

Nottingham Youth Offending Team

Assessment and Early Intervention Panel Report

April 2006 – March 2007

This report has been written to highlight the workings and achievements of the Assessment and Early Intervention Panel (AEIP) from April 2006 up to March 2007.

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 advise on appropriate interventions.

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

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

Mandate

The Mandate comes from a multi-agency Steering Group which includes Children's Services (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 2006 to March 31st 2007, 39 young people were arrested for a sexual offence. Of these, 30 were considered at panel, 5 were not taken to panel following a manager's decision and 4 failed to attend the panel. In addition to the 39 arrested young people, the panel also heard 2 cases where the young people had been involved in sexually abusive behaviour but had not been arrested.

The panel, therefore, considered 32 cases over this 12 month period.

Age, sex and ethnicity of young people arrested

Male	37
Female	2

Age	No.
11	2
12	1
13	10
14	9
15	7
16	5
17	5

White	26
Black British	6
White/Black British	4
Asian	1
Asian/White	2

Learning Difficulties

Of the 32 young people *considered* at Panel (including the 2 not arrested but brought to Panel), 2 were deemed to be ADHD, one as "autistic, learning difficulties and ADHD", and 2 had "learning difficulties". However there is no clear definition of learning difficulty as often no definitive assessment of learning needs is carried out.

Range of offences for which young people were arrested

Offence	No.
Sexual Assault	6
Sexual Assault by touching	8
Sexual Assault by touching of female under 13 years	2
Sexual Assault with penetration	2
Causing person to engage in sexual activity without consent	3
Voyeurism	1
Taking an indecent image of child	1
Produce indecent image of child	1
Rape	12
Attempt Rape	1
Sexual activity with child	1
Inciting sexual assault on a child	1

The 2 offences involving ICT show that this is a growing concern not just in the adult population.

Victim Data

Age	Male	Female	Total
4	0	1	1
5	0	3	3
6	0	1	1
7	1	2	3
8	2	0	2
9	0	1	1
10	3	3	6
11	3	1	4
12	0	3	3
13	3	3	6
14	0	7	7
15	1	2	3
17	0	2	2
n/k	0	1	1
adult	0	1	1
No victim			1
Total	13	31	45

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

The pattern of victims' age distribution appears 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.

Outcomes

The 39 young people who were arrested for sex offences were dealt with in the following way:

Outcome	No.
Supervision Order	1
Final Warning	5
Reprimand	3
Referral Orders	3
Still going through the court process	2
Withdrawn at court	2
No further action	22
No result recorded on PNC	1

The 2 children still going through the court system face serious charges and if convicted will receive significant input from the YOT. Others who were not arrested/prosecuted also received a service either from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services or from the YOT via the Preventative Team. Some 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 abusive behaviour whilst on Orders for other types of offences.

Case example of work undertaken by the YOT

X is DPA male aged 16 years and convicted of sexual touching against a 10 year old boy in January 2007. He was made subject to a DPA supervision order at the Youth Court. X will undergo an individualised programme of work with his case manager, which will focus on all areas of his life, which need support. He is undergoing a therapeutic assessment which will lead to intervention from a therapist commissioned by the independent residential unit where he is accommodated and funded by the local authority. He is deemed to be high risk due to the concerns around possible grooming behaviour and is,

therefore, subject to regular MAPPA (Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements) level 2 reviews.

Issues to be addressed

Changes of personnel

The panel has seen the change of Chair of the Panel, the police representative on the Panel, and the Chair of the Steering Group over the past year. This has inevitably caused some discontinuity. However, over the past six months, 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 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 – this has happened on 3 occasions this year and goes against the advice given to police officers. This can happen as a result of lack of awareness on the part of the police officer, or lack of assessment on the part of Children's Services, which results in no panel being arranged early enough to influence the police decision. The Steering Group should address this issue.

There have been 5 Final Warnings issued this year and due to changes in police personnel at the YOT, some confusion as to what interventions should be offered. This has been rectified and a new policy has been introduced so that all future Final Warnings for sex offences will be followed by a robust intervention plan, which will, where possible, be decided at the AEIP stage.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) Support

Due to changes in protocols and financial agreements between various agencies, the support the Panel now receives from CAMHS, which has in the past been provided by the Young Abusers' Project at Thorneywood, has been to a large extent withdrawn and there has been confusion over where to refer youngsters who need early intervention to address their abusive behaviour but who will not go through the Court process. The Steering Group needs to address this issue with some urgency. We need clarity around who will offer this specific service now.

Conclusion

This year has again been spent consolidating the work of the panel, which has seen changes in important personnel. There has been some excellent work carried out under the auspices of the panel but there are some areas still to be addressed as outlined in the report. Work needs 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 the safety of the citizens of Nottingham.

Glynis Storer

Practice Manager for Young People with Harmful Sexual Behaviour

Nottingham Youth Offending Team

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