorities.
Introduction to local partners

There is a wide range of people working in your local area to improve outcomes for children, young people and their families. The diagram opposite shows just some of the people who could support you in your work.

The manager’s guide provides an overview of the youth-focused partnership arrangements in your local area and links to other guidance on partnership working. Some formal meetings of local partnerships may be attended by members of the Neighbourhood Policing Team.

Working with partners

Given the benefits of partnership working, even if you don’t attend these formal partnership working meetings, you should be working with neighbourhood partners. The Neighbourhood Policing Team you work in should have a list of key contacts in other agencies. If this isn’t in place, speak with your manager about setting up a contacts directory. Your force lead on youth issues should also have details of key people working with children and young people in your area.

Once you have the relevant contact details, get in touch with key people working in your neighbourhood and make sure you stay in touch with them, for example through a monthly meeting, an email group or an online forum. You can work with partners to find joint ways of addressing problems and meeting local priorities. Partnership working will also help you to identify and respond to risks. If you are having difficulty engaging with key partners in your area, speak to your manager, who may be able to facilitate progress by raising the issue at strategic partnership meetings. You should also escalate the problem if you feel it needs a strategic response (e.g. changes to youth service provision).
A key benefit of partnership working is that you can share information and share the workload when responding to problems. When working with your partners, it is important that you are aware of your force’s procedures for information sharing. You can share information with other partners under an Information Sharing Agreement and you need to familiarise yourself with the process for doing so. The manager’s guide has more information on information sharing processes and links to further guidance.

The next three pages present some case studies of effective multi-agency teams, which show what can be achieved through working in partnership.

You can find more case studies of effective partnerships by looking on the Home Office database of effective practice: www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/cgi-bin/epd/index.cgi

Previous Tilley Awards winners can be found at: www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/tilley/tilleyawards2009.htm
Case study: The Corby Jam Team

The Corby Jam Team is a regional Tilley Award winning team of police officers and youth workers from the East Midlands. The project adopted a multi-agency approach to tackling anti-social behaviour (ASB) and criminal damage, which were identified as major concerns by residents in the Corby area.

The Safer Community Team (SCT) and partners successfully secured funding from local business for a six-month pilot project, which provided two rapid-response youth workers for a central ward. The team were intelligence led and informed each morning of overnight ASB in order to plan their patrols productively. If ASB was occurring while they were on duty, the team were informed by the SCT and attended the scene as it was occurring, offering advice in line with local policing Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), for example on street drinking/knife crime, signposting young people to various projects. This method of informal education and interaction minimised the risks of alcohol misuse associated with street drinking, knife crime and gang-related activity by providing positive intervention and diversion to more appropriate youth projects.

Through partnership between police officers and youth workers, the Corby Jam Team engaged residents and 312 young people over 12 months and improved perceptions of crime among both younger and older residents. Since its launch, reports of ASB in the area have fallen considerably.


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2 For more information on the Tilley Awards, see: [www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/tilleyawards.htm](http://www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/tilleyawards.htm)
Case study: The Camden Youth Disorder Engagement Team

The Camden Youth Disorder Engagement team is a team of youth workers and police officers who engage on the street with young people at risk of ASB or crime. The team includes an ex-gang member. The team goes out on foot, outside schools and shops, in housing estates – anywhere young people congregate. The team seeks to talk to specific young people, developing a rapport over time. The team informs young people about relevant agencies and activities, offering ways out of trouble.

For more information about setting up street-based teams see the Youth Crime Action Plan Handbook for Practitioners: www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/youth/youth085.htm
Case study: Operation Python

In November 2008, Sport Lincs launched Operation Python, a specialist mobile multi-agency project that operates on Friday and Saturday evenings in areas highlighted by intelligence as experiencing high levels of police calls for youth-related ASB, crime and disorder over the previous weekend. The principle is to go into an area and set up sports activities for young people to attend and participate in. It also includes street-based teams of uniformed police officers and youth workers who engage with young people on surrounding streets and direct them to the activity. They will remove alcohol if found and if the circumstances show a child in need they will take him or her to a place of safety. The mobile team is complemented by the use of a Mobile Youth Unit and portable floodlights that enable activities to be continued through the winter months.

In 2008/09 Operation Python delivered an average reduction in youth-related ASB of 62% in the areas where it had been deployed.
**Actions**

- Identify some key contacts in children’s services, your local schools (or your local Safer School Officer), community safety departments, local voluntary sector or community organisations and your local Youth Offending Team police officer. This will help you establish good partnership working.

- Find out who your force lead for children and young people is.

- Familiarise yourself with the information-sharing arrangements that are in place with partner agencies. You need to know the systems or databases through which you can share information and the process for doing so.

- Find out what programmes are run in your local area by partners, so that you can refer young people on. There is more information about referrals in section 4.
2. Youth engagement

This section aims to:

• demonstrate the importance of consulting young people and involving them in setting neighbourhood priorities

• provide some suggestions of ways to engage with young people

• give some links to sources of further advice on youth engagement.

You will already meet young people on a daily basis while out on patrol or when responding to incidents. The way in which you deal with them has a big impact on the confidence of young people in the police, and on the quality of the intelligence that you can gather from them. Youth engagement is a continuous process and should run throughout all of your work, rather than being seen as something done occasionally.

Neighbourhood profiling and setting priorities

Your youth engagement work should be informed by your general neighbourhood profiling, as the primary purpose of neighbourhood profiles is to inform and drive engagement activity. Young people
can make up to 25% of your local community, and this percentage is often much higher in deprived neighbourhoods, so young people should be consulted when setting neighbourhood priorities. It is important to remember that your community will include young people of different ethnicities, religions, sexual orientations, etc., and you should use any available demographic or equality data when planning engagement and participation.

You can find guidance on neighbourhood profiles on the NPIA’s Neighbourhood Policing website: www.neighbourhoodpolicing.co.uk/publication.asp

### Ways to engage

To have the biggest impact, you need to adapt the consultation methods that you would use with adults when consulting young people. You should also ensure that you give feedback to young people about what you have done to act on their ideas or concerns. Feeding back, even if you haven’t been able to implement what they requested, is vital as it shows that you value their input. Without this, it can seem as if you are not really listening, and as a result you may lose the confidence of those young people and undermine their willingness to engage.

There is a range of simple ways that you can involve young people, get feedback and keep them informed of what is going on.

### Operational/day to day

- Talk to them, and listen to what they have to say, while on patrol.
- Involve youth advisers when planning operations: e.g. have youth advisers in place when carrying out a large weapons screening operation.
- Think about how you interact with young people when carrying out enforcement such as stop and search. The style or approach that you use when carrying out these measures can have a lasting impact.
• Consider how you get feedback from young victims of crime and seek their views on how the police can give them the confidence to report crimes.

**Partnership**

• Make links with existing organisations such as school councils, Youth Forums, Youth Opportunity Fund panels or voluntary organisations such as Police Cadets.

• Liaise with your local Safer School Partnership (England) or with the All Wales School Liaison Core Programme (Wales) to find ways to engage in schools.

• Participate in positive activities, including local football tournaments or outdoor pursuits, such as those run by your local authority or by voluntary organisations such as Positive Futures.³

• Set up youth surveys to get feedback and inform your local prioritisation. Children’s Trusts and other partners may have already been involved in consulting local young people; their findings could provide useful information and reduce the need for a bespoke survey. This can also prevent duplication and ‘consultation fatigue’, and improve partnership working.

• Set up a network of youth advisers or youth Key Individual Networks (KINs), or have informal meetings or drop-in sessions with young people.

• Use other channels to get messages out to young people and to find out their views, e.g. youth services, local football clubs and Connexions offices (in England), as well as technology like social networking websites.

³ www.posfutures.org.uk/
Case study: Coventry Positive Futures

West Midlands Police has a strong relationship with Coventry Positive Futures Service, which includes providing fortnightly information on the nature and extent of local ASB hotspots through its ‘Active Intelligence Mapping System’. This information has allowed Coventry Positive Futures to plan and deliver targeted project activity, including local weekend youth provision.

Positive Futures deploys its Fusion minibus, which is staffed by youth workers, to engage with young people in the areas highlighted by police information. They have consulted with young people and this consultation has led to various successful sports, leisure and arts activities being developed. As one development worker said:

‘The young people have enjoyed it. The other key worker does the sport activities and I stay on the bus and chat to the young people who play on the PlayStation. We are finding that the same people are returning now. Sometimes there are around 20 young people attending at the same time.’

Police officers have noticed a difference in these areas and recognise the benefits of commissioning this facility as part of their youth engagement strategy in areas of high crime. They see the next step as ensuring that the project is mainstreamed and the facility is expanded. The following quote from the sergeant tasked to reduce local ASB in Coventry highlights the neighbourhood policing value of this work:

‘The relationship I share with the coordinator is very informal. He supplies the bus and some youth workers and I provide a police officer not in uniform to try and break down the barriers. On occasions this is not always possible so I ensure that a uniformed presence is on site. Local PCSOs and neighbourhood wardens are also encouraged to pop onto the site and support the project. It is then down to the skills of the youth workers to interact with the young people.’
Further sources of advice and case studies

You can find more information on how to develop consultation and engagement with young people in England through the ‘Hear by Right’ standards: http://hbr.nya.org.uk/. In particular there is a useful fact sheet which provides an introduction to involving children and young people: http://hbr.nya.org.uk/files/Involving%20cyp%20-%20an%20introduction.pdf. In Wales, a useful resource can be found here: www.uncrcletsgetitright.co.uk/toolkit.aspx

Young Advisors is an initiative in 43 areas across England whereby young people engage with a range of agencies, including the police, to make a positive difference to their communities. Young Advisors can play a key role in helping agencies to engage young people and improve community safety. Young Advisors are young people aged between 15 and 21, who show community leaders and decision makers how to engage young people in community life, regeneration and renewal. For further information on Young Advisors see: www.youngadvisors.org.uk/index.html

There is also more about ways to work with young people in the manager’s guide which accompanies this practitioner’s guide, including a case study about Durham Constabulary’s use of a Youth Independent Advisory Group.
Case study: Tackling Youth Crime and ASB Toolkit in Redcar

In Redcar, young people secured funding from the Youth Crime Action Plan and Youth Opportunity Fund to design, develop and produce a Tackling Youth Crime and ASB Toolkit. Aimed at practitioners, the Toolkit seeks to raise awareness of how young people feel about and view crime and ASB. It gives advice on how to encourage and enable young people to report crime, how to identify and address young people’s concerns about youth crime and ASB, and how to support them as victims of crime. In addition, it focuses on ways to ensure that intelligence is sought from young people, drawing on their perspectives in relation to the causes of and solutions to youth crime and ASB, and provides advice on how partners can work together in the design, development, delivery and impact tracking of services to young people.

It is hoped that, as a result of this project, more children and young people will feel able to make a contribution to tackling youth crime and ASB by taking up opportunities to deliver their own community-based projects. It is also hoped that such activity by young people will spur on the wider community to take action to prevent crime and ASB.

The Tackling Crime and ASB Toolkit was introduced and piloted in 2008/09. Young volunteers are currently updating the Toolkit and will launch the updated version during 2009/10. The Toolkit will then be rolled out across children’s and young people’s services in Redcar and Cleveland and introduced into other areas of the Tees Valley.
Case study: Online engagement in Cumbria

SpeakUp is a new online community for every 13 to 19-year-old in Cumbria: www.speakupcumbria.com/. The website is based on social networking sites such as Bebo, MySpace and Facebook, and aims to help young people develop new networks, including links with key adults in the community and with services that affect them. SpeakUp has put in place advanced safeguarding measures to protect both young people and adult users. These include cross-matching all young people against the Connexions database at registration, vetting adult participants and full site moderation. Cumbria Constabulary has become a partner in the pilot phase of the project, making it the first of many organisations in the county to use this route to engage with young people through forums, messaging, photo and video libraries, polling and surveys, issue and action groups.

SpeakUp will be promoted through schools, colleges and youth organisations to an audience of 45,000 young people. Communication with young people through the site can be targeted to specific postcodes, ages and gender groups, and online issues and debate can be followed up by meetings, events and projects in local communities.

The site was the idea of local young people who said they didn’t like the formal nature of youth councils, forums and meetings that have traditionally provided a voice for a select few of their peers. SpeakUp uses the communication tools that young people like and offers a supportive environment for key adults to engage with new technology.
**Actions**

- Find out how your force and other partners currently engage with young people.

- Ensure that your neighbourhood profile covers young people and that young people are involved in your wider community engagement.

- Plan some ways to get feedback from young people across your work, and how you will act on that feedback.
3. Practical problem-solving

This section aims to:

• demonstrate that taking a problem-solving approach will help you achieve longer-term solutions

• show the importance of improving perceptions of young people, as well as tackling any negative behaviour

• give an overview of the SARA model of problem solving

• provide a worked example of problem-solving focused on perceived or actual low-level crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB).

Partnership problem-solving has been used successfully across England and Wales in tackling local concerns. Problem-solving is at its most effective when the tools are used before a problem becomes entrenched and in order to influence future activity. It works by identifying and dealing with the root causes of the problem instead of repeatedly responding to the consequences.

You can work with your partners and use the problem-solving process to:

• reduce crime and ASB

• improve quality of life in the community

• reduce the fear and perception of crime and ASB

• support community cohesion
- increase the public’s confidence that agencies are tackling ASB and crime
- increase young people’s confidence to come forward if they have been victims of crime or ASB.

Your day-to-day interactions with young people already provide opportunities for you to gather information and use this to solve problems. Those interactions with young people will break down into a number of common categories. The most common of these are:

- speaking to young people when on patrol
- as a result of a call to a location where young people are gathered
- through enforcement or the exercise of a policing power
- when investigating an incident where a young person is a victim, a witness or otherwise involved
- as a result of an organised meeting or event where police are consulting with young people or the whole community.

Working closely with your partners will also provide opportunities for you to gather various kinds of information. This will make it easier for you to solve problems, and also help to identify when partners can contribute to solutions. Examples of information that you could gather from partners are:

- information on littering or graffiti from your local authority
- information on ASB from local Registered Social Landlords
- a list of available Positive Activities for young people in your area (local authorities in England have a statutory duty to gather this information).

This section will show you how to use the information you gather from all these sources in the SARA model of problem solving when policing your local neighbourhood and tackling youth crime and ASB.
The SARA model involves taking a systematic approach to a problem as follows:

- **Scanning:** gathering evidence on the problem from a range of sources
- **Analysis:** working with analysts and with partners to analyse this data and define the problem
- **Response:** agreeing on a response to the problem, which does not necessarily have to be police led
- **Assessment:** evaluating and assessing the impact of the approach you took, for example by further data collection or through meetings with local residents.

The following flow diagram summarises the SARA model, setting out the different stages and what you need to do at each of them.

The SARA model is not a linear step-by-step process. For example, if your analysis identifies information gaps you should return to the scanning stage. If your assessment shows that you have not reduced or eradicated the problem, you may wish to tailor your response (returning to the response stage) or gather more information about the problem and the underlying causes (returning to the scanning stage).
Problem-solving in action

The following pages set out a way for you to think through problems using the SARA model\(^4\) and the key elements of the problem analysis triangle (PAT) of victim, offender and location. It demonstrates how you can apply problem-solving models in your day-to-day work by giving examples of the types of questions you could consider at each stage.

Scanning

This first stage in the problem-solving process involves gathering evidence on the problem from a range of sources, including partners, to establish what you know already and what more you need to know. Set out below is a series of questions that you might consider in this ‘scanning’ phase.

**Victim**
- What are the specific concerns being raised?
- How many calls have been received, over what period of time? What seem to be the problematic days and times?
- Who is reporting these issues and what do we know about them, e.g. are they local or from a variety of areas? What is the impact on the victims?
- Is there objective evidence to confirm the reports?
- What information is there from other people, e.g. Safer School Partnership officers, neighbourhood managers, businesses, other residents?
- Are there different cultural perspectives on the problem? For example, different expectations regarding the adult supervision of young people?
- Are there any other groups/people involved, e.g. local retailers, caretakers or residents?

**Offenders**
- Is it known who the young people are, and what links them, e.g. where they live, the school or club they attend?

\(^4\) Detailed information and guidance on the SARA crime prevention model is available at: www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/learningzone/sara.htm
• What age group are they mainly? If they are under 18, do their parents know what they are doing and where they are?
• Are they at risk or making themselves vulnerable?
• Do you know their viewpoint on the issue faced?
• What evidence of any offences is available?
• Is there any evidence of the use of alcohol or drugs?
• Is confrontation an issue with these young people?
• What approaches have been used to date, either by the police or by other partners, and what was the impact?
• Why are they committing offences?

**Location**
• What is the location? Is it public or private property or a mixture?
• What attracts young people to that area? Is there anywhere else locally that young people could go?
• Is it a safe environment?
• Are there any local associations of retailers, residents or youth service providers who are involved in the location?
• Does the location provide a contributing factor to the problem (e.g. is there a lack of CCTV)?

**Analysis**

The next stage is to work with partners to analyse the information you have gathered. Set out below is a series of questions that you might consider in this ‘analysis’ phase.

• Have you got all the relevant information you need? Is appropriate data sharing in place so that you and partners have access to that information to make a decision on next steps?
• Do you know the detailed nature of the problem? What is the problem profile in terms of offender, victim and location? Is there a perceptions issue?
• Do you know what the drivers of the problem are? Is there an underlying issue to the offending (e.g. peer group pressure, drugs, gangs, substance misuse)? Is there an underlying issue to the victimisation?

• Do you know what the impact of the problem is on the young people involved, residents and the local community, as well as on the police and partner agencies?

• Can you set a benchmark against which any response you implement can be evaluated?

• Can you clearly define the problem from the analysis?

If any of the answers to the above questions suggest that there is an information gap, you should consider returning to the scanning stage.

Response

The third stage is to agree on a response to the problem. You should do this in partnership to ensure you have considered all the options available from prevention through to enforcement. Set out below is a series of questions that you might consider in this ‘response’ phase.

• Have you involved all the people and partners who can contribute to solutions?

• Do you have a clear and realistic idea about what you want to achieve, e.g. is it to change behaviour or change perceptions?

• What options are available to you?
  – What has worked elsewhere?
  – What are the legal framework and the enforcement powers of you and your partner agencies? What alternatives are open to you, e.g. is restorative justice an appropriate option?

• What are the prevention options?
  – Are there ‘location’ solutions, e.g. CCTV, design, lighting?
  – Does your response address the needs of victims?
– Does your response consider the causes of offending behaviour as part of reducing reoffending?

– Who else could assist? For example, can you involve local youth outreach teams or third sector providers? Could you gain assistance from victims’ organisations in the form of support, mediation, counselling etc?

– What funding opportunities are available?

• How will you communicate with those affected?

• Have you documented the agreed response and is everyone clear on their actions?

• Have you considered whether your response will displace the problem?

Assessment

The final stage is to evaluate and assess the impact of the approach. Measurement allows the success of activity to be determined and will suggest ways that responses might be modified if necessary. Set out below is a series of questions that you might consider in this ‘assessment’ phase.

• Do you know how you will evaluate the results and monitor their effectiveness, e.g. recorded incidents, calls to the police, complaints, perceptions, etc.?

• What mechanism will you use to share the good practice?

• How will you ensure good news is shared and promoted? This should include engaging young people.

• Is your response sustainable?

• How will you take on board lessons learned from the things that didn’t work as planned?

If your assessment indicates that the problem has not reduced, you may wish to return to the scanning or response stage.
Set out below is an example of this SARA approach in real life.\(^5\)

**Scanning**

A car park is situated in a small market town in the heart of a rural county. The anti-social use of vehicles by young people has come to the attention of public services through two sources.

- A scan of police and partner data has indicated that vehicle-related ASB is high. Calls to this area have risen steadily from a (mean) average of five a month prior to the trigger period to 20 a month at present (a 400% increase).

- The Anti-Social Behaviour Officer at the local authority is also receiving complaints from residents in relation to the problem. Members of the community who use the car park have highlighted the problem at a Community Action Group (CAG), stating that they find it intimidating and that it has a detrimental impact on their quality of life.

  The lack of an effective response from public agencies has led to a series of letters of complaint and negative reports have appeared in the local media.

  Following on from analysis of police systems, community surveys have been completed, partner agencies have been consulted and a visit has been made to the site.

**Analysis**

The analysis shows that the car park is being used as a social gathering area for young people late in the evenings when it is otherwise empty.

In this rural area, many young people have access to motor vehicles and use them for recreation and as a way of socialising with one another.

In terms of the specific location, the small car park is not in view of any main road managed by the district council and the surrounding private and social dwellings are occupied mainly by elderly residents.

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\(^5\) This example is taken from a Tilley Award winning case study. For more information on this see: www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/tilley/cherrytreecarpark.pdf
Response

The police and partners agree a response that includes:

- target hardening, using barriers, speed bumps, etc. (if the local authority owns the car park, it has a duty under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to consider crime reduction in all its business)

- law enforcement via the local Neighbourhood Policing Team, for example warning letters and Acceptable Behaviour Contracts, Police Reform Act 2002 Section 59 ‘Seizure of vehicles’

- work with the Fire and Rescue Service on school visits along the lines of Cambridgeshire Fire Service’s ‘For My Girlfriend’ campaign, which is held at secondary schools across the county each year in a bid to make boys aged 15 to 16 realise the consequences of their actions before they get behind the wheel for the first time: www.cambsfire.gov.uk/news/1789.php

- arranging visits to the force’s skidpan for young drivers or hosting an event such as Lincolnshire Police’s ‘Modified Car and Road Safety Show’: www.lincs.police.uk

- a media campaign to focus on the response phase

- victim support through a residents’ group led by the local Neighbourhood Policing Officers.

Assessment

The results of the approach taken were as follows:

- resident satisfaction increased by 80%
- a successful proactive residents’ group formed
- 49 ASB warning letters and seven Section 59 Crime and Disorder Act 1998 warnings were issued. One vehicle was seized under Section 59 of the Police Reform Act 2002
- there was increased confidence in resident reporting and a reduction in vehicle-related ASB
- displacement was assessed, as was the impact on the young people.
Case study: Operation Marple

Essex police ran Operation Marple during the October half-term holiday, with the aim of engaging young people and directing them to positive activities, reducing ASB through a multi-agency problem-solving approach.

The operation relied on high-visibility patrols of police officers working alongside other agencies, at times and in places where ASB is most acute. Two key elements of this operation were to confiscate alcohol from under-age drinkers and, through letters and home visits, to make parents aware of young people’s alcohol misuse or ASB.

During one week either side of the half-term holiday, Safer School Partnership police officers ran ‘Reality Roadshows’ for year 9 students across the district, focusing on the law surrounding alcohol and ASB, and whole-school assemblies on the importance of staying safe, particularly at Halloween.
Case study: Youth engagement in Norwich

During the summers of 2008 and 2009 an activities project was run during the school holiday period. It was done in partnership with Future Projects, and funded by the Norfolk Constabulary problem-solving fund.

The key focus was to engage with young people and their families from an area of Norwich that is known to have hostile feelings towards the police, as well as to educate the participants in basic citizenship skills and promote a feeling of community ownership.

The project was aimed at 10 to 14-year-olds from the Larkman area of Norwich. The participants were from families that were facing social and financial hardship. Sporting activities, arts and crafts, and outings to the police helicopter, local zoos and other facilities were undertaken. Families of the children were invited to attend and mix with their local Safer Neighbourhood Team, promoting a breaking down of barriers and opening of community lines.

This project has led to further engagement projects, including a joint advice/drop-in centre, as well as developing various adult and young offender training schemes and a domestic violence advocacy scheme.
Case study: Operation Relentless – Safe and Confident

Derbyshire Constabulary’s Operation Relentless – Safe and Confident was an initiative in 2009 during which officers worked with more than 110 organisations, including local authorities and the Fire and Rescue Service, to target ASB in all its forms. The operation ran for six weeks in the autumn, tying in with the traditional historical increases in youth-related ASB around half-term, Halloween and Bonfire Night.

As part of the initiative, people were asked what they felt were priorities in their area, for example nuisance youths, drug dealing, fly tipping, speeding or graffiti. Local Safer Neighbourhood teams then worked with bodies across the county to tackle those problems. More than 3,000 events were held across the county, including community clean-ups, crime prevention events, under-age drinking patrols, burglary reduction campaigns, sports sessions for young people and fire safety checks.

A relentless success?

- Evaluation, particularly around public confidence in the police, is continuing. There was positive media coverage during the initiative, and early surveys indicate that perceptions of partnership work are also positive. Additionally, partnerships have identified a number of sustainable activities, events and themes that will continue after the operation.

- In terms of crime reduction, compared with the same six-week period in 2008/09, there was a reduction of 18% in criminal damage. That amounts to a total of 384 fewer offences, or 64 fewer victims each week.

- During the period of Operation Relentless ASB levels dropped by over 8%, or 700 incidents. This means that, by working in partnership, Derbyshire prevented over 110 people becoming victims of ASB every week.
Critical Incidents

While the vast majority of incidents involving young people will be of a low-level nature, there will on rare occasions be incidents that are more serious or that impact significantly on young people as a specific group.

These may include incidents of serious violence involving young people, or policing operations that may have a disproportionate impact on them: for example, the use of powers under Section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 to deal with incidents in a local area, or heightened policing activity around Halloween. It is important that officers consider whether these incidents should be classified as Critical Incidents and, if they are, follow local force guidance for dealing with such matters. You should have a contact in the rest of the force responsible for Critical Incidents so that you can be involved in the planning and aftermath of any such incident.

In any Critical Incident, it is important to have a strong communication strategy, so that people affected can be kept informed of not only what has happened and how the police are dealing with it, but also how they can help the police in such matters. There will also be a need to conduct a Community Impact Assessment; staff will find the contacts they have made from their engagement activity useful when carrying this out.

For more information on managing Critical Incidents, see the NPIA guidance at: www.npia.police.uk/en/11959.htm
**Actions**

- Use the problem-solving approach in your work.
- Ensure that you gather information from a range of sources.
- Work with partners when planning a response to a situation.
- Be clear about what you want to achieve in terms of outcomes for the victim, the offender and the location.
4. Vulnerability and victims

This section aims to:

• provide an introduction to different risk factors and how to identify risks
• outline some of the referral mechanisms for information relating to risks
• provide information on the multi-agency panels which will assess risk and decide on support packages for young people or families
• signpost to sources of advice on particular risk factors.

You have a role in preventing crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) but also a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.6 Young people may be vulnerable to a range of risks during adolescence. They may be exposed to potentially risky behaviours, e.g. drug and alcohol misuse; they may be exposed to new influences, from peers, and from older people via the internet; and they may begin to explore ideas and issues around their identity.

They may also be facing risks at home because of parental substance misuse or mental health problems, domestic violence or abuse, and neglect. Some children and young people may have physical or mental health problems that place them

6 Children Act 2004
at greater risk of becoming victims or involved with crime. These may include problems with speech or communication, a learning disability or difficulty, or an autistic spectrum disorder. Sometimes these sorts of problems are not immediately obvious to others.

This section provides an overview of potential risk factors and how to deal with them, including examples of how to refer information on to multi-agency teams. It includes some case studies to demonstrate identification and referral in practice.

Early identification of young people at risk and ensuring appropriate multi-agency responses are promptly put in place can have a number of benefits, including:

• helping to prevent problems before they happen or before they escalate
• improving public confidence in the ability of police, and partners, to manage difficult individuals and situations
• ensuring that vulnerable people are protected.

**What are the risk factors?**

Considerable retrospective research has taken place into the lives of people who have become victims or offenders, in the attempt to identify common factors in their lives. These factors include:

• a member of the family who has a criminal record
• poor attainment or attendance at school
• alcohol abuse by themselves or a member of the family
• previously having been a victim of crime or witness to domestic violence.

This list is not exhaustive: you can find a fuller list of the risk factors in the manager’s guide.

The fact that a young person has experienced a number of common risk factors does not mean it is inevitable that they will be an offender or a victim. In addition there are protective factors that mitigate the risk, for example strong parenting or good role models.
Nevertheless, it is still important that you act on risk factors when they are identified so that multi-agency teams can assess whether further help or support is needed.

**How to identify risk factors**

Your daily interactions with young people will provide opportunities for you to identify potential risk factors. You may notice, for example, if a young person is a witness to domestic violence, is present outside an off-licence smelling of drink, is a victim of bullying or is associating with people involved in crime. You should also be ‘Thinking Family’ when identifying risk factors as there is clear evidence of intergenerational disadvantage within families.

For example, 63% of boys with convicted fathers go on to be convicted themselves, and parental problem drug use is associated with neglect, poverty, physical or emotional abuse, separation and exposure to criminal behaviour.

**Assessing and acting on risk factors**

**Assessment**

You will already be using your judgement to assess how far an individual is at risk during your day-to-day work. You must decide whether to take immediate action under child protection legislation.

Where a risk factor exists that does not in your opinion need immediate intervention, there will be processes in place in your force to enable you to share that information with partner agencies. Your information alone may not seem important, but, combined with data held by other agencies, such as Youth Offending Teams (YOTs), social services, education and health, it may indicate wider risks or vulnerability. Some of these children and young people will be known to Children’s Social Care, and some will be subject to Child Protection Plans.

**Processes**

It is important that you identify through your partnership or youth lead what processes exist locally and what mechanisms are available...
to you. One process which may be in use in your force is the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) in England, and referral to the local authority social services department in Wales. The CAF provides a standardised approach to conducting assessments of children and young people’s needs and deciding how these should be met. It aims to provide a simple process for a holistic assessment of children’s needs and strengths, taking account of the roles of parents, carers and environmental factors on their development.

You are unlikely to undertake common assessments yourself but you should consider CAF when in contact with children and know who would undertake such an assessment if required. Consent is vital for the CAF process, as it is voluntary: before completing a CAF the informed consent of the child/young person and their parents must be obtained.

You can find more information on CAF at: www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/resources-and-practice/IG00063/

There will also be arrangements for safeguarding in your force; you should ensure that you know how they work and that you refer on to the appropriate agencies any information that you think may be relevant. It is vital that links are made and maintained with other agencies for information sharing and complementary action planning.

You can find more information about what to do if you suspect a child is being abused at: www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/resources-and-practice/IG00182/

**Targeted Youth Support**

The CAF is the underlying assessment and referral process in Targeted Youth Support (TYS) arrangements which have been rolled out in every local authority area in England. TYS is about integrating the work of local agencies and voluntary and community services so that all professionals who work with young people, including youth workers, YOT officers, health workers and education staff, take a joined-up and systematic approach to early identification, prevention and support for vulnerable teenagers.
TYS arrangements in each area are led by the Children’s Trust and should include at both strategic and delivery levels all Children’s Trust partners, including police, YOT, and education and health agencies. Different areas have developed their TYS structures in slightly different ways, but many will have co-located multi-agency teams which will be able to provide support to young people at risk or involved in crime.

You will be able to find about your local TYS through the local authority’s assistant director for Integrated Youth Support Services.

Resources, including case studies, can be accessed at: www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/Youth/targetedyouth/targetedyouthsupport/

Youth Inclusion and Support Panels

Youth Inclusion and Support Panels (YISPs) provide targeted interventions to identified young people at risk of crime.

A YISP is a multi-agency planning group that assesses risk and needs and offers early intervention based on this assessment. Their aim is to prevent ASB and offending by those 8 to 13-year-olds (up to 17 in some areas) who are considered to be at high risk of offending and ASB.

You will be able to find out about your local YISP through your local YOT manager or YOT police officer.
Case study: an example of a staged approach

It’s Your Choice in Cumbria started life in 2002 when a patrol officer at a team meeting in Carlisle expressed his frustration at forever ‘moving kids round and round’. What, he asked, were the parents doing about it?

Initially it was a simple referral and letter-writing process, almost entirely police led. Over the years the process developed and partners became more involved. A full review and refresh in 2008 saw Connexions Cumbria and children’s services become equal partners in the process along with Cumbria Constabulary.

Following an encounter with a young person or group engaged in ASB, an officer or PCSO submits a referral form if they feel the individual or group is a risk to the community or indeed themselves. At the first stage a letter from the head of the local Children’s Planning Group is generated and sent to the young person’s parent/carer. It simply informs them where the child has been found, lets them know about the encounter and asks that they discuss the matter with the young person. It also refers the young person to a website (www.wotson4u.com/), in an attempt to provide some diversionary activities.

Following a second encounter the young person receives a letter from Connexions Cumbria. This letter is accompanied by a list of personal advisers for Connexions and encourages the young person to make contact to discuss positive activities.
After a third encounter the young person receives a hand-delivered letter from their Neighbourhood Policing Team (Community Constable or PCSO). This warns of the consequences of continued involvement in ASB. Recent cases have led to the Neighbourhood Policing Team organising a restorative justice conference for a number of young people from a neighbourhood who have received a third letter, together with a number of victims of ASB in the local area.

A further involvement in ASB would lead to a referral to the local multi-agency Prevent and Deter panel.

It is strongly believed that It’s Your Choice has helped North Cumbria reduce its ASB incidents by 21% over the last three years.

**Action on risk factors**

There is a range of services available to deliver support and intervention to deal with risk factors, to prevent problems from occurring and to address the underlying causes of problem behaviour.

**Positive activities**

Providing good-quality positive activities at the times and in the places young people want and need them must be an important part of the approach to preventing youth crime and ASB. Local authorities in England have a statutory duty to promote the available positive activities in the local area and ensure access to them is available. You should be able to direct young people into local youth provision and also be involved in deciding when and where activities should be provided. Targeted programmes such as Positive Activities for Young People and Positive Futures will specifically target those young people at risk of crime. You should not put on bespoke positive activities for young people.

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8 Under Section 507B of the Education Act 1996
unless they are specifically linked to a neighbourhood priority.

You will be able to find out about the available local activities through the local authority’s assistant director for Integrated Youth Support.

Youth Inclusion Programmes
Youth Inclusion Programmes (YIPs) provide tailored programmes for 8 to 17-year-olds at high risk of involvement in crime and ASB, but are also open to other young people in the area. YIPs use information shared between local agencies, including the police, to identify a core group of young people and address the risk and protective factors associated with offending.

You will be able to find out about your local YIP through your local YOT manager or YOT police officer.

Case study: a Youth Inclusion Programme
Ian was referred to the local YIP at the age of 13. With lax parental supervision and an older sibling heavily involved with robberies and vehicle thefts, he was assessed as high risk. Ian got involved in various weekly activities with the YIP, but still continued to be involved with low-level offending and ASB. He was chosen to take part in a scuba-diving course where he would learn how to dive and about the physics of diving, and complete two dives into open water. As the course progressed his behaviour changed and the feedback from community wardens, PCSOs and the police was very positive: he was not hanging around with his usual group, he was home at regular times and his ASB had lessened. His improved behaviour was confirmed by feedback from the local community and his Pupil Referral Unit. He completed academic exams and an open-water dive of six metres. The project motivated Ian and the other participants to improve their behaviour through the excitement of scuba, coupled with a firm, low-tolerance attitude to bad behaviour and regular home visits to parents to provide updates on their children’s behaviour and progress.
Challenge and Support/Intensive Intervention

Other dedicated projects to address young people at risk of crime or ASB may also be available in your local area. Challenge and Support Projects provide appropriate support alongside the use of Acceptable Behaviour Contracts and Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs). Intensive Intervention Projects provide assertive support to the most challenging young people with complex needs.

Parenting

As well as support that is focused primarily on young people, there is a range of services aimed at parents and families. In every local authority there are parenting experts and practitioners who can deliver evidence-based programmes to parents of young people at risk. The Parenting Early Intervention Programme has also been rolled out across the country to provide targeted programmes to parents of 8 to 13-year-olds.

You will be able to find about your local parenting services through the Parenting Commissioner in your local authority.

Family Intervention Projects

For the most complex and entrenched problems in families, Family Intervention Projects (FIPs) provide assertive and persistent support to the whole family. If you are concerned about a particular family in your local neighbourhood that causes disproportionate problems in the area, then you should be able to refer the family to the local FIP for intervention.

You will be able to find out about your local FIP by contacting the Family Intervention Project manager in your local authority.
Case study: Stockton’s Integrated Youth Support Services

In Stockton, a group of 12 young people identified as being at risk of involvement, or already involved, in ASB by local voluntary and community sector organisations and Stockton Borough Council’s Integrated Youth Support Services (IYSS), but who had shown a significant improvement in behaviour, were put forward for the Cleveland Army Cadets Outreach programme. The group successfully completed the programme, funded by the IYSS, the Youth Crime Action Plan (YCAP) and the Positive Activities programme.

The programme consisted of a discovery day at the Stockton Road base, followed by an action-packed residential weekend at the Cleveland Army Cadet Force training camp where they learned military skills. Finally they visited the Yorkshire Dales for an outdoor activity programme. As part of this activity the young people gained both an Open College Network Unit accreditation and the Heartstart First Aid qualification.

The young people’s participation was approved by Neighbourhood Policing and ASB teams, and their behaviour was monitored during and after the programme. There have been no reports of further ASB or criminal behaviour for this group since participating in the activities. It is also important to note that some young people did not attend because their behaviour had not improved and they were not allowed to access or continue the course. IYSS are continuing to work with these young people.

Paul Surtees, head of IYSS, said: ‘This is a great example of partnership working to provide services for vulnerable young people. We have worked together to deliver a programme of challenging diversionary activities for young people through the YCAP programme which has provided the group both with life skills and accreditation to support them into future training and employment.’
Operations to spot risks and safeguard vulnerable young people

There are specific operations that can be run to help identify risks and support vulnerable young people. For example, Operation Staysafe\(^9\) uses child protection legislation to protect young people considered by a police officer to be at risk of significant harm. The operation involves local authority services working in tandem with police to protect vulnerable children and young people whose behaviour or whereabouts places them at risk of significant harm.

Intelligence-led patrols are directed to particular areas and any young people found to be at risk of significant harm are removed to a place of safety. At the place of safety, social services and police work together and engage the parents or carers. This provides an effective way to identify risk factors in the young person’s life and protect vulnerable young people. For more advice and guidance on using Operation Staysafe, see the *Youth Crime Action Plan Handbook for Practitioners*: www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/youth/youth085.htm

\(^9\) Currently operational only in England
Case study: Operation Safe Stop

Operation Safe Stop, run jointly by the police and the Youth Offending Service in South Tyneside, aims to protect young people from the risk of significant harm, being a victim of crime or offending. Young people considered at risk are taken to a reception centre where youth workers are on hand to assess them, and to which parents or guardians are called to collect them and to discuss the circumstances that led to their children being taken into police protection. Operation Safe Stop has contributed to a reduction of 37% in reports of ASB by young people in South Tyneside.

On 3 July 2009, a Safe Stop patrol encountered four young people, two boys and two girls, outside a local park, behaving in a rowdy and disorderly manner. When the patrol attempted to engage the young people, it became apparent that they were all intoxicated. The boys were clearly over 18, but the girls appeared much younger. One of the boys became extremely abusive and threatening towards the officers during the conversation, and one of the girls exacerbated the tensions by swearing and shouting. The two boys’ behaviour got worse and one of them approached the officers, threatening violence. The boys were arrested and taken into police custody. The two girls were removed to the Safe Stop place of safety under police protection.

An assessment by the Youth Offending Service established the following details:

- Child A, aged 16, lived with her mother in a stable home environment and had had no criminal warnings or convictions. However, there were clear concerns about boundary setting and her level of alcohol use. As a result, referrals were made to the Young People’s Drug and Alcohol Service and the Early Intervention Panel.
Child B, aged 15, lived with her father and one brother. She had had a previous Reprimand. Her mother had significant alcohol problems and her daughter sees her only irregularly. She disclosed significant prior substance use and inappropriate sexual relationships. Her father did not collect her from the place of safety, and a family friend had to be contacted. Referrals were made to the Young People’s Drug and Alcohol Service, both as a direct client and for support as the child of a substance user, and also to children’s services for priority action.

Supporting young victims and witnesses

Young people can often come to the attention of the police as victims and you have a role in referring them to appropriate support. The voluntary sector organisation Victim Support exists in every area and you should find out what they can provide for young victims of crime and how you can work together. Less formal support could take the form of, for example, directing a young person to a local sports club that could help them rebuild resilience after a crime.

Good links with Safer School Partnership officers are important because they may identify young victims at school of whom you will need to be aware in your communities. There is also a leaflet that you can give to young victims of crime; this is available at: www.cjsonline.gov.uk/downloads/application/pdf/Young_victims_leaflet.pdf

Witnesses going to criminal courts can receive help with practical arrangements like childcare from the local Witness Care Unit run jointly by police and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). Children and young people under 17 years (18 years when Section 98 of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 comes into force) are automatically eligible for special measures at court such as giving evidence by video link.
You can find more information on supporting young victims and witnesses in the YCAP good practice guidance for supporting young victims of crime, which is available at: www.frontline.cjsonline.gov.uk/guidance/victims-and-witnesses, and in the manager’s guide.

**Case study: special measures in Lewisham**

Lewisham Borough Council produced a small card that was designed to inform young people who might have to attend court as witnesses of the ‘special measures’ available to help them provide evidence in a discreet manner.

The card was made available to local agencies that come into contact with young people to raise awareness and increase confidence to come forward as witnesses among young people.
Further sources of guidance on tackling particular risk factors

Stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting violent extremism

The Police Service and our partners have an integral role to play working with local communities to support and safeguard people who are vulnerable to being drawn into violent extremism in just the same way as those vulnerable to involvement in any other form of criminal activity, be it in relation to drugs, knife crime, guns or gangs.

Prevent lies at the heart of the work of local Neighbourhood Policing Teams, whose direct contact with the public and local organisations makes them ideally placed to support communities. For further information on Prevent within your force, please contact your force Prevent lead or local Prevent officers. If in doubt, please make contact with counter-terrorism units (CTUs) or counter-terrorism intelligence units (CTIUs) via your force’s Basic Command Unit’s nominated contact or alternatively your force’s Special Branch.

For further information about the work of the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) Prevent Delivery Unit, including its work with young people and educational institutions, please email Prevent@acpo.pnn.police.uk or call 020 7084 8778. Police officers and staff can also visit the Prevent pages on the internal Police National Counter Terrorism (PNCT) website: www.pnct.pnn.police.uk

You can also visit: http://security.homeoffice.gov.uk
www.dcsf.gov.uk/violentextremism

Serious youth violence

Neighbourhood Policing Teams play a vital role both in responding to violent incidents and in early intervention preventative work. You should establish good working relationships with third sector organisations, Family Intervention Project leads and Safer School Partnerships to facilitate identifying hard-to-reach young people who are most at risk of involvement in violent crime and gangs.
The Tackling Knives and Serious Youth Violence Action Programme (TKAP) brings together a range of partners, including the police, courts, local authorities and schools, in a concerted approach to tackling serious youth violence and improving public confidence.

For more information about TKAP and the support available for tackling serious youth violence, visit:

- the It Doesn’t Have to Happen website: www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/stopknifecrime/

For guidance for parents about knife crime, visit: www.direct.gov.uk/en/Parents/Yourchildshealthandsafety/WorriedAbout/DG_078769

**Alcohol**

Alcohol is a key risk factor for young people in terms of increasing their vulnerability as well as having an influence on the likelihood of them committing crime and engaging in ASB. There is a range of tools and powers available to you in tackling under-age drinking and guidance on these can be found on the Home Office website. See especially The practical guide for preventing and dealing with alcohol related problems: www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/drugsalcohol/drugsalcohol104.htm

On 29 January 2010 new alcohol powers and guidance came into force. They include:

- a new offence of persistent possession of alcohol by a person under 18
- changes to the legislation on the confiscation of alcohol from young people: you no longer have to prove intent to consume and can remove vulnerable individuals to a place of safety
- extending the existing Direction to Leave power to 10 to 15-year-olds.
For guidance on these new powers, see:

- young people drinking alcohol in a public place: www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/crimereduction054.htm
- giving directions to individuals to leave a locality: www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/crimereduction053.htm

Missing persons


Safeguarding

Safeguarding is about more than protecting children and young people from being physically or sexually abused. Children and young people can suffer significant and long-term harm to their health and development from being neglected. Safeguarding is also about protecting children from accidental injury, bullying and discrimination. Each local area has a Safeguarding Children’s Board, on which the police are represented, which oversees the actions of all services working with children to ensure that they are carrying out their duties to safeguard children. These boards will also collect information relevant to planning specific activity to improve safeguarding in the area, and neighbourhood police are likely to gather a lot of information relevant to their work.

Your force will have a Child Abuse Investigation Unit (CAIU) and this will normally take primary responsibility for investigating child abuse cases. However, safeguarding children is not the role of CAIU officers alone. It is a fundamental part of the duties of all police officers. In a case of child protection, decisions will be made at a multi-agency child protection conference, and the child and family will be supported by a core group of professionals agreed at that meeting.
To find out more about safeguarding you should look at the Working Together guidance, which can be found on the Department for Children, Schools and Families website: www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/safeguardingandsocialcare/safeguardingchildren/workingtogether/workingtogetherhertosafeguardchildren/
This guidance also requires that the police should be notified as soon as possible by local authority children’s social care services whenever a case referred to them involves a criminal offence committed, or suspected of having been committed, against a child.

Actions

- Find out what risk referral process is in place in your force and how to refer information on through this process.
- Find out what multi-agency assessment panels are in place to assess risks around young people and how your Neighbourhood Policing Team is involved with these panels.
5. Tackling anti-social behaviour and an introduction to the Youth Justice System

This section aims to:

• give information on low-level out-of-court measures and civil orders for tackling anti-social behaviour
• provide an introduction to restorative justice and young people
• provide a brief introduction to the Youth Justice System.

Where a young person has done something that requires some kind of enforcement action, there is a range of options open to you in a Neighbourhood Policing Team.

Professional judgement

The performance management systems in the police are changing, with a move away from the sanction detection focus towards increasing public confidence. There is now only one central government target for police forces: to improve public confidence that the police and local authorities are dealing with the anti-social behaviour (ASB) and youth crime issues that matter locally.

A pilot scheme in four forces in 2008 allowed officers to save time and exercise greater professional
judgement in dealing with low-level crime and ASB. The Government has now committed to introducing professional judgement and decision making in all forces. Professional judgement is predominantly police focused and typically does not involve children’s services or youth justice partners. Officers wishing to adopt the principles of professional judgement and decision making should seek local guidance.

This approach means that, where appropriate, you can use your judgement to decide on an alternative way to resolve an issue, rather than pursuing the criminal justice route. This means that you can ensure that the outcome is victim focused and proportionate, and addresses the root cause of the problem originally reported.

For a video interview with a victim of ASB discussing the positive benefits of professional judgement and decision making, watch *Putting the heart back into policing* at: www.neighbourhoodpolicing.co.uk

**Anti-social behaviour**

The Home Office ASB website www.asb.homeoffice.gov.uk has guidance on all aspects of ASB. It is practitioner led and, as well as information on the tools and powers available, contains advice on everything from partnership working to court issues and some useful case studies.

There is also guidance on the youth-specific approach to tackling ASB, which can be found in section 8 at: www.asb.homeoffice.gov.uk/uploadedFiles/Members_site/Documents_and_images/Enforcement_tools_and_powers/ToolsPowersGuideMay08_0145.pdf. This includes guidance on the key tools and powers available to tackle ASB, including those which other bodies, such as local authorities and social landlords, can use to take enforcement action.

**The Youth Justice System**

The Youth Justice System can be defined as the laws, procedures and institutions which deal with those aged under 18 accused or convicted of crime in England and Wales. The aim of the Youth Justice System is to prevent offending.
The ‘end-to-end’ Youth Justice System

Overview

Out-of-court disposal

- Home visit
- Acceptable Behaviour Contract (ABC)
- Warning letter

- Restorative justice, including the Youth Restorative Disposal

- Reparation

- Penalty Notice for Disorder
- Reprimand
- Final Warning
- Youth Conditional Caution

Civil or criminal court disposal

- Anti-Social Behaviour Order
- Individual Support Order
- Parenting Order

- Youth Rehabilitation Order

- Custody

- Resettlement

Child or young person involved in crime or ASB
Out-of-court disposals

Restorative justice

Restorative justice (RJ) provides opportunities for those directly affected by an offence – victim, offender and members of the community – to communicate and agree on how to deal with the offence and its consequences. RJ is a highly effective conflict resolution tool that has been successfully applied to various youth justice situations and neighbourhood disputes.

Restorative approaches can be a cost-effective and efficient means of dealing with low-level offending – the very signal crimes which impact upon community life and confidence. The use of RJ gives specially trained police officers and PCSOs on-the-spot discretion to hold to account young people who have committed certain minor offences.

For case studies on the use of restorative approaches in neighbourhoods, see: www.restorativesolutions.org.uk/b_RAiN_Home.htm. Your local Youth Offending Team (YOT) will be able to provide you with more information and guidance on RJ, and there may also be someone in your force who leads on RJ who can help.
Case study: Youth Restorative Disposal

A scheme has been trialled by seven police forces in England and Wales which gives young people who offend the chance to atone for their mistakes without the need to go to court. Under a Youth Restorative Disposal (YRD), a police officer will act on the spot where circumstances allow and oversee a meeting between the two parties to resolve the offence.

North Wales is among the police forces which tested this new approach. Since August 2008, 600 trained police officers in the region have had the option of issuing YRDs instead of Reprimands for offences such as theft, criminal damage or assault. The YRD can take different forms and is used only if the victim of the offence agrees. The police aim to arrange a meeting between perpetrator and victim, at which the young person apologises and is told how the victim was affected by the offence. Alternatively, the young person’s apology and victim’s opinions are relayed indirectly by police. In some cases, a letter of apology may be written.

Often, the young person and victim will agree forms of reparation, such as repayment. For example, a teenage boy who had climbed scaffolding and thrown debris into a neighbouring garden agreed to clear up the garden over a period of two weeks, while a 16-year-old girl paid £250 for damage she had caused to a hairdressing salon’s window.
YRDs are issued only to young people between 10 and 17 who have never come to the police’s attention before and who admit their offences. But a YRD, unlike the previous option of a Reprimand, does not result in the young person receiving a criminal record. The results so far in North Wales have been encouraging: only 9% of young people who have received YRDs have gone on to reoffend, compared with 25% of young people who have received Reprimands. ‘The evidence tends to show that the fact that they’ve had to take responsibility for what they have done, and realise the consequences of their actions, has more of an effect than a Reprimand,’ says Sergeant Tony Morgan, restorative justice coordinator with North Wales Police.

Case study produced by Children and Young People Now

Reprimands

A Reprimand is the most likely response to first-time offending by a young person. For a Reprimand to be issued, the young person must admit the offence. If the young person is bailed prior to the Reprimand being issued, the YOT can assess the young person for a prevention/intervention programme. The YOT will then be present when the Reprimand is given. If the young person is assessed as high risk there may be a short intervention programme, but this is voluntary. The YOT can also put an RJ process in place if the victim agrees.
**Penalty Notices for Disorder**

Penalty Notices for Disorder (PNDs) are available for young people aged 16 and 17 years, though they have been piloted for use with 10 to 15-year-olds. They offer an additional method of dealing with low-level offending and ASB. Police officers have the discretion to use these ‘on-the-spot fines’ for a number of defined offences. More information on the offences for which they can be used is listed in the annex on statutory powers. They can only be issued if there is sufficient evidence to support a successful prosecution. Their use is inappropriate if the offence forms part of a pattern of offending behaviour or the young person is vulnerable and in need of greater intervention.

When a PND is issued to a 16 or 17-year-old, the local YOT must be notified by the police. If the young person wishes to dispute the issue of the PND, they can request a court hearing during the 21 days given to pay the penalty. If the PND is accepted and the offence is recordable, it will be logged on the Police National Computer. A PND should not be issued more than once for a recordable offence.

**Final Warnings**

A Final Warning is used for second offences, or where the offence is too serious for a Reprimand. No further Final Warning may then be given unless at least two years have passed since the earlier Final Warning and the offence is not so serious that it should be charged. To receive a Final Warning, the young person must admit that they committed the offence.

Once a Final Warning has been given, the police are under a duty to inform the YOT, who then have a duty to assess the young person.
Generally an intervention programme to prevent reoffending is offered; this may include RJ. While participation is voluntary, any failure to attend can be cited in court if the young person goes on to commit further offences which then come before the court. Final Warnings aim to prevent young people reoffending by ensuring that the young person is made aware of the consequences and impact of their criminal activity. Factors that may encourage a young person to reoffend should also be addressed.

**Youth Conditional Cautions**

The Youth Conditional Caution (YCC) is the highest-tariff out-of-court disposal, and was introduced by the Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008. Though the intention is that it will be available for 10 to 17-year-olds, it is initially being piloted for 16 to 17-year-olds in five areas, prior to national implementation. YCCs will provide an additional, alternative disposal that may be used when the young person has already had a Reprimand and/or Final Warning, or where the offence is too serious for a Reprimand or Final Warning. For the YCC to be used, the young person cannot have been convicted of an offence previously and must admit the offence. Their consent to the caution is also required.

Conditions included on the caution will aim to support rehabilitation, effect reparation or punish. Young people must be able to complete the conditions satisfactorily and within a reasonable time period. When considering a reasonable time period, prosecutors will have to take into account any time limits affecting the commencement of proceedings for the offence involved. If the young person does not satisfy the conditions of the caution then they may be prosecuted for the original offence. YOTs will have a key role in assessing cases, and recommending, supervising and delivering caution conditions, subject to approval and oversight by the Crown Prosecution Service.
Court disposals

Referral Orders
The Referral Order is the primary community sentence for those aged under 18 who are in court for the first time and plead guilty. A Referral Order requires a young offender to attend a youth offender panel (comprising a YOT representative and two community volunteer members). The panel agrees a contract with the young person lasting between three and 12 months and includes reparation and interventions to address reoffending risk (e.g. substance misuse, anger management).

The aim of Referral Orders is to encourage young people to take responsibility for their offending behaviour, participate in rehabilitative activity and be reintegrated into the law-abiding community. When the contract is complete, the conviction is spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

Youth Rehabilitation Orders
The Youth Rehabilitation Order is the standard community sentence for young people under 18. The order is made up of a ‘menu’ of 18 possible requirements.

By selecting the most appropriate requirements for each young person, a tailored sentence can be achieved. There are no restrictions on the number of occasions on which this sentence can be used. YOTs assist the court by recommending which of the requirements are the most appropriate and available locally.
Case study: Warwickshire Youth Justice Service’s Bike Project

Working in partnership with the police and Connexions, young people recycle abandoned and confiscated bicycles donated by the police to the project as part of the reparation element of their court orders. Bicycles are received from the police and then, under supervision by a bicycle mechanic, the young person learns general bicycle maintenance and safety. Bicycles are repaired to a safe standard, then donated to Connexions for use by people needing assistance with transport to education, training or employment.

The project benefits the community by providing affordable bicycles. It also contributes to Warwickshire County Council’s efforts to promote cycling, thereby improving health, and is environmentally friendly.

The young person benefits through learning new marketable skills to increase job prospects (at least one young person has secured employment as a bicycle mechanic). It also increases their awareness of road safety and the need for bicycle maintenance. The young person is also able to gain basic qualifications, further enhancing their employment prospects (AQA Awards: CE1353 – Safety for Bicyclists, CE2291 – Community Service).
Custody

Most young people aged 12 to 17 who are sentenced to custody receive a Detention and Training Order (DTO) of between four and 24 months. Half of the order is served in custody and the other half under supervision in the community. The aim of the DTO is to make planned and constructive use of the time spent in custody, with effective supervision and support after release.

For the most serious offences, the Crown Court has the power to sentence young offenders aged 10 to 17 to longer periods of detention, under the Powers of Criminal Courts (Sentencing) Act 2000. Those found guilty of murder are detained at Her Majesty’s pleasure under Section 90 of the Act (this is essentially a life sentence). For certain other serious offences, for which an adult offender aged 21 or over may receive a sentence of imprisonment of 14 years or more, the court may (under Section 91 of the 2000 Act) sentence a child or young person aged 10 to 17 to a period of detention with a maximum term equivalent to that for which an adult committing the same offence could be imprisoned.

Young people identified by the courts as dangerous may be detained for public protection (an indeterminate sentence) or given an extended sentence (with an extended period on licence after release).

Most under-18s in custody are in young offender institutions.

The under-18 secure estate consists of three types of establishment:

- young offender institutions (YOIs) for boys aged 15 to 17 and for 17-year-old girls
- secure training centres (STCs) for boys and girls aged 12 to 17 (i.e. younger and other more vulnerable young people)
- secure children’s homes (SCHs) for young people in the care of local authorities. SCHs accommodate boys and girls aged 10 to 17 (again, younger and other more vulnerable young people).
Local policing guide for early intervention and prevention of youth crime and anti-social behaviour – Practitioners

**Actions**

- Find out more about restorative justice and professional judgement guidance in your force.
- Make contact with your local Youth Offending Team.