

Prison Reform Trust and Association of YOT Managers

Introduction

It has long been known that high numbers of young people who come to the attention of youth justice services have complex support needs and low levels of educational attainment. Research shows that:

- 23% of young offenders have very low IQs of less than 70 (Harrington and Bailey et al, 2005)
- 60% have communication difficulties that will affect their ability to understand certain words and to express themselves (Bryan, 2004)
- 40% have mental health problems, which rises to 90% for those in youth custody (Healthcare Commission, 2006)
- 29% have difficulties with literacy and numeracy (YJB, 2006)
- 46% were rated as under-achieving at school (YJB, 2006)
- 15% of 10 – 19 year olds in custody had a diagnosis of ADHD (Fazel et al, 2008; review of international research literature)

The Prison Reform Trust¹ and Association of YOT Managers want to find out how young offenders with such impairments are identified and supported, what training and support are available for YOT staff, including opportunities to refer young people to specialist services, and what would most help YOT staff in working with these young people.

A report will be published jointly by the PRT and the Association of YOT managers and recommendations for change will be pursued at the highest level.

Time frame

Please complete and return this questionnaire by Monday 30 November 2009. The likely timeframe for publication of a report is summer 2010.

PLEASE READ THIS SECTION

Completing this questionnaire

This questionnaire is for *you* to fill in – it is not designed for a collective ‘best’ response. There are no right or wrong answers; simply answer the questions according to what you believe to be true.

The answers to certain questions may only be known to particular staff, for example the YOT head of service. If you don’t know the answer to a particular question just say, ‘don’t know’. Please avoid leaving any blanks.

Many of the questions involve a tick box response so the questionnaire shouldn’t take more than 30 minutes to complete.

Ideally the questionnaire will be completed on line using Survey Monkey. If you would prefer to fill in a hard copy or make a telephone response contact Jenny Talbot at the Prison Reform Trust: 020 7251 5070; jenny.talbot@prisonreformtrust.org.uk

If you have any questions about the research or the questionnaire, please contact Jenny or Diz Minnitt, Association of YOT Managers: diz.minnitt@milton-keynes.gov.uk

¹ The Prison Reform Trust is an independent charity that seeks to create a just, humane and effective penal system. We do this by inquiring into the system; informing prisoners, staff and the wider public and by influencing Parliament, Government and officials towards reform.

Confidentiality

Please be assured that all responses will be anonymised. Individual YOTs will not be referred to in any reports, press releases or dissemination events. The reason you are asked to identify your YOT is because it may be useful to analyse data by region or to draw urban/rural comparisons.

Note: to complete the questionnaire you must enter the name of your YOT and your position, please:

Name of YOT:	
Position, please tick one box:	<input type="checkbox"/> YOT head of service <input type="checkbox"/> YOT manager, operational <input type="checkbox"/> YOT worker <input type="checkbox"/> YOT worker, specialist (please say which)

1. Research has estimated that high proportions of young offenders have complex support needs and low levels of educational attainment. How well do the following research findings match your experiences? Please indicate whether you believe the proportions are higher than in your YOT, about the same or lower. If you don't know, please say so:

Research findings	Higher	About the same	Lower	Don't know
About one in four, or 23% of young offenders have very low IQs of less than 70 (possible learning disabilities)				
Over half, or 60% have communication difficulties				
Two in five, or 40% have mental health problems				
Less than one third, or 29% have difficulties with literacy				
One in four, or 25% have special educational needs				
Fewer than one in five have ADHD				

Initial contact with the YOT

2. When a young person first comes into contact with your YOT do you request and/or receive information about any impairments or difficulties from local Children's Services?
 YES/SOMETIMES/NO/DON'T KNOW

a. If YES or SOMETIMES, please complete the following:

Type of information	Where from	Quality of information (1 being high quality and 4 low quality)				Timeliness (1 being within one week and 4 after long delays)			
		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
<i>Example: Statement of SEN</i>	<i>LEA</i>		X			X			

- b. Does your YOT use any screening or assessment tools or procedures to identify:

i. Learning disabilities or low IQ: YES/NO/DON'T KNOW

If YES, please say what:

ii. Specific learning difficulties: YES/NO/DON'T KNOW

If YES, please say for what and for which specific learning difficulty, e.g. dyslexia

iii. Communication/speech and language difficulties: YES/NO/DON'T KNOW

If YES, please say what:

iv. Mental health problems: YES/NO/DON'T KNOW

If YES, please say what:

v. ADHD: YES/NO/DON'T KNOW

If YES, please say what:

vi. Autistic spectrum disorder: YES/NO/DON'T KNOW

If YES, please say what:

vii. Literacy levels: YES/NO/DON'T KNOW

If YES, please say what:

3. If you complete ASSET, how useful would you say the process is in alerting you to the possibility that a young person may have the following impairments or difficulties?

	Very useful 1	Quite useful 2	Not very useful 3	Not at all useful 4
Learning disabilities or low IQ				
Specific learning difficulties, e.g. dyslexia				
Communication/speech and language difficulties				
Mental health problems				
ADHD				
Autistic spectrum disorder				
Low levels of literacy				

4. Are there any other ways in which a young person's impairments or difficulties might come to your attention or to the attention of YOT staff? YES/SOMETIMES/NO/DON'T KNOW

a. If YES or SOMETIMES, please say what:

Specialist YOT staff and service provision

5. Mental health: does your YOT have a mental health worker? YES/NO/DON'T KNOW

a. If YES, does he/she have learning disability expertise? YES/NO/DON'T KNOW

6. Does your YOT have any other health workers? For example, general health, substance misuse worker, learning disability nurse, coordinating role for access to mainstream services etc: YES/NO/DON'T KNOW

a. If YES, how many other health workers does your YOT have?

b. What are their area(s) of expertise?

7. CAMHS: how would you describe the quality of the relationship with your local CAMHS service?				
a. Is there generally a waiting list? YES/NO/DON'T KNOW				
i. If YES, what is the average length of wait?				
b. Does the CAMHS to which you refer young people have learning disability expertise? YES/NO/DON'T KNOW				
c. Does your YOT have a Service Level Agreement with CAMHS? YES/NO/DON'T KNOW				
	Very satisfied 1	Quite satisfied 2	Not very satisfied 3	Not at all satisfied 4
d. How satisfied are you with your local CAMHS service?				

8. Does your YOT have access to Learning Disability CAMHS? YES/NO/DON'T KNOW

9. Learning Disability: does your YOT have access to learning disability services? YES/NO/DON'T KNOW

a. If YES, is there generally a waiting list? YES/NO/DON'T KNOW
i. If YES, what is the average length of wait?
b. Does your YOT have a Service Level Agreement for this? YES/NO/DON'T KNOW

10. Does your YOT have access to a speech and language therapist? YES/NO/DON'T KNOW

a. If YES, is there generally a waiting list? YES/NO/DON'T KNOW
i. If YES, what is the average length of wait?
b. Does your YOT have a Service Level Agreement for this? YES/NO/DON'T KNOW

11. Does your YOT have access to an educational psychologist? YES/NO/DON'T KNOW

a. If YES, is there generally a waiting list? YES/NO/DON'T KNOW
i. If YES, what is the average length of wait?
b. Does your YOT have a Service Level Agreement for this? YES/NO/DON'T KNOW

12. Education: is there a member of staff at your YOT qualified in special educational needs?
YES/NO/DON'T KNOW

- a. If NO, is there a procedure for referring young offenders for further assessment, who YOT staff suspect may have special educational needs? YES/NO/DON'T KNOW
- i. If YES, is there generally a waiting list? YES/NO/DON'T KNOW
- If YES, what is the average length of wait?
 - Does your YOT have a Service Level Agreement for this?
YES/NO/DON'T KNOW

13. Does your YOT have access to any other specialist staff or service provision? YES/NO

If YES, please what:

14. Is there anything else you want to say about specialist YOT staff or service provision?

YOT programmes and activities

15. Thinking about interventions at your YOT, have changes been made to support young offenders with any of the following: communication difficulties, learning disabilities (low IQ), learning difficulties, mental health problems, ADHD, autistic spectrum disorder, low levels of literacy?

YES/NO/DON'T KNOW

a. If YES, please describe briefly the changes made and for which impairments or difficulties:

Intervention	Changes made	For which impairments/difficulties?
Offending behaviour work		
Victim awareness		
Restorative justice		
Mental health activities		
Substance misuse		
Positive activities		
Education		
Connexions		
Other, please add:		

16. In your opinion, what proportion of young people in your YOT find it hard to participate fully in interventions because of their impairments or difficulties?

Less than 10%	Less than 20%	Almost half	More than half
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17. How confident are you that your YOT has the skills and expertise, or ready access to them, to identify and support the needs of young offenders with the following:

	Very confident 1	Quite confident 2	Not very confident 3	Not at all confident 4
Learning disabilities				
Specific learning difficulties, e.g. dyslexia				
Communication /speech and language difficulties				
Mental health problems				
ADHD				
Autistic spectrum disorder				
Low levels of literacy				

18. Pre-sentence reports: how confident are you that pre-sentence reports prepared by your YOT adequately address the implications of the following impairments or difficulties in order that magistrates and judges can make informed sentencing decisions:

	Very confident 1	Quite confident 2	Not very confident 3	Not at all confident 4
Learning disabilities				
Specific learning difficulties, e.g. dyslexia				
Communication/speech and language difficulties				
Mental health problems				
ADHD				
Autistic spectrum disorder				
Low levels of literacy				

Training and support for YOT staff

(Note: in this section the words 'disability' and 'disabilities' refers to all disabilities)

19. Does your YOT do any disability awareness training? YES/NO/DON'T KNOW

a. If YES, please tick to indicate which of the following are included/not included or whether you are unsure:

	Included	Not included	Unsure
Learning disabilities			
Specific learning difficulties, e.g. dyslexia			
Communication/speech and language difficulties			
Mental health problems			
ADHD			
Autistic spectrum disorder			
Disability Discrimination Act and Disability Equality Duty			
Other, please say:			

20. Do YOT staff receive any specific training on the identification of particular health needs or special educational needs that need to be further assessed or acted upon? YES/NO/DON'T KNOW

a. If YES, please say what specific training is covered and by who:

21. Thinking about young offenders with disabilities, and in addition to your YOTs ASSET improvement plan, can you think of any further training or support that would assist YOT staff in completing the ASSET? YES/NO

a. If YES, please say what:

22. Is there anybody in your YOT who holds a brief for young people with disabilities? YES/NO/DON'T KNOW

a. If YES, what is their job-title:

Statistics and record keeping

23. Note: this question relates to all disabilities. Does your YOT keep any statistics on numbers of young offenders with disabilities? YES/NO/DON'T KNOW.

a. If YES, do you know how many young people currently on an order at your YOT, including on a final warning, have a disability? YES/NO

b. If YES, please say how many:

i. Expressed as a number:

ii. Expressed as a percentage:

24. The Disability Discrimination Act (2005) requires local authorities to prepare a Disability Equality Scheme. Distinct units within the local authority are sometimes required to create their own action plan within a generic local authority Disability Equality Scheme.

a. Does your YOT have an action plan? YES/NO/DON'T KNOW

b. Does your local authority reflect your YOT's actions in its own Disability Equality Scheme? YES/NO/DON'T KNOW

Challenges and recommendations for change

25. What do you think are the greatest difficulties faced by young offenders with:

Learning disabilities (or low IQ):
Specific learning difficulties, e.g. dyslexia:
Communication difficulties/speech and language difficulties:
Mental health problems:
ADHD:
Autistic spectrum disorder:
Low levels of literacy:

a. What would most help you in working with young offenders with the above impairments and difficulties?

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26. What recommendations for change would you make?

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27. In your opinion, are young offenders with the following impairments or difficulties more likely or less likely than young offenders without such impairments or difficulties to end up receiving a custodial sentence?

	More likely to receive a custodial sentence	Less likely to receive a custodial sentence	No difference
Learning disabilities (or low IQ)			
Specific learning difficulties, e.g. dyslexia			
Communication difficulties/speech and language difficulties			
Mental health problems			
ADHD			
Autistic spectrum disorder			
Low levels of literacy			

Good practice or work of which you are proud

28. Please describe any good practice or work of which you are proud for young offenders with any of the following: learning disabilities (low IQ), learning difficulties, communication difficulties, mental health problems, ADHD, autistic spectrum disorder, low levels of literacy:

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29. Please add any other comments you wish to make:

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Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

Jenny Talbot
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