

Nottingham Youth Offending Team

Assessment and Early Intervention Panel Report

April 2010 – March 2011

This report has been written to highlight the workings and achievements of the Assessment and Early Intervention Panel (AEIP) from April 2010 up to March 2011.

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. and is accountable to the Local Safeguarding Children's Board.

Statistical Analysis of cases in which the Panel was involved

During the period April 1st 2010 to March 31st 2011, the YOT became aware of 34 young people who were either arrested for a sexual offence or were brought to our attention via social care or the police. Of these, 26 were considered at panel, 4 were not taken to panel following a management decision, 3 failed to attend the panel, having been cancelled by the social worker and in 1 case the panel had been cancelled due to there not being enough core members available for the panel to go ahead. Of the 34 youngsters, 31 had been arrested, and the panel also heard 3 cases where there had been no arrest but there were concerns involving sexually abusive behaviour.

The panel, therefore, considered 26 cases over this 12 month period.

The figures quoted below refer to the 34 cases as mentioned above (unless otherwise stated).

Age, gender and ethnicity of young people

Age	No.
9	0
10	0
11	0
12	4
13	2
14	3
15	9
16	7
17	10

Gender

All 34 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	21
Black African/Caribbean	6
Black British / White	1
Asian	3
Other	3

Learning Difficulties

Of the 26 young people considered at Panel, 2 had "mild learning difficulties", 1 had moderate learning difficulties, 1 had a diagnosis of autism and 4 had Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. These were descriptions given at panel by the presenting social worker.

Range of offences young people arrested for

Offence	Number
Rape	13
Attempt rape	4
Rape female under 13	4
Assault by penetration female under 13	1
Incite a child under 13 to engage in sexual activity	2
Sexual assault	8
Sexual touching	7
Sexual touching child under 13	1
Penetrative sexual activity with a girl aged 13 to 15	1
Engaging in a non-penetrative sexual activity with a child under 13	1

Some young people are arrested for more than one offence, this will account for the fact that these numbers do not match the number of young people brought to panel.

Victim Data

Age	Male	Female	Total
5		1	1
6		2	2
7			0
8		1	1
9	1		1
10		1	1
11		1	1
12		2	2
13		3	3
14		4	4
15	1	3	4
16		3	3
17		1	1
adult		9	9
total			35

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

The pattern of victims' age distribution is varied. Female victims appear more at risk of sexual assault in their adolescent years. The figures for this year show a varied age range of victims, with only 2 of the total 35 victims being male. This differs greatly from last years figures which show that there were 11 male victims. There are a considerably higher number of adult victims this year than was recorded last year.

Outcomes

For the 34 youngsters who came to our attention the following outcomes are recorded:

Outcome	No.
Found not guilty at court	0
No further police action	7
Refused charge	21
Final Warning	2
Referral Order	1
Youth Rehabilitation Order with ISS	1
Awaiting Outcome	2

Some youngsters who were not prosecuted were referred on to appropriate agencies. The AEIP system also alerts the YOT 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. It is worth noting that the high number of young people where no further action is recorded may represent cases where, although the evidence may present as poor, clear concerns have been noted (e.g. if victims are very young there is an understandable reluctance to prosecute if a trial is the likely outcome).

Re-panels

There was 1 case which was brought to panel for a second time during this period. This was due to accommodation issues and Social Care involvement.

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 this year despite plans to do so at the last Task and Finish Group which met on 16.03.10. The panel system however has been running much more smoothly and cases referred to Children's Services received a swifter assessment and were brought to panel more regularly.

Final Warnings

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

Throughout the whole of this period, we had the input from the Head to Head team. This was very positive and we have welcomed this continued expertise and advice. Also the Head to Head team manager should sit 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 and an agreement was reached that the MALT teams would do this work with the assistance of the Head to Head Team.

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 is very well placed to identify cases where young people arrested for sexual offences have been victims of sexual exploitation (i.e. 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.

Racheal Osborne

YOT lead for Young People with Harmful Sexual Behaviour

Nottingham Youth Offending Team

April 2012

Update April 2012

During the following year the panel was suspended due to resource issues (June 1011). Social Care felt unable to provide an Independent Reviewing Officer to chair panels and admin support was also unavailable. The AEIP Task and Finish Group have not met since March 2010.