

Nottingham Youth Offending Team

Assessment and Early Intervention Panel Report

April 2009 – March 2010

This report has been written to highlight the workings and achievements of the Assessment and Early Intervention Panel (AEIP) from April 2009 up to March 2010.

Aim of the Assessment and Early Intervention Panel

The aim of the AEIP is to ensure that children and young people whose sexual behaviour is abusive or aggressive are responded to in a way that meets their needs, considers any risks posed towards them, and the risks they themselves pose to others.

Objectives

To ensure that all children and young people arrested or referred to the Police, Youth Offending Team (YOT), or Children's Services for sexually abusive/offending behaviour are consistently assessed.

To identify as early as possible those cases where intervention and treatment would be beneficial in preventing the development of a pattern of further offending/abusive behaviour and to give advice on appropriate interventions.

To ensure that victims' needs are identified and appropriate services offered.

To offer advice, where appropriate, to agencies regarding diversion from court.

To provide a consistent and coherent multi-agency approach which can be monitored and evaluated.

Mandate

The Mandate is derived from a multi-agency Task and Delivery Group (previously the Steering Group) which includes Children's Social Care (Chair), YOT, Education, Police and C.A.M.H.S.

Statistical Analysis of cases in which the Panel was involved

During the period April 1st 2009 to March 31st 2010, the YOT became aware of 37 young people who were either arrested for a sexual offence or were brought to our attention via social care or the police. Of these, 29 were considered at panel, 3 were not taken to panel following a management decision and 5 failed to attend the panel, having been cancelled by the social worker. Of the 37 youngsters, 31 had been arrested, and the panel also heard 6 cases where there had been no arrest but there were concerns involving sexually abusive behaviour.

The panel, therefore, considered 29 cases over this 12 month period.

The figures quoted below refer to the 37 cases as mentioned above (unless otherwise stated).

Age, gender and ethnicity of young people

Age	No.
9	1
10	1
11	2
12	2
13	6
14	6
15	6
16	6
17	7

Gender

All 37 young people who came to our attention this year were male. This is not unusual, and it is rare that a young female is arrested for a sexual offence in Nottingham.

Ethnicity

White	25
Black African/Carribbean	8
Black British / White	3
White/ Portuguese	1

Learning Difficulties

Of the 29 young people considered at Panel, 1 had "mild learning difficulties", 1 had moderate learning difficulties, 1 had a diagnosis of autism and 1 a

diagnosis of Di George Syndrome, which includes learning difficulties. These were descriptions given at panel by the presenting social worker.

Range of offences young people arrested for

Offence	Number
Rape	11
Attempt rape	1
Rape female under 13	2
Assault by penetration female under 13	2
Incite a child under 13 to engage in sexual activity	3
Sexual assault	9
Sexual touching	6
Sexual touching child under 13	2
Downloading indecent images of children	1
Common Assault	2

Victim Data

Age	Male	Female	Total
3		1	1
4	2	3	5
5			0
6		2	2
7		4	4
8	1		1
9	4	2	6
10	3		3
11	1	1	2
12		3	3
13		2	2
14		4	4
15		5	5
16		1	1
17		1	1
adult		2	2
various			2
total			44

The number of victims exceeds (alleged) perpetrators, reflecting the fact that some offenders had more than 1 victim.

The pattern of victims' age distribution usually tends to show broadly that both male and female victims are equally at risk when they are younger whilst females are more at risk of sexual assault in their adolescent years. The figures for this year reflect this again. 19 alleged victims were under the age of 10 which is of concern.

Outcomes

For the 37 youngsters who came to our attention the following outcomes are recorded:

Outcome	No.
Found not guilty at court	1
No further police action	5
Dealt with outside of the criminal justice process following panel intervention	1
Refused charge	22
No police involvement	1
Final Warning	2
Referral Order	2
Supervision Order 3 years	2
Supervision Order 2 years plus 6 month curfew	1

Some youngsters who were not prosecuted were referred on to appropriate agencies. The AEIP system also alerts the YOT Practice Manager to the identities of other youngsters open to the YOT for other types of offending, whose behaviour gives cause for concern but who are not prosecuted for sex offences. This enables the YOT to work with these children on their behaviour whilst on Orders for other types of offences.

Repanels

There were 2 cases which were brought to panel for a second time during this period. One of the youngsters was in the care of the local authority.

Issues to be addressed

Changes of personnel

Over the past year the panel has had an Independent Reviewing Officer Chair which has been a positive. The Steering Group did not meet until March over this period but this is now up and running effectively as a Task and Finish Group. Also, over the past year, the panel system has been running much more smoothly and cases referred to Children's Services are receiving a swifter assessment and are being brought to panel more regularly.

Reprimands and Final Warnings

If a young person is given a reprimand for a sex offence, there is no opportunity for assessment by the YOT police officer and therefore, no opportunity to offer any resources to that young person. A concern has been raised by this panel in the past that a number of young people have been given a reprimand as opposed to a final warning by police officers without the case coming to the AEIP. It is pleasing to see that this practice does not seem to have continued into this year again, and the Panel has not been made aware of any reprimands which have been given to youngsters for sex offences during the year.

There have been 2 Final Warnings issued this year and both will have been thoroughly assessed by a YOT police officer and followed by an intervention plan.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) Support

Towards the end of this period, we were joined on the panel by a member of the Head to Head team. This has been a very positive addition and we have welcomed his expertise and advice. Also the Head to Head team manager is on the Task and Finish group. An ongoing problem has been where to refer the young people who are discussed at panel who, either because they are deemed less risky, or because they have not received an AIM2 assessment, have been unable to access a service which meets their needs and risks. We have been working with Head to Head to resolve this over this period.

Liaison with other agencies

The Panel has been attended by police officers from the Child Abuse Investigation Unit on several occasions and decisions have been made and recommendations forwarded to the Crown Prosecution Service following full multi agency discussion. This has been felt to have been a useful and

effective process ensuring best outcomes for victims and alleged young perpetrators. Unfortunately regular police attendance (ie arresting officers) at the panel has been less common.

Sexual Exploitation

The panel has been concerned that at least one of the youngsters discussed appears to have been involved in child sexual exploitation (ie where the youngster has been coerced into sexual activity by adults outside of the family) and the link between this and the young person's own sexually abusive behaviour must be recognised.

Conclusion

This year has again been spent consolidating the work of the panel, which continues to see improvements in the number of cases being brought to panel and the work carried out on these cases. Some excellent work has been carried out under the auspices of all the agencies involved but there are some areas still to be addressed as outlined in the report. Work needs to continue to focus on these areas in the coming year to ensure that the needs of young people who have harmful sexual behaviour and their victims continue to be seen as a priority within Safeguarding Children Board procedures and that they receive services vital to them as individuals in order to ensure their wellbeing and the safety of the citizens of Nottingham.

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Nottingham Youth Offending Team

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