

# *Working in partnership with communities to reduce youth offending*



*(A baseline report of community based projects supported by  
Young Persons Probation and the Irish Youth Justice Service)*



<i>Foreword</i> .....	2
<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	3
<i>Executive Summary</i> .....	4
<i>Section 1 Introduction</i> .....	7
<b>Value for Money and Policy Review</b> .....	9
<b>Undertaking the YPP project review</b> .....	10
<b>SUMMARY DESCRIPTIONS OF YPP PROJECTS PARTICIPATING IN THE REVIEW</b> .....	13
<i>Section 2 Youth crime in Ireland</i> .....	18
<b>YPP projects’ experience of youth crime</b> .....	20
<b>Young persons presenting behaviours and circumstances</b> .....	22
<b>Probation Service perspective</b> .....	25
<i>Section 3 The Current Response</i> .....	29
<b>Outcomes intended by YPP projects</b> .....	30
<b>The portfolio of YPP project</b> .....	33
<i>Section 4 Discussion</i> .....	40
<i>Section 5 Conclusion / Recommendations</i> .....	44
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	44
<b>Recommendations</b> .....	45
Appendix A: Probation Service – Value For Money Report. ....	49
Appendix B: Rationale for structure of interview. ....	51
Appendix C : Project funding in 2009.....	53
Appendix D: Example of Diagnostic Model developed in Garda Youth Diversion Projects.....	54
Appendix E: Pro-forma for Logic model .....	55
Appendix F : Online Forum abstract - YJForum.....	56
Bibliography.....	57
End Notes .....	59

# Foreword

We know that most youth crime is transitory. Long term data provided by An Garda Síochána show clearly that most offending behaviour involving young people begins to decline once a young person reaches their twenties and takes on the normal social responsibilities of citizenship. These facts support our general approach to youth crime which is to ensure that young people are accountable for their behaviour but additionally recognises that their future prospects as fully active members of the community can be significantly hampered by undue exposure to the formal criminal justice system and the acquisition of a criminal record.

We also know that this is not the full picture. A minority of young people engage in offending behaviour that is less amenable to stopping and runs the danger of continuing as career crime into adulthood.

Irrespective of whether crime is a short or long term phenomenon for young people, it is a serious matter for the members of the community at the receiving end of offending behaviour. While our emphasis is on dealing with young people who offend by way of community interventions and sanctions, increasingly the public investment demands better impact in terms of improved behaviour as an appropriate counter-balance to restricting the use of detention.

The Irish Youth Justice Service is responsible for ensuring the effective development and execution of strategy in relation to reducing youth crime and facilitating the effective co-ordination of effort by all stakeholders involved in this area of work. The Probation Service more specifically occupies a central role in delivering court ordered community sanctions and bringing about change in the behaviour of young people involved in offending behaviour.

This report focuses on the important role played by the community based organisations which support the Probation Service in this strategic effort. Young people caught up in offending behaviour often experience complex and problematic personal and social circumstances. These circumstances present young people and the professionals working with them with significant challenges in terms of making a positive impact. The report acknowledges gains that organisations have made to date and provides coherent vision for future practice, specifying outcome areas where effort should be deployed to bring about behavioural improvements in the young people involved.

The Probation Service and Irish Youth Justice Service are fully committed to actively supporting the community based organisations to bring about these improvements.

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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# Executive Summary

The National Youth Justice Strategy 2008-2010 was launched in March 2008 with a mission to *'create a safer society by working in partnership to reduce youth offending through appropriate interventions and linkages into services'*

The strategy provides for an incremental approach to dealing with young people who offend by way of diversion<sup>1</sup>, court ordered community penalties<sup>2</sup> and for a small number of children where offending is so serious or persistent, detention<sup>3</sup> as a last resort.

High Level Goal 3 of the National Youth Justice Strategy has a deliberate focus; *'To promote the greater use of community sanctions and initiatives to deal with young people who offend'*, and more specifically, the *'review and audit of existing programmes and the ongoing development of enhancements to existing Community Based Organisation programmes.....'*<sup>4</sup> Complimentary to this strategic goal the Probation Service mission states that it will *'provide high quality assessment of offenders and a professional and effective management of services and supports to bring about positive change in the behaviour of offenders'*.<sup>5</sup>

Also in 2008 the Department of Justice, Equality, and Law Reform<sup>6</sup> undertook a comprehensive Value For Money (VFM) review of Probation Service funded community based projects. Since publication of this report all Probation-funded projects have been engaged in a programme of change led by a team within the Probation Service which ensures that all the projects have objectives which are strategically aligned with those of the Probation Service.

In 2007 funding responsibility for community projects falling within the strategic remit of the new specialised Young Persons Probation (YPP) division of the Probation Service was transferred to the Irish Youth Justice Service. Beyond the responsibilities inherent in relation to funding accountability, the direct governance relationship and business planning process is managed by the Probation Service

This report should be considered in the context of the VFM report; specifically addressing improved performance. The report considers the evidence about what

we know about youth crime in Ireland (by interrogation of the available data) and referencing these findings in relation to the rationale forwarded by YPP projects for interventions which intend to improve outcomes for young people. The report outlines a development process to further improve crime reduction outcomes which will be of benefit to young people and communities alike.

YPP PROJECTs are not a homogeneous group of services and to some extent defy coherent description, at least in terms of their activity. The report attempts thematically to capture the complexities inherent in the challenges faced by YPP projects by considering the ways that they deploy effort in the context of improved outcomes for young people. The review is necessarily future focussed given the current absence of outcome data to conduct a performance review.

Report format -

- Section 1 sets the scene by locating YPP projects within the wider criminal justice system.
- Section 2 considers some of the key and relevant issues relating to youth crime in Ireland.
- Section 3 presents the current response by projects to the challenges presented by young people's offending behaviour and their personal circumstances.
- Section 4 discusses the findings of the review and presents four strategic proposals intended to improve performance.
- Section 5 has the Conclusion and Recommendations.

The report presents proposals outlining how YPP projects can develop into the future in terms of improved performance. It is recommended that all stakeholders in this process, including the Irish Youth Justice Service and the Probation Service sign up to the programme of change identified in the report. The change programme identifies four proposals.

The first proposal attempts to improve the coherence of the YPP project *portfolio* by distinguishing between those providers which **are more specialist** and those which are more **developmental**. This proposal suggests different strategic questions to be applied to each of these groups in terms of future service demand and development.

The second proposal outlines a process for services to be more data driven to ensure further alignment with Probation Service objectives and to focus practice in pursuit of improved outcomes for young people.

The third proposal identifies a support and development plan to assist projects to improve performance.

The fourth proposal suggests a means for certain YPP projects to engage in an intensive change programme to further develop evidence-led interventions that demonstrate their contribution to reducing crime.

In making suggestions about moving forward it could be inferred that the services referred to in the review are in some way deficient or unsatisfactory. This is not the case. Each service has a clear and meaningful logic for its current configuration. The improvements outlined in this report, many of which were generated by the organisations themselves, intend to build on the current capacity and improve performance in the interests of the young people and communities they serve.

# Section 1 Introduction

The National Youth Justice Strategy 2008-2010 places responsibility on the Irish Youth Justice Service, in partnership with the Probation Service to 'promote the use of non-custodial interventions with children who have offended or are at risk of offending to address their offending behaviour....'<sup>7</sup> and within this objective to review existing programmes provided by projects and contribute to their future development.

The Probation Service is in partnership with 66 Community Based Organisations (CBO) to provide services on its behalf to clients of the Probation Service and others considered *at risk* of offending in local communities across the country<sup>8</sup>. A smaller group of these CBOs are funded by the Irish Youth Justice Service (IYJS) and fall within the management remit of Young Persons Probation (YPP).

Alongside the establishment of YPP the Probation Service, in its strategic preparation for the full implementation of the Children Act 2001, also sought to enhance its relationship with projects to ensure the provision of an infrastructure allowing for court ordered community sanctions. It should also be noted that some projects provide services to a wider group of marginalised young people at risk. The longest established YPP project has been in operation since 1976 with the most recent commencing in 2009.

By way of context, approximately 395,000 young people aged 12-17 yrs (inc.) live in Ireland<sup>9</sup> or 9 percent of the total population of 4.2 million. Within this population the Irish youth justice system, in keeping with the philosophy of the Children Act 2001 responds incrementally to acts of wrongdoing. Approximately 5 percent of the 12-17 yr population or between 18,500-20,000 young people, who are detected for crime each year, are considered for admission to the Diversion Programme administered by An Garda Síochána<sup>10</sup>. Approximately 1,000 young people who are prosecuted are assessed on behalf of the court by the Probation Service (see below) 279 young people (or <0.01 percent of the total youth population) were



committed by the Children Courts to detention in either a detention school or St. Patrick's Institution in 2009<sup>11</sup>.

In 2009 IYJS allocated €3,886,976 to YPP projects. In this year YPP projects delivered services to some 555 individuals of which 481 (or 87 percent) were direct referrals from the Probation Service<sup>12</sup>. According to Probation Service statistics the proportion of project referrals sourced directly from the Service varied from 58 percent to 100 percent with most remaining referrals deriving from agencies falling within the remit of the IYJS <sup>13</sup>i.e. young people engaged with the broader criminal justice system or at risk of entering it. However in terms of estimating a reasonable baseline for future service demand for YPP projects ; it is worth considering that in 2009 the courts ordered almost 1,100 reports from the Probation Service (see figure 1) in relation to young people<sup>14</sup> and required 876 court ordered services<sup>15</sup> (although 75 of these orders were for specific ring-fenced orders)<sup>16</sup>.

**Figure 1**

<b>Young Persons Assessment Reports Requested</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>
<b>(also included in overall figure)</b>		
Pre Sanction Reports	912	1038
Community Service Reports	36	42
Pre-Sanction Reports to consider Community Service	10	18
<b>Supervision of Young Persons (also included in overall figure)</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>
Orders for Supervision	380	383
Community Service Orders	41	43
Orders for Supervision during Deferment of Penalty	304	418
Family Conference Referrals	35	32

(Source IYJS Annual report 2009)

In terms of strategic positioning, the VFM report (see below) makes it clear that the project role is 'to support the service in the effective management of offenders in the community ...' although certain license in terms of preventative intervention is inherent in any work with younger offenders. In practice the levels of demand are not so clear cut; however the court activity data provides a useful reference point.

### **VALUE FOR MONEY AND POLICY REVIEW**

In 2008 the Department of Justice, Equality, and Law Reform published its Value for Money and Policy Review on projects funded by the Probation Service (VFM report). It is not the purpose of this report to re-state the analysis and findings from this comprehensive review. It is sufficient for the purposes of this report to state that:-

- a) The findings from the VFM report encompass the work of projects funded by IYJS
  
- b) Many of the findings of the VFM report particularly in terms of the diversity of provision and need for coherent performance measurement resonate with the findings of this report and
  
- c) The recommendations contained in this YPP review fall within the scope of the VFM report in terms of its general governance arrangements, intending to add further value in terms of project performance.

Since 2008 each YPP project has been engaged with a business planning team set up by the Probation Service following publication of the VFM report, to implement the 12 recommendations (see appendix A). A key focus of the initial work has been to align YPP projects activities, outputs, and outcomes with those of the Probation Service (recommendations 1-8)<sup>17</sup> with remaining recommendations 9-12 dealing with funding commitments and transferring outcome commitments into performance measurement.

Despite the diversity of provision, the focus on positively engaging young people who are developing problematic offending patterns is broadly acknowledged by YPP projects, although clearer data is needed in some cases to evidence this. The added value of this review focuses upon considering current practice in the context of a statistical and qualitative analysis of youth crime and the construction of a finite number of outcome measures consistent with project competence and analysis of relevant research literature.

#### **UNDERTAKING THE YPP PROJECT REVIEW**

The field work for the review took place May 2009- January 2010. Fourteen of the eighteen YPP projects participated<sup>18</sup>. The Assistant Director for YPP and Head of Young Offender Programmes (IYJS) facilitated site meetings held in the premises of each participating project. Present at all meetings were project staff and management with detailed knowledge of the young people engaged by the project in addition to relevant Probation Service representatives.

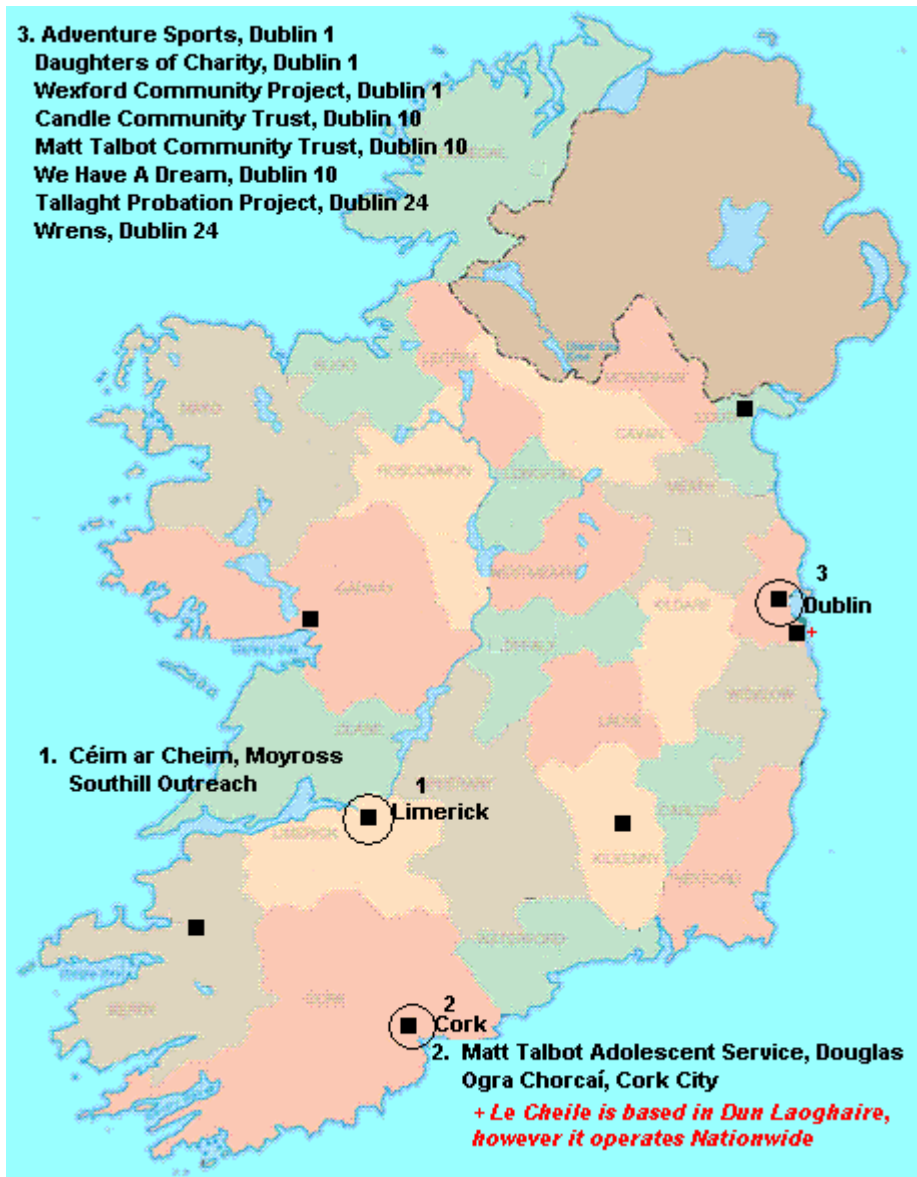
Critically the focus of the exercise related to the projects analysis of the challenges presented by youth crime **within the specific catchment area that it served**<sup>19</sup> and its *stated intent* or logic in terms of what it believed could be done to improve the situation. This discussion deliberately steered clear of a description of project activities, which out of context leaves little capacity to differentiate between strong and weak interventions.

Each interview consisted of a semi structured discussion which lasted for approximately 2 hours. The structure of the conversation was as follows<sup>20</sup>

- i. *Size of catchment area;*
- ii. *Basic list of offences committed by juveniles;*
- iii. *Perceived patterns of youth crime in the area / or committed by young people referred to the project;*
- iv. *The profiles of young people committing these offences;*
- v. *The improvement(s) that the project is trying to make to change the situation;*
- vi. *The project's logic for seeking these improvements*

A record of each meeting was prepared by the Irish Youth Justice Service. This record was submitted to the project for verification of its accuracy. All records were amended where necessary and verified by interview participants and Irish Youth Justice Service. Meeting records formed the substance of the analysis referenced where necessary with supporting data and academic references

**Figure 1**  
**Geographical distribution of projects**



## **SUMMARY DESCRIPTIONS OF YPP PROJECTS PARTICIPATING IN THE REVIEW<sup>21</sup>**

### **Adventure Sports (Est. 1983)**

Adventure Sports provides group and one-to-one activities for young people at risk of offending in Dublin's north inner city<sup>22</sup> either voluntarily or under the auspices of a Training and Activity Order. The project has a well established community development presence in this locality, as a consequence any formal referrals are usually known to the project. IYJS allocated €103,400 to Adventure Sports in 2009 constituting 22 percent of its operating costs. Referrals originate from a number of sources, including self referral. However profile information regarding the young participants indicate a significant number are involved in the criminal justice system.

### **Aislinn Centre (Est. 1998)**

The Aislinn Centre offers a national residential drug treatment service, based on the Minnesota model, to young people with problematic drug addiction. A significant number of the young people are involved in the criminal justice system. However the referral base is broader, accepting referrals through other agencies including private admissions.. IYJS allocated €300,000 to Aislinn in 2009 amounting to 22 percent of its operating costs. In 2009 thirty three young people accepted on to the Aislinn programme were referred by the Probation Service as part of its management of a Probation Order and other orders of the Courts.

### **Dóchas Don Óige (Est. 1996)**

Dóchas don Óige provides services to young people at risk of offending behaviour or involved in offending behaviour across Galway City.<sup>23</sup> The project offers training and education with FETAC accreditation combined with interventions to assist in reducing offending behaviour. This service can be provided under the auspices of a Training and Activities community sanction. IYJS contributes 100 percent of the operating costs (€282,000 in 2009). In 2009 Dóchas Don Óige worked with 40 individual young people of which 30 were referred by the Probation Service.

### **Candle Community Trust (est. 1977)**

Candle Community Trust, designated as a Day Centre under the Children Act, 2001, provides services to young people involved in offending behaviour or at risk of offending behaviour, from the Ballyfermot, Inchicore, and Clondalkin area of Dublin<sup>24</sup>. Many of the young people currently engaged by Candle were involved in a less formal drop-in centre at a younger age. The service offers a combination of training (training workshop) and therapeutic inputs (Connect Project). IYJS allocated €356,347 or 56 percent of operational funding in 2009. In 2009 thirty four referrals originated from the Probation Service amounting to 60 percent of its total workload.

### **Céim ar Chéim (est. 2000)**

Céim ar Chéim provides a service for young people mainly from the Northside of Limerick, more specifically the communities of Moyross, Kilealy and Thomondgate.<sup>25</sup> Referrals for the service originate almost exclusively from the Probation Service providing for a range of community sanctions under the Children act, 2001. IYJS allocated €540,000 or 100 percent contribution toward running costs in 2009. In 2009 eighteen referrals originated from the Probation service constituting almost 100 percent of the workload.

### **Cox's Demesne (Est. 1991)**

Cox's Demesne provides a service for young people mainly but not exclusively from the Dundalk and wider Louth area. There are two thresholds of service The *Second Chance Project* for young people involved in risky behaviour and failing in school. The *Gaining Ground Project* was established in 2008 to meet more complex needs of young people considered to be moderate to high risk by a Probation Officer and subject to a community sanction under the Children Act or other orders of the Court. IYJS allocated €168,231 or 22 percent of the running

costs of Cox's Demesne in 2009. In 2009 eighteen referrals originated from the Probation Service.

### **Daughters of Charity - St. Vincent's Trust (Est. 1976)**

The Daughters of Charity service, provides a Community Training Workshop for young people in Dublin's North inner-city (mainly but not exclusively Dublin 1 and Dublin 7). The service offers 60 places for young people, each placement having a 2 year duration, providing a therapeutic input from a central support team in addition to the core employment training. IYJS allocated €216,000 or 72 percent of running costs in 2009. In the same year eight referrals originated directly from the Probation Service. However the profiles of the majority of young people using the service indicate a high level of contact with the criminal justice system. Referrals from Juvenile Liaison Officers, National Education Welfare Board, local schools and the HSE for unattached young people are also accepted.

### **Kerry Adolescent Counselling (Est. 1998)**

Kerry Adolescent Counselling service is available to young people across Kerry, although 50% of referrals originate from Tralee and surrounding area. The substance of the counselling support provided to each young person is influenced by issues raised in assessment by the Probation Officer. IYJS allocated €103,400 to Kerry Adolescent Counselling Service in 2009 constituting 37 percent of its core operating costs. Ten young people were accepted as referrals from the Probation Service in 2009.

### **Le Chéile (Est. 2005)**

Le Chéile provides a mentor service to young people involved with the Probation Service. Many of the young people are subject to the Mentoring Order under the Children Act, 2001. In addition Le Cheile provides parent mentoring and delivers



the *Strengthening Families* programme. Le Cheile has increased its service in response to demands by Probation Officers and courts.. The service now has a significant reach across the country<sup>26</sup>. IYJS allocated €1,244,125 to le Chéile in 2009. Le Chéile worked with 195 young people in 2009, 100 percent of these referrals originated from the Probation Service.

### **Matt Talbot (Est. 1999)**

Matt Talbot offers two services which are grant supported by IYJS. The service included in this review<sup>27</sup> is a specialist drug treatment service based in Cork, servicing Cork City and county. IYJS allocated €112,000 or 6 percent toward the running costs of Matt Talbot Drug Treatment service in 2009. Fifty percent of young people serviced by Matt Talbot drug treatment service are referred as a consequence of involvement in criminal behaviour where drug use is the key risk or complicating factor.

### **Ógra Chorcaí Day Centre. (Est. 2009)**

The Ógra Chorcaí Day Centre (Westview), provides interventions to young people involved with the Probation Service across Cork City. It is a designated Day Centre under the Children Act, 2001 The service provides an individualised programme for each young person based on an assessment undertaken by a Probation Officer. IYJS allocated €184,434 or 100 percent of the running costs in 2009. Referrals to Westview, (23 in 2009) originate exclusively from the Probation Service.

### **Southill Outreach (Est.1990)**

Southill Outreach was established in 1990 as a community based organisation and operates throughout Limerick City. It was set up to primarily engage young people (a) who are at risk of becoming involved in crime and anti-social behaviour, (b) who

are currently at the judicial stage and (c) who are in detention centres where both pre and post release supports are provided. The main aim of the project is social inclusion through a range of social and recreational activities, these activities support the reintroduction to more formal, and structured education and training programmes operated by its partners. These programmes are conducted alongside one to one work and counselling. The target group is 12–18 year olds with possible follow through, support for young adults up to age 23 . IYJS provided funding of €415,480 in 2009 which was 100 percent of the running cost.

### **Wexford Centre (Est. 1991)**

The Wexford Centre offers a residential facility in County Wexford for young people identified as 'at risk' in Dublin's north inner-city with the intent that it will provide them with a safe opportunity for new experiences. IYJS allocated €103,400 or 66 percent of the running costs in 2009. The facility is used on a continual basis by up to 22 youth groups in the locality and is otherwise accessed by a number of referral routes including the Probation Service and local Garda Youth Diversion Projects.

### **W.H.A.D (Est. 1988)**

W.H.A.D. (*We Have A Dream*) provides services for young people at risk of offending in Ballyfermot, Cherry Orchard, Neilstown and Clondalkin<sup>28</sup>. WHAD provides off campus activities such as kayaking, caving etc for young people involved with the Probation Service as a means to engage young people in pro-social relationships and broaden their reference from the immediate neighbourhood. W.H.A.D. provides assistance to YPP in the management of Training and Activity orders under the Children Act 2001, and other Court orders. IYJS allocated €122,200 to W.H.A.D. in 2009 amounting to 100 percent of its operating costs. W.H.A.D accepted eighteen referrals in 2009, seventeen of these originated from the Probation Service.

## Section 2 Youth crime in Ireland

The 2009 report '*Designing Effective Local Responses to Youth Crime*<sup>29</sup>' demonstrates the value in commencing any discussion about interventions designed to reduce youth offending with a factual analysis of youth crime itself; particularly how it manifests itself in the local communities where the services in question operate. Starting with the 'facts' provides a focus for subsequent discussion regarding interventions. Inevitably any analysis of performance will have to account for how any intervention will demonstrably impact the behaviour of a young person within a particular local context.

The national picture in relation to detected youth crime<sup>30</sup> is captured in the annual report which monitors the performance of the Diversion Programme<sup>31</sup>. The report of performance in 2009 demonstrates that the majority of youth related crime incidents involve (what are typically called) *anti-social behaviour*<sup>32</sup> (42%), theft (16.6%) and road traffic offences (13%). This grouping of offences represents a total of 71% of all youth crime<sup>33</sup>. It is a profile significantly different from adult crime as indicated by comparisons between offences listed for 12-17 year olds and 25-30 year olds from 2009 PULSE records (see figure 2)

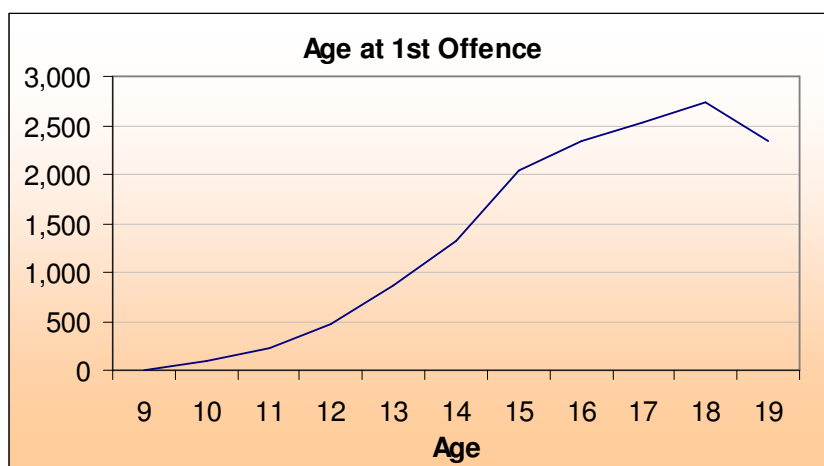
**Figure 2**

<b>Offence Type</b>	<b>12-17 yrs (n=28,264)</b>	<b>25-30 yrs (n=71,216)</b>
Public Order Offences	20%	11%
Theft from Shop	12%	5%
Criminal Damage (Not by Fire)	12%	2%
Road and Traffic Offences	6%	39%
Trespassing in Yard or Curtilage	5%	1%
Minor Assault	5%	2%
Burglary	5%	2%
Unauthorised Taking (Vehicle)	2%	1%
Handling / Possession of Stolen Property	1%	1%

Source PULSE 2009

An analysis of the PULSE data for the period 1999-2009<sup>34</sup> clearly indicates that the majority of young people involved in offending behaviour will desist their offending behaviour in their early twenties. This *actuarial* data falls short of explaining why or how youth offending patterns tail off although increased maturation and the acquisition of responsibilities tied to adulthood is hypothesised to play a major part. In this respect the age/crime curve in Ireland (see figure 3) is similar to neighbouring jurisdictions and provides sound underpinning for responses such as the Diversion Programme and the restriction of detention for those exceptional circumstances where it is deemed necessary. However transitory this behaviour, it still negatively affects the quality of life of those members of the community at the receiving end. Therefore interventions to moderate the effects of this behaviour as well as expedite its cessation are necessary.

**Figure 3**

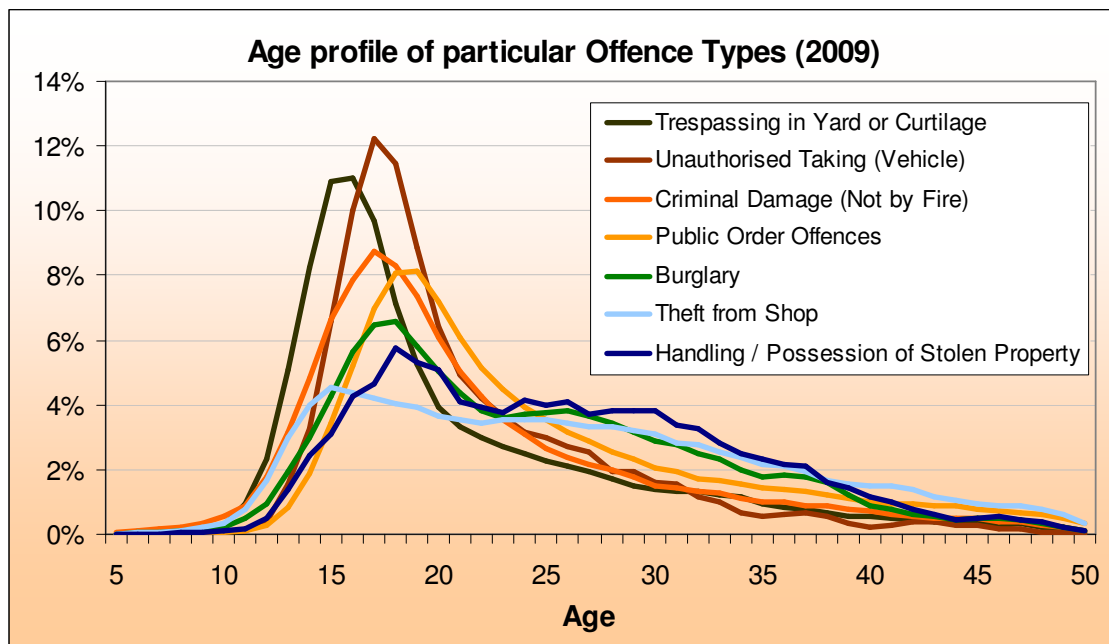


**Source:** PULSE  
1999-2009  
N = 14,986

Nevertheless, the data does not support a view that *all* children and young people simply 'grow out' of youth crime. Further quantitative analysis of PULSE discloses that there are certain behaviours which are more resistant to change. **Figure 4** provides a snapshot of all offences committed in 2009 by age and offence descriptors. A more resistant trend is indicated by a flatter peak and less pronounced tail-off and appears to be typified by offences where the overriding motive is financial gain as opposed to thrill seeking. This analysis is only one way of looking at the data but it clearly shows that there is a degree of complexity

underneath the age/crime curve which requires more detailed scrutiny and assessment. Local qualitative accounts of youth crime indicate a range of factors ranging from a young person's individual attitudes and behaviours, intellectual capacity, school performance, family circumstances, choice of friends and the influence of other adults within a particular neighbourhood that can serve to entrench and prolong offending behaviour.

**Figure 4**



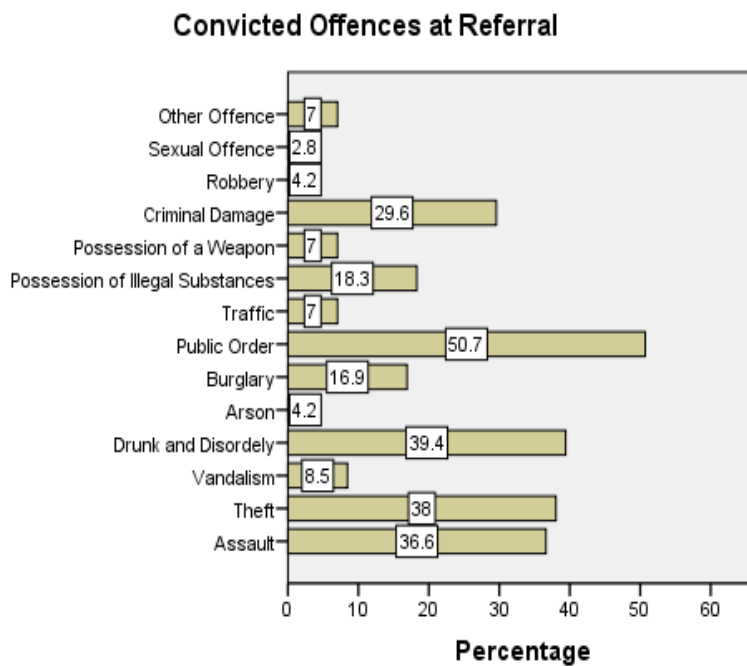
Source PULSE 2009  
N=87,772

**YPP PROJECTS' EXPERIENCE OF YOUTH CRIME**

As would be expected, the majority offence clusters identified in national trends are reflected in the experience of YPP projects. When organisations were asked to cite the most frequent offences committed by young people referred, eleven of the fourteen cited theft, although this was not confined to shop theft<sup>35</sup>. Thirteen projects cited public order crime, often linked with alcohol, in many cases directed at members of An Garda Síochána and on some occasions to intimidate other members of the community.

However there was also a significant presentation of less typical or more serious offences, suggesting a targeting toward young people engaged more deeply in offending behaviour in terms of frequency and /or seriousness. Some projects were able to evidence this clearly by producing analysis relating to aggregated risk assessments provided by Probation Officers.

**Figure 5 Example of offence analysis provided by one project**



Thirteen projects cited drugs use/ possession and five of these identified additionally that young people were directly involved in drugs supply. Eight projects cited unlawful taking / theft of motor vehicle and eight projects cited burglary.

It is arguable that this latter cluster of offences requires higher levels of risk taking, more technical expertise and/or necessitates third party assistance to facilitate and support their occurrence. Drug sale necessitates some degree of organisation to support transactions and generate income. In addition an associated dynamic attracting young men (in particular) toward neighbourhood notoriety is evident in some localities. One project stated

*'.. this ability for young people to secure a source of income (from drugs) can cause particular difficulties for the project in its attempt to engage....'*

Another project cited the significance of criminal gangs in recruiting and retaining young people to sell drugs. These young people frequently become involved in coercive debt recovery from users and suppliers who owe money local criminal networks. From discussions with project staff, *burglaries* often require adult support and availability of sell-on opportunities. The net effect is that young people involved in these types of behaviours present particularly complex challenges for project staff in terms of helping the young person to desist from their offending behaviour.<sup>36</sup>

### **YOUNG PERSONS' PRESENTING BEHAVIOURS AND CIRCUMSTANCES**

There is now a well established body of research outlining factors which appear to be associated with increasing the likelihood of offending behaviour (*risk factors*) and those associated with sheltering the young person to various degrees from these risks (*protective factors*)<sup>37</sup>. A number of academics challenge the veracity of claims made in what has been termed risk science<sup>38</sup>. However the experience in Ireland suggests that there is a degree of validity in the cautious application of a theoretical framework which includes reference to risk and protective factors<sup>39</sup>.

Factors relating to a young person's anti-social attitudes, impulsiveness, and low empathy; parents' effectiveness and specifically their role in cultivating pro-social behaviours were all evident in the discussions with participating YPP projects and Probation Officers. Additionally the roles of delinquent friendship network, family and neighbourhood groups in elevating risk taking behaviour, facilitating criminal activity and under-pinning anti-social attitudes featured particularly in those situations where offending behaviour becomes more entrenched. Nevertheless the experience of most projects is that young people have the capacity to act pro-socially but face significant barriers in demonstrating more acceptable behaviours due to their personal and social circumstances. However it is important to note that acting pro-socially in a high crime environment can mark a young person out as being different.

Project descriptions of young people in terms of their individual behaviours and attitudes suggest that staff are presented with significant and overt challenges in terms of improving pro-social behaviour. Projects described young people with little capacity to deal with everyday problem solving without some form of anti-social presentation perhaps typified by a '*short-fuse*' response. Staff described more specifically young people with poor emotional literacy, limited ability to manage anger or aggression, a tendency toward impulsiveness, lacking the capacity for reflection, good judgement and empathy towards others. One project reflected in its experience that when young people present with poor self identity they often find it difficult to be considerate or demonstrate 'empathy' towards others.

Of equal significance is that many young people see little wrong with their offending behaviour and consequently show little motivation toward change. Mental health issues and learning disability were also seen as playing both direct and indirect roles in offending behaviour. A logical linkage exists where young people with learning disability become disaffected with school, drop out of school, and become vulnerable to delinquent peer groups. However, this is not the whole picture. Despite many young people presenting with a poor attitude to authority most projects believe that given a more supportive environment young people have the capacity to behave more pro-socially.

Widespread drug (and alcohol) usage is significant feature in most project's offending analysis, manifesting itself in

- the way that young people use their leisure time;
- directly elevating youthful misbehaviour into more serious public order crime;
- offending prompted by the need to service a habit or a debt deriving from addiction;
- the promise of an attractive lifestyle for young males to achieve neighbourhood notoriety;
- Becoming involved in activity designed to coerce payment of drug debts.



Commenting on how normalised drug usage had become in the locality one project referred to young people taking joints like they would a packet of crisps.

At least ten projects specifically cited *education* as a key issue of concern manifesting in poor school attendance and behaviour to the degree that many young people are effectively excluded from large parts of mainstream school activity. Projects reported a significant lack of expectation in terms of educational performance by young people themselves but also by parents (see below). A small number of projects indicated young people with a lower than normal intellectual capacity adding another level of complexity in sustaining affection for school.

Projects also reported the effects of a *negative peer or friendship network* in terms of elevating and facilitating offending behaviour but also in the sustenance of anti-social attitudes and antipathy toward authority figures, suggesting delayed desistance of offending behaviour. The fact that in a number of projects (particularly those with local or neighbourhood based catchment areas), many of the young people were part of long established delinquent friendship networks prior to referral means additional challenges in terms of effecting change. In certain more established projects there was a clear multi-generational dynamic with projects reporting relationships with parents and grandparents of current young service users.

All projects specifically cited *family* as a key factor in either increasing or decreasing the likelihood of offending behaviour. 'Family' as risk or protective influence presents in a number of different ways, for instance:

- The capacity of parents to promote the healthy social, emotional and physical development of their children;
- The degree of nurturing experience of home life for children;
- The role of parents in developing attitudinal norms in young people; and
- The active engagement (or not) of parents and other family members in criminal activity.

At least eleven projects indicated situations where parenting was ineffective, where parents had effectively relinquished responsibility for effective supervision and/or where young people experienced violence as a norm in the home. Seven projects reported circumstances where parents and/or family networks were actively complicit in offending behaviour, excessive drug, and alcohol use or more generally in promoting anti-social attitudes. Nevertheless projects also experienced parents taking responsibility and trying their best in often very difficult circumstances to effect change in the young person's behaviour.

In a small number of situations problematic family influence was under-pinned by an added negative *neighbourhood* influence. Though such situations are comparatively rare this particular relationship inverts the traditional youth crime/community dichotomy i.e. the young person offending against the community, to the community (or certain influential elements within the community) encouraging or coercing the young person into criminal behaviour. In these circumstances the considerable motivation, skill, judgement, and luck required for a young person to successfully negotiate such risk should not be under-estimated. Projects reported that young people who have decided on a pro-social trajectory also have to manage an essential ambiguity, to stand apart from the crowd while maintaining life-long relationships with young people who may be involved in serious offending in their home communities.

#### **PROBATION SERVICE PERSPECTIVE**

Implicit in the VFM report recommendations is a view that that the best functioning YPP projects will operate where there is a high degree of synchronicity between the referring Probation Officer and the professionals involved in service provision. This is a view shared by the authors of this report. It follows therefore that any exercise designed to improve effectiveness of projects should also serve to support or improve (rather than diminish) this relationship. Eliciting the opinions of Probation Service practitioners in terms of service design ideas for projects provides a dual benefit for the purposes of this review. It provides an opportunity to exploit the considerable organisational wisdom held within the Probation Service in relation to '*what works*' and an opportunity to gauge the distance between

current services provided by projects and proposals regarding future Probation Service preference informed by the available evidence.

As part of this review a meeting was held with Probation Service first line managers – (Senior Probation Officers). This particular management group was selected for its strategic positioning within the Probation Service at the juncture of practice, operational management, and organisational strategy; in addition to its holding key relationships with management of the various YPP projects.

As a general observation the group believed that project service designs should be based on sound evidence sourced from relevant crime data, clinical risk related data contained in YLS/CMI assessments<sup>40</sup> and project service related performance data in addition to relevant research literature. However, it should be noted that such evidence driven process presumes uniformity in the way that data is recorded, collated, stored, shared, and analysed.

Certain proposals raised by Senior Probation Officers related specifically to focusing attention on achieving a limited number of key outcomes for young people which are linked to reducing offending behaviour:

- Improved engagement and motivation;
- Improved empathy;
- Improved pro-social behaviour and motivation.

in addition to more specific and tangible outcomes, for example education and training credentials.

However the importance of being realistic about expectations was stressed. Bearing in mind the outcomes referred to above, it was recognised that considerable effort sometimes has to be deployed in merely engaging a young person in a particular programme of interventions. It is also recognised (while it may not secure the ideal outcome), that there is a value in securing a dynamic

relationship with the young person<sup>41</sup> even if attempts to engage others key actors in the young person's life, particularly parents, prove counterproductive.

In terms of operations the meeting believed that there should be a clear expectation that case plans agreed between Probation Officers and project professionals are followed through. For example an overall plan to improve pro-social orientation and improve empathy geared toward reducing offending behaviour, should be able to accommodate short term welfare crises. It was felt that applying disproportionate effort to responding to short term needs can de-rail longer term plans designed to reduce offending behaviour or take plans off in a new trajectory without an opportunity for professionals to stand back and review.

This expectation of course implies a reciprocal responsibility a) upon the Probation Officer to be clear in their assessment about what type of service is required and b) for the project to implement the service as agreed. Furthermore where any significant departure from an agreed plan is intended this should be subject to a formal 'change control' process involving the Probation Officer.

Scaled up, the logic of this proposal demands a similar change control process at project management level where there is an intention to re-orientate the projects strategic direction or significantly depart from a service model agreed with the Probation Service. In real terms the effective leverage of the Probation Service to ensure effective execution of its expectations may be somewhat moderated by the level of Probation Service investment as a percentage of overall project running costs. However as communicated in the VFM review the principle of commissioning responsibility held by the Probation Service in relation to its project partnerships is an important one. While discussed exhaustively in the VFM report in terms of assuring appropriate architecture to align services to the Probation Service it is appropriate to reiterate here in the context of improved outcomes.

The Senior Probation Officer group convened for this review were generally optimistic in terms of future developments for projects adding that current high performing practice should be championed and showcased. Importantly the vision articulated by the Senior Probation Officer group quite clearly mirrors much of the

analysis provided earlier in the section by projects in terms of setting out current challenges and, as is evident in the next section, a proposed course for future development.

## Section 3 The Current Response

The following analysis is thematic and while it attempts to capture the substance and diversity of responses to interviews with staff it does not refer to specific projects. The discussion regarding *current responses* to youth offending followed each projects detailed offence analysis of its catchment.

Project staff were asked:

*'Bearing in mind your own analysis of offending behaviour and the presenting profile of young people within your catchment area, what positive difference are you intending to make to improve the chances that a young person will desist their offending behaviour?'*

Some services due to their professional focus pursue discrete outcomes, *particularly with reference to reduction in drugs use*. Others balance either a recreational or educational function with specific interventions designed to reduce offending behaviour. In this regard it is important to recognise that a breakthrough in a young person's addiction may well be their most significant milestone to reducing their offending behaviour. Likewise a young person's re-engagement with education or the discovery of a talent, particularly in the current economic circumstances, could be the beginning of a new trajectory to a law abiding life as an adult.

Given the variety of services within the group of YPP projects it is difficult to capture the entire breadth of *activity* that projects engage in. However it is the *improvement* intended by the project in terms of reducing the likelihood of a young person re-offending that is of more significance in terms of gauging the usefulness of any intervention. As indicated by the VFM report<sup>42</sup>, traditionally *'the inherent assumption is that the type of initiative or project (financially) supported, have a positive impact on the key objectives of the Probation Service....'* when in reality this may not be the case.

Even a detailed description of each project's activity provides little in the way of insight into the relative value of the individual project from a funder's or tax-payers perspective. Identifying the improvement or outcome that a project intends to secure provides a platform and a common language, permitting singular analysis of what, at face value, presents as a diverse grouping of projects. Discussion about improvements or outcomes also provides the opportunity for the Probation Service and, for its part, the Irish Youth Justice Service to be more focussed in its communications with projects regarding expectations about orientation and performance. This in turn makes it easier to present the benefits of such work to the public in terms of reducing crime.

#### **OUTCOMES INTENDED BY YPP PROJECTS**

Projects indicated a number of intended outcomes for young people; below is a selection of four of the more significant ones. While the categories may not specifically reflect each individual project's description of what it is trying to achieve, attempts have been made to preserve the essence of each response in building a meaningful composite of overall outcomes.

**Reducing impulsiveness/ improving reflection and empathy:** At least eleven projects identified interventions designed to reduce impulsiveness and/ or reciprocally to improve reflective capacity. Given the numbers of young people presenting for alcohol and drug related public order incidents often in the company of other young people; there is a clear logic in promoting an intervention which successfully encourages a young person to stop and think before acting.

In discussions with projects, it is clear that the facilitation of this cognitive process can be delivered by a range of activities and programmes in addition to the development of less formal but critical relationships with staff. Acting on impulsiveness and self reflection can help develop a capacity for critical thinking which by itself may not for example offset the influence of a delinquent friendship group but could create the psychological discomfort and dissonance required for the young person to question their current situation and seek help to make the

necessary changes. Improving reflection can also act to genuinely improve empathy, a capacity and trait well supported in the research literature as being associated with reducing the likelihood of offending behaviour<sup>43</sup>. With this outcome in mind a small number of projects expressed significant interest in further developing this area of work by way of restorative practices.

**Building pro-social relationships and creating pro-social opportunities:** At least ten projects indicated that significant effort is invested in challenging young people to take responsibility for anti-social behaviour and attitudes. Indeed most projects working philosophies require mutual respect between young people and staff, defining what acceptable and unacceptable behaviours are. During project activities staff reinforce pro-social behaviours in the young person as opportunities arise with the intention that a pro-social perspective becomes the default orientation for the young person in their day to day lives. Staff also provided examples of how pro-social opportunities were engineered by staff to permit young people to engage in acts of altruism, re-engage with education, or pursue healthy lifestyles.

**Improved motivation and self efficacy:** Nine projects indicated that staff invested significant professional time in increasing a young person's motivation to change and improving their self efficacy. The fact that many young people presented to projects with a normalised attitude to offending behaviour (where changing their behaviour seems neither logical nor desirable), means that improved motivation to genuinely engage in a change process in the first place could be considered an outcome in itself. One project indicated that it had moved away from more formal *behaviour change* programmes and shifted effort toward more individualised and family responses involving motivational techniques.. All projects were realistic about their impact; recognising that while a positive cognitive and behavioural shift may occur at the point of intervention, a young person's ability to implement their learning depended on their willingness and capacity to negotiate the multiple risks and influences they face in their own homes and neighbourhoods. No intervention can offset all the risks and influences encountered by a young person. However many projects believe that they can act



to help a young person become more thoughtful and resilient and to change their 'narrative' as an offender *if they choose to*<sup>44</sup>. Projects provided a number of case vignettes outlining how certain young people had dealt with extremely difficult circumstances relating to their offending behaviour and had successfully negotiated the negative influences to take up career or educational opportunities.

### **Improvement in the young person's circumstances:**

At least eleven projects deploy effort to try and improve the young person's circumstances (in addition to focussing on offending behaviour), usually in relation to the home situation and school or training. The previous section of this review outlined the multiple challenges presented to projects by young persons' family situations both in terms of the effectiveness of the parenting relationship and parents' variable attitude to discouraging offending behaviour. Some projects actively engage in formal programmes such as *Strengthening Families*,<sup>45</sup> others try to develop motivational and dynamic relationships on a case by case basis with parents, similar to the relationship between project and young person. The varying levels of complexity and challenge presented by different parenting and family situations demands closer attention being paid in future to the capacity of specific interventions to secure improvements<sup>46</sup>. However the systemic value of a project staff facilitating a pro-social home environment for a young person carries a substantial common sense logic not surprisingly supported by the research evidence.<sup>47</sup> In addition to family, improvement in educational performance features as the main means to impact the systems that the young person operates within. While some projects directly provide accredited education and training, others additionally act as advocates for young people and parents to sustain school and college placements and apply motivational techniques to improve the young person's performance.

### **Future outcome performance**

This presentation of activities as intended outcomes is certainly not exhaustive, nor does it claim to be the only legitimate means of categorisation. The wide range of projects activities could have been collectively analysed in different ways,

particularly in terms of outputs '*who, how many, what frequency etc*'. However in terms of moving forward and developing greater coherence from services for young people who have offended, the outcome areas highlighted above resonate significantly in projects descriptions of their own activities. Improvements in these areas also have a clear association with research evidence in terms of interventions which can help in reducing offending generally and fits what data tells us about the specific offending patterns presented by young people in Ireland. *It follows that significant organisational effort should be mobilised and aligned around this relatively small number of outcomes.*

*A question begs 'Would the average tax-payer be satisfied if YPP projects demonstrated a capacity to facilitate improvement for young people in building pro-social relationships, reducing impulsiveness, improving motivation to change, improving capacity for empathy and improving the specific circumstances which are contributing to the offending behaviour?'*

Knowing that as far as the evidence can determine, these factors contribute to reducing offending behaviour, there is strong argument for believing that this type of focus should attract support. There is also an important role for IYJS and the Probation Service in communicating to the public clear and free from jargon the connections between such activity and crime reduction. In addition focussing on a small number of straightforward outcomes allows for fair performance measurement and permits a clear communication to the public about the links between project activity and the yield in terms of improved behaviour.

#### **THE PORTFOLIO OF YPP COMMUNITY PROJECTS**

It is difficult to describe the total portfolio of YPP projects in a manner that can clearly communicate its contribution to assisting the Probation Service to reduce crime. However individual projects do appear to converge to varying degrees around '*Product Specific*' and '*Developmental*' descriptors overlaid with a local, regional, or national reach. Matt Talbot<sup>48</sup> and Aislinn specialise in drug treatment, The Wexford Centre has a specific residential based product, Kerry Adolescent

Counselling provides a clinical counselling service, Le Chéile has three specific products<sup>49</sup> (although the substance of any mentoring arrangement between a volunteer and young person will be largely determined by the Probation Officer assessment). There is some degree of homogeneity linking the remaining projects which may best be described as local or community based services, used primarily by Probation Officers. At face value there appears to be greater capacity<sup>50</sup> for more significant service change in response to demand, with this latter group of projects.

### **Product specific services**

Le Chéile could be described as being a national service, currently product specific but with capacity for development. Kerry Adolescent Centre, The Wexford centre, Matt Talbot Drug treatment service, Aislinn could be described as regional or national reach specialist services with limited capacity for development.

### **Local services**

Cox Demesne, The Westview project, Céim Ar Chéim, WHAD, Southill Outreach, Adventure Sports – could be described as being local services, currently with specific products but with significant capacity for development. Dóchas Don Óige, Candle Community Trust, St Vincent's Trust – could be described as being local services with fixed products (training) but with some capacity for development.

The service distinctions are not as clear as presented here. However they are reasonable reflections of the current position. The difference between specialist or product specific services and locally based developmental services generate two quite different groups of strategic questions for IYJS and the Probation Service.

**With reference to *specialist or product specific services*** - What are the patterns and trends in terms of emerging clinical need of young people dealt with by the Probation Service? Is there an ongoing need for this specific service? (And if so) is the respective provider delivering appropriate services to the required standard, achieving the desired outcomes?

**With reference to *local developmental services*** - 'What is known about youth crime in the catchment area served by the project? To what degree is the service provider in question configuring its services to respond to the challenges disclosed by local crime data? To what degree is the service provider providing services of sufficient quality to achieving the desired outcomes?

### **Data informed service development**

As would be expected from a group of services which is made up of almost 90 percent Probation Service referrals, there appears to be a high degree of involvement (at least at referral stage) by Probation Officers and widespread use of the YLS/CMI to inform the referral process. All projects have some means of transferring relevant personal offence related information from the *assessor* (Probation Officer) to the *provider* (YPP project). Three projects would welcome more information from the Probation Service, in relation to its expectations of them as service providers<sup>51</sup>.

The significance of this transfer of information is that the professional effort invested in assessing both risk and need by the Probation Officer ought logically to be reflected in the specialist service chosen (much like a G.P. refers a patient for specialist treatment) or with more generic providers, the way that service responses are designed and configured around the young person. Therefore the Probation Officer as the professional responsible for the clinical assessment has in effect a commissioning or purchasing role in terms of determining service choice and informing service development and configuration.

It is not possible to gauge as a consequence of this review, whether the transfer of information contained in the Probation Officer assessment could be accurately described as steering each therapeutic input by the service provider or indeed whether, when aggregated, such assessments inform the routine service activity of the project. In order to better determine whether assessment had actually directed clinical inputs to young people it would have been necessary to undertake a case file review; for service development it would have been necessary to examine the logic underpinning annual business plans. This approach was not necessary for

this future directed exercise but should be considered in future strategic assessments and reviews of service activity.

A pre-requisite for a move toward a more systematic development model for YPP projects is the availability of good quality data. By way of example, recent developments in 100 Garda Youth Diversion Projects have demonstrated the value of using statistical data provided by An Garda Síochána combined with professional observation to achieve more nuanced insights into the patterns of youth crime in specific localities.

The analysis has permitted the construction of more sophisticated diagnostic models making linkages with situational, temporal, practice-observed and sociological youth crime features, as opposed to more traditional and abstract list-type risk inventories.<sup>52</sup> In many cases the data secured to inform the development of the 100 local Garda Youth Diversion Projects will also be of strategic benefit to YPP projects, particularly where the service has a discrete and reasonably local catchment area. However the Probation Service also routinely undertakes clinical assessments using the YLS/CMI standard instrument which in itself has been designed to yield important service data on needs and risks and will be of particular benefit to those YPP project's serving larger catchment areas.

With reference to YPP *specialist services* periodic reviews of the YLS/CMI assessment data at national level, (ideally in conjunction with qualitative discussion with YPP Probation Officers to understand any case related trends) could provide a useful reference point for evidencing and quantifying specialist need and weighing up needs against available resources. A clear logic linking improvements in specialist outcomes to a local narrative of how it is envisaged that this improvement will contribute to a young person reducing their offending behaviour will also be valuable.

With reference to YPP *local developmental services*, the collation and analysis of YLS/CMI assessments (again ideally in conjunction with reflections provided by referring Probation Officers) will assist local projects in service planning and local Probation Service management in communicating outcome related service

expectations to local audiences. Performance measures linked to outcomes suggested earlier in this chapter will indicate whether the individual provider is meeting agreed expectations.

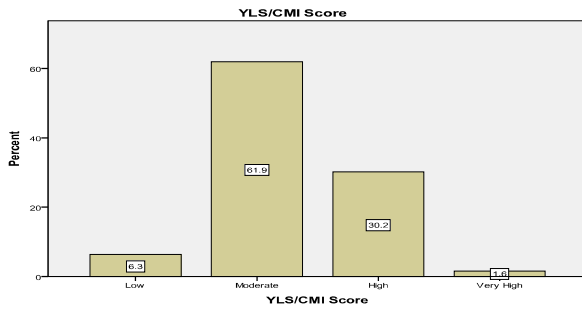
Overall this type of systematic data review will assist in determining how best to invest the finite funding available to YPP projects.

A recent analysis of YLS data conducted by one YPP project relating to its own referrals (See figure 6) gives an indication of how such an exercise repeated across all projects could generate focussed discussions in relation to service design and agree which outcomes should be prioritised.

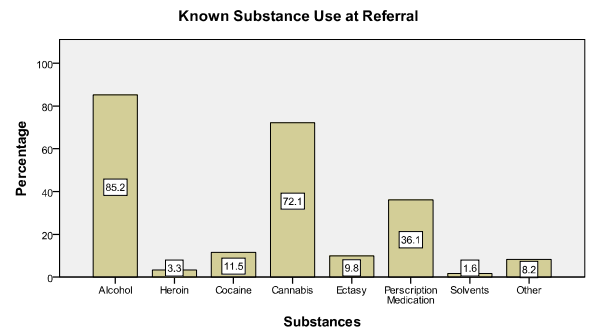
Greater use of outcome related measures yield better quality data in terms of performance. An exercise undertaken by another YPP project serves to demonstrate the value of using specific measures to indicate improved outcomes (See figure 7) although the more general principle of aligning case records and reviews with achieving desired outcomes will assist in performance evaluation.

**Figure 6 Case Example 'Using assessment data to inform service planning'** The following selection of YLS generated statistics relate to 72 referrals worked with by one project over a period of 12 months<sup>53</sup>

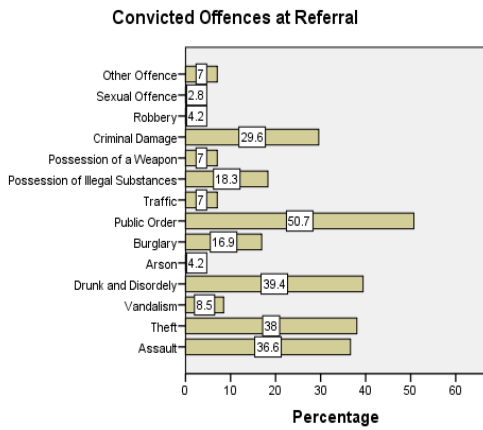
**1) Overall YLS/CMI Score indicating risk and need**



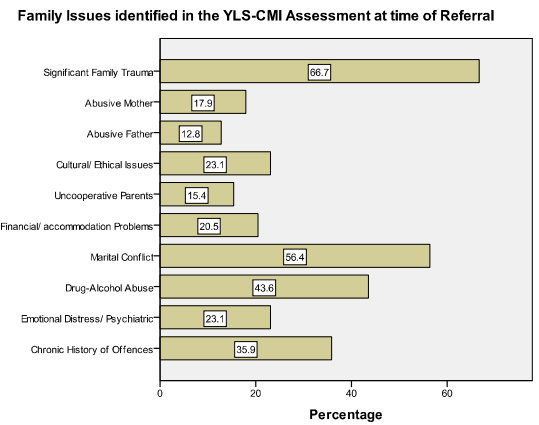
**3) Type of substance misuse**



**2) Offence type**

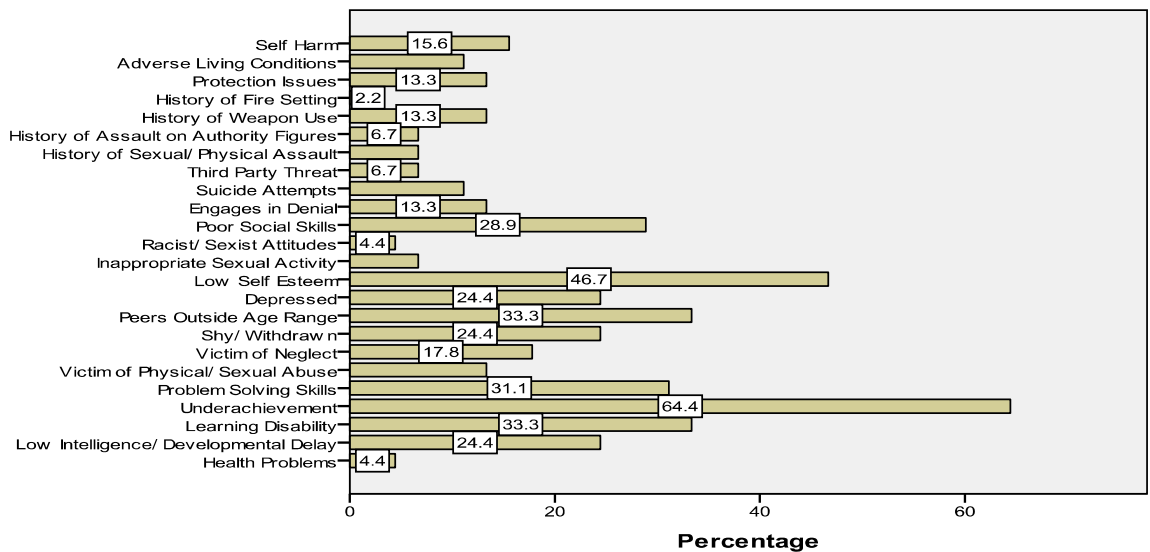


**4) Family issues**



**Needs**

**Young Person Issues identified in the YLS-CMI Assessment at time of Referral**



**Figure 7: Le Chéile Strengthening Families – Outcome Evaluation Summary 2010 (Navan, Togher, and Moate)**

Table 1. Outcomes for Pre to Post test Changes (Lutra Evaluation Summary 2010)	Navan, Meath		Togher, Cork		Moate, Westmeath	
	Effect Size vs Irish Norms	Effect of Change	Effect Size vs Irish Norms	Effect of Change	Effect Size vs Irish Norms	Effect of Change
<b>Family Outcomes</b>						
Family Organisation	.70 vs .74	Large	.74 vs .74	Large	.82 vs .74	Large
Family Cohesion	.54 vs .48	Large	.65 vs .48	Large	.53 vs .56	Large
Family Communication	.70 vs .73	Large	.80 vs .73	Large	.80 vs .75	Large
Family Conflict	-.04 vs .39	Small	.57 vs .39	Large	.17 vs .34	Small
Family Resilience	.74 vs .65	Large	.85 vs .65	Large	.48 vs .72	Medium
<b>Parental Outcomes</b>						
Positive Parenting	.57 vs .59	Large	.51 vs .59	Large	.63 vs .61	Large
Parental Involvement	.41 vs .53	Medium	.48 vs .53	Medium	.31 vs .57	Medium
Parenting Skills	.54 vs .56	Large	.62 vs .56	Large	.37 vs .61	Medium
Parental Supervision	.61 vs .49	Large	.77 vs .49	Large	.63 vs .67	Large
Parenting Efficacy	.67 vs .61	Large	.73 vs .61	Large	.48 vs .66	Medium
Alcohol & Drug use	.52 vs .14	Large	.41 vs .14	Medium	.36 vs .15	Medium
<b>Child Outcomes</b>						
Overt Aggression	.62 vs .44	Large	.76 vs .44	Large	.15 vs .53	Small
Covert Aggression	.43 vs .26	Medium	.70 vs .26	Large	.00 vs .35	Small
Concentration Problems	.53 vs .60	Large	.73 vs .60	Large	.30 vs .62	Medium
Criminal Behaviour	.23 vs .11	Small	.26 vs .11	Medium	.17 vs .10	Small
Hyperactivity	.03 vs .11	Small	.30 vs .11	Medium	.12 vs .05	Small
Social Behaviour	.75 vs .61	Large	.57 vs .21	Large	.23 vs .30	Medium
Depression	.37 vs .38	Medium	.76 vs .38	Large	.17 vs .46	Small
<b>Total of 18 Outcomes</b>						



## Section 4 Discussion

There are undoubted limitations in the methodology used for this review. It is essentially a qualitative snap-shot picture relying largely on information provided by project staff and management without onerous verification or use of a specific metric to analyse the data. Nevertheless the use of a standard approach to interviews, the ability to probe the narrative and willingness by project staff to examine their own logic for service design has added significant insight to the work of the VFM review. Moreover the conversations regarding crime, the challenges presented by the personal circumstances of young people involved in crime and an understanding of the improvements that each project is trying to make, in some way mitigates the methodological problems associated with the diversity of project activity, and permits a common language in relation to performance.

A snap shot may not articulate with sufficient nuance, the possibly complex history that has brought a project to a particular situation. However in attempting to mark a future point where projects need to arrive at, it does disclose for each project where it currently stands. It has been necessary to composite responses from individual interviews for the purposes of this report which to some degree flattens out the new design challenges facing individual projects; nevertheless the recorded account from each interview will go some way to generating the necessary discussions at local level as they pertain to individual projects.

While each project has developed a working model with an intrinsic and substantial logic for its client base, the experience of this review also indicates that the total *portfolio* of IYJS funded YPP projects would benefit from greater overall coherence.

The reasons for this diversity are clear. As the Value For Money review acknowledges (consistent with many other community based services) the historic development of projects has been ad hoc, incremental and organic, responding to needs as they arose in certain localities when resources became available. For the most part, each project is governed by a single local management company

which ensures an appropriate local focus but also provides complex organisational challenges at national level in terms of measuring performance and capturing knowledge across the board. The longest running project has been in operation since 1976 and the most recent 2009. Some projects have national reaches others serve more local populations; (although even *local* projects differ in reach from 10,000 to 150,000 population).

It is clear that more recent project developments have to a greater degree reflected the outcome of 'strategic' deliberations by the Probation Service in terms of service priorities but it is also true that longer serving projects have had the opportunity over the years to test the value of various interventions and have therefore developed significant practice wisdom. Consistent with the VFM report<sup>54</sup> it is important for this review to identify a more coherent future course in terms of YPP funded projects as a whole, but one that builds on the inherent strengths developed at practice level. It is equally important to recognise that significant work is already underway with YPP projects in terms of the alignment process that has involved all community based organisations which are in partnership with the Probation Service. A new service level agreement has provided architecture to assure that negotiated Probation Service objectives are reflected in all project activities. The alignment occurs at contractual level in terms of service undertakings but inherent in the service level agreements is an ongoing governance function for Probation Service management to liaise with and support projects and to monitor performance.

In building on the work done to date, there is a clear benefit in maximising the information sources already available for planning purposes. Statistical data in relation to youth crime trends, clinical data indicated by Probation Service YLS assessments and output data from YPP projects could be used more effectively in terms of strategic planning both in terms of identifying geographical service gaps and determining the orientation of service developments. The experience of this review also demonstrates the value of periodically and systematically discussing the veracity and meaning of any apparent trends directly with practitioners from YPP projects and the Probation Service.

Projects are clearly keen to improve practice and this review provides an opportunity to consider the corresponding development needs. Taking aside the specific areas relating to drugs use and education and training which form a key service pillar of certain projects with their own discrete output and outcome measures, it is appropriate to consider what investment is necessary to assist projects to better perform.

In this review we have cited interventions designed to lead to improved pro-social relationships, reduced impulsivity improved reflection and empathy, improved motivation to change and improvements in specific circumstances associated with current offending behaviour such as parenting and family functioning and school performance. A discussion in relation to the current position of projects in relation to their success in achieving these outcomes would be a useful start point for any capacity building plan.

Despite many years of service development, systematic means to adequately demonstrate the relative value of community programmes for young people are still largely under-developed. More generally there are significant differences of opinion in criminological and wider academic circles about the associations between certain risk factors and crime. There is vociferous debate about the most effective means to prevent youth crime and to help those young people involved in offending to then desist in their behaviour. The conjecture is not particularly helpful in terms of easily identifying solutions and any option chosen has direct and indirect resource consequences.

However the lack of certainty does highlight the need for home grown practice leadership and offers an opportunity for YPP projects to reflect on the merits of current service provision with a view to determining what might be necessary to secure further improvements. As indicated in the VFM report '*measurement of progress can be intrinsically difficult because some outcomes are often influenced by factors beyond (the project's) direct control...*'.<sup>55</sup> Nevertheless a project's contribution to changing behaviour and improving pro-social trajectories can be measured. It is incumbent upon IYJS and the Probation Service as strategic partners to encourage and facilitate any such enterprise to realise this focus.

There is little doubt that each individual service is currently committing huge effort in purposefully engaging young people and that in large part this effort is well placed. In addition the conclusion drawn from direct discussions with projects is that all are committed to change where this will bring about real improvements for the young people they serve.

The report's recommendations will help in bringing about such improvements and are intended to be implemented over the period of a three year planning cycle

## Section 5 Conclusion / Recommendations

### CONCLUSION

The objective of this exercise was to review current interventions provided by YPP project's. With *improved value* in mind for the significant public funding invested in YPP projects, it has also proposed a future direction for development.

The review was thematic and prospective rather than a site by site audit of practice against standardised criteria. However by engaging in a focused and logic driven discussion about the features of youth crime experienced by each project and its respective rationale for improving a young person's situation, a short list of desired strategic outcomes have emerged. Focussing on these outcomes provides for a more coherent direction that is also better able to accommodate, though not wholly, the current diversity in provision.

It is a matter for each project to determine whether or how much it decides to engage in the process of change associated with this review. Ultimately funding support should be based on performance. The mobilising of project effort around key outcomes for young people will permit the adoption or development of measurement tools to indicate relative performance.

Finally it should be stated that the experience of the review team was of a dedicated and talented group of professionals who actively, honestly and constructively engaged with the review process. The fact that there is more commonality than difference between projects in terms of each individual analysis of youth crime and proposed solutions, indicates that there is greater potential coherence in service delivery than appears at face value. The fact that the proposed solutions are largely shared by colleagues in the Probation Service and that the solutions resonate significantly with a practical interpretation of the available research evidence provides for a sound underpinning for the proposed change programme.

## Recommendations

The review has four strategic recommendations:-

### 1) Re-defining the YPP project portfolio

- The current group of YPP projects<sup>56</sup> is made up of two smaller groupings; specialist or product specific services and locally delivered projects. It is proposed that these distinctions are made clear for the purposes of future development.
- *Specialist or product specific services* include Kerry Adolescent Counselling, Matt Talbot Drug Treatment, Le Chéile, the Wexford Centre, and Aislinn. IYJS and the Probation Service will need to decide on the basis of periodic review of clinical data (see below) whether there is an ongoing need to purchase the specific services offered, whether to refine its request and whether on the basis of performance the arrangements will continue. It will be necessary to agree individual development plans with each provider including an assessment of relevant crime data, discrete outcome measures where these are not in place and a demonstration of how the specific service will contribute to reducing offending in terms of the local narrative.
- *Locally-based services* include Westview, W.H.A.D., Cox Demesne, Dóchas Don Óige, Candle Community, St Vincent's Trust, and Adventure Sports. IYJS and The Probation Service will need to consider the current configuration of services provided by these projects relative to data about youth crime (see below) in the community served by each project and the development of a coherent logic model demonstrating how the service intends to make improvements for the young people within its specific local context. The proportionate level of investment by IYJS and Probation Service with reference to individual project budgets will obviously determine the relative leverage available and will need to be considered in the context of each development plan.
- Each service will prepare a detailed logic model (See Appendix E) (appended to existing service Level Agreements) by year end 2011; for implementation in 2012. The logic model will evidence the challenges

presented in terms of relevant youth crime patterns and the individual circumstances of young people targeted. Significantly the model will also demonstrate how certain improved outcomes; *a) building pro-social relationships, b) reducing impulsiveness, c) improving motivation to change, d) improving capacity for empathy and d) improving the specified circumstances which are contributing to the offending behaviour* will be achieved.

- Periodic site visits by an agreed review committee will take place from 2013 to assure compliance with agreed plans.

## **2) Identifying service needs:**

- There is sufficient data available to make informed strategic decisions about service design and development. This data is currently not fully utilised and a process does not exist for periodic review. Crime data and clinical YLS data in addition to periodic consultations with practitioners will disclose patterns and trends assisting in making decisions at national, regional, and local level about investing finite public funds. The data will also be of critical importance in terms of wider policy development.
- It is proposed that a joint planning team involving The Probation Service and IYJS<sup>57</sup> meet quarterly to review trends in crime and clinical need with a view to directly informing the commissioning process with specialist and local services. The provision of crime data reports will need to be negotiated with An Garda Síochána. It will be necessary for the Probation Service to provide reports based on aggregated YLS assessments. Arrangements will need to be made to secure the views of practitioners in relation to emerging trends. This important qualitative component can be elicited via periodic conference and /or on-line (see *organisational supports* below).
- All YPP projects should receive a synopsis of the information referred to above along with any observations by the planning team relating to the data. Specialist services should use the data to inform their own strategic planning. Local service providers should use the data to assist in

constructing youth crime models specific to their own catchment area. This will assist each project in communicating its contribution to reducing youth crime within its own local context. Some of the current effort spent in administering projects should be devoted to assisting projects in this process at least once per year

### **3) Organisational Supports to enhance practice**

- While IYJS and the Probation Service effectively commission services from YPP projects, the transaction is not a business relationship in its strictest sense. Each project is an independent entity, its objectives are limited to competently serving the young people they work with, and no project makes a profit. It is a decision for an individual project whether it chooses to subscribe to the strategic vision outlined in this report or indeed whether it engages with the capacity building programme; ultimately decisions on ongoing financial support will be influenced by performance.<sup>58</sup> However there is a responsibility on IYJS and the Probation Service to support those projects which do want to engage.
- *Data* – It will be necessary to ensure that projects get sufficient information to inform its service planning over and above a more general requirement to clarify service objectives (see data above)
- *Capitalising on existing knowledge* – Some specialist providers already have well developed professional networks in their own field to provide comparative reference in terms of professional service development. Where this is not the case, IYJS and The Probation Service will assist these projects in sourcing comparable reference points. There is sufficient similarity among local service providers to form a discrete development group<sup>59</sup> allowing for the exchange of ideas and tactics and to assist in developing a coherent theoretical framework. Both specialist and local projects will be offered access to the IYJS on-line forum (see appendix E) which will provide an opportunity to share knowledge and tactics with a



wider audience of Garda Youth Diversion Projects and Juvenile Liaison Officers in addition to accessing external research material.

- *Training* – IYJS and The Probation Service will negotiate a training and development plan with projects which reflects the outcome focus of this review. Inevitably, the discussion will commence with considering the development needs associated with improving practice in; building pro-social relationships, reducing impulsiveness, motivation to change and improving the specific circumstances in a young person's life which are contributing to the offending behaviour.

#### 4) Pursuing best practice:

- Given the prospective fiscal situation '*....existing projects are likely to incur the bulk of the expenditure....*<sup>60</sup> It follows that practice leadership must be generated from within given that opportunities for new initiatives will be limited. Such leadership will need to deliver innovation in practice which demonstrates value; meaning improved performance, better behavioural outcomes for young people with, as a minimum, with reduced or no increased cost. Recent developments in the €13 million Garda Youth Diversion Project programme have included **a trial site initiative** where five local projects have entered into a detailed re-design programme to improve their effectiveness.<sup>61</sup>
- It is proposed that IYJS and The Probation Service lead a similar trial site programme with selected YPP projects with a view to developing home grown and verifiable best practice models.

## Appendix A: Probation Service – Value For Money Report.

### Summarised Findings and Recommendations

Finding	Recommendation	Target	Priority	Effort	Timing
Some projects are unclear about the objectives and requirements of the Probation Service.	Probation Service to provide clear communication of core policy goals and objectives of its work emphasising the need to focus on outputs and outcomes to all projects in a seminar and written format as appropriate.	Hold seminar and/or provide written guidance to all sole funded projects in attendance and majority of the others. Probation Service to communicate requirement and call for funding applications.	High	Medium	Q3 – 2008
All projects do not routinely report on measurable performance criteria.	The Probation Service to advise and set criteria for Projects to have clear, quantitative objectives that are aligned with the objectives of the Probation Service.	Develop a minimum set of measures (5-10) for all sole funded projects to report on quarterly and consult with other funding agencies where relevant.	High.	Medium	Reporting in place by Q3 - 2008
Need to build on the requirement to submit Business Plans introduced last year.	Funding applications provided to the Probation Service to include updated business plans, with strategic objectives and outcomes aligned to Probation Service objectives.	All projects submit objectives and outcomes aligned to Probation Service goals.	High	Medium	Q3 2008
Monitoring and reporting of performance is not consistent for all projects.	The Probation Service , in consultation with the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform to develop an agreed central database to enable the funded Projects to report monthly/quarterly/annually as appropriate to the Probation Service in standard format covering a defined list of KPI's.	Develop uniform database and agree reporting formats, frequency etc. with the Projects.	High	High	Reporting in place by Q4 - 2008
The level and frequency of external monitoring and evaluation of projects is inconsistent.	All projects which are solely funded and other projects in receipt of more than €100,000 should be independently evaluated and/or operationally reviewed at least once in a three year cycle.	One quarter of sole funded projects to be independently evaluated and /or operationally reviewed in each 12 month cycle beginning from 1 July, 2008.	Medium	High	Ongoing
The staff resources devoted to managing projects within the Probation Service do not reflect the size and importance of the funds involved or the services required. Organisation and administration of projects	Project support team to be established in the Probation Service to, inter alia, draw up guidelines for establishing and running projects, development of detailed service level agreements, assistance with legal queries, assessment of annual funding	Unit to be established with necessary skills by reallocating existing staff.	High	Medium	Q3 2008

<b>Finding</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Effort</b>	<b>Timing</b>
needs to be more structured.	applications, capital expenditure assessments, reporting and operational evaluations, assistance to probation staff, governance etc.				
The relative or absolute effectiveness of specific interventions is unknown.	Establish an independent accreditation process for programmes delivered by projects following consultation. Establish and support systems to monitor and independently evaluate such programmes.	Top 6 projects to have the programmes they deliver to Probation clients independently accredited. Rolled out to all sole funded projects subsequently.	High	High	Commence Q2– 2008 End Q2 2009
Many projects focus on inputs and activities.	Link funding to demonstrated achievements against Probation Service objectives measured in terms of outputs and outcomes.	Top 6 projects in funding terms to have funding linked to outputs by 2009. Extend to all sole funded projects in 2010.	High	High	Q2 2009
Projects suffer because of a lack of certainty regarding funding availability and levels.	Examine the feasibility of introducing longer term rolling funding commitments for key service providers that can demonstrate that they are aligned with the objectives of the Probation Service.	Identify funding mechanism and strategic providers by Q4 2008.	High	Low	Q4 2008
Tracking clients within projects and across the criminal justice system needs to be improved.	Intensify efforts to develop the case tracking system to allow clients to be traced through the Criminal Justice system.	Work already being carried out in this area to be expedited.	High	High	Substantive work to be underway by Q2 2009
Limited research on Recidivism in Ireland is taking place.	There is a need for more in-depth analysis of existing material and also the development of a baseline for future independent evaluations.	Commission research on aspects of recidivism in Ireland and the role and impact of the Probation Service. Provide funding for monitoring and independent evaluation of projects as part of core funding with results provided to the Probation Service.	High	Low	Commission Research Q3 2008
Recidivism rates for clients directly referred to Projects by the Probation Service should be collated by the Probation Service.	Probation Service to examine how best to track and report recidivism rates.	Client recidivism tracking format to be developed. and implemented.	High	Low/Medium	Q4 2008

## **Appendix B: Rationale for structure of interview.**

### **Interview Schedule (Discussion points) – Young Persons Probation projects**

#### **Objectives:**

- **To understand the rationale for current programme design**
- **To gauge capacity and willingness of a project to make any necessary changes.**

**Basic information** (Project name, location, contact details, key contact, catchment area for referrals / target group(s) level of funding, percentage of core funding provided by IYJS and stake of other funders, annual placement capacity, no.'s of individual young people worked with 2008, average length of intervention, referral source as percentage of workload, YLS scores (if possible) for probation referred young people)

---

#### **Introduction**

- Context
  - Purpose of exercise
  - What will happen with information
- 

#### **(Offences)**

- Principal offence type(s)
  - Pattern of offending
- 

**(Presenting risk)** Outline of offences / offence patterns and characteristics of young people being engaged

#### *Prompts*

- Individual risks
- Social/ emotional wellbeing (include any prior assessments? E.g. Social work/ mental health)
- School Education (include learning/ intellectual capacity)
- Alcohol drugs misuse
- Peer Group risks
- Family Risks
- Neighbourhood Risks
- Other

How do staff find out about these needs – prior assessment? (by whom?)  
Assessment by YPP project ? (By whom?)

(If relevant: Who is responsible for turning assessment into programme activity?)

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**(Intended outcomes)** What improvement is the project trying to make with reference to these characteristics?

---

**(Rationale)** What activities does the project engage in? How do these activities achieve the desired outcome for the young people given their characteristics?

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**(Change)** What changes do you think need to be made to make your project more effective at reducing youth crime?

What kind of support from IYJS would help your project improve its effectiveness in reducing youth crime

Any other feedback to YPP or IYJS?

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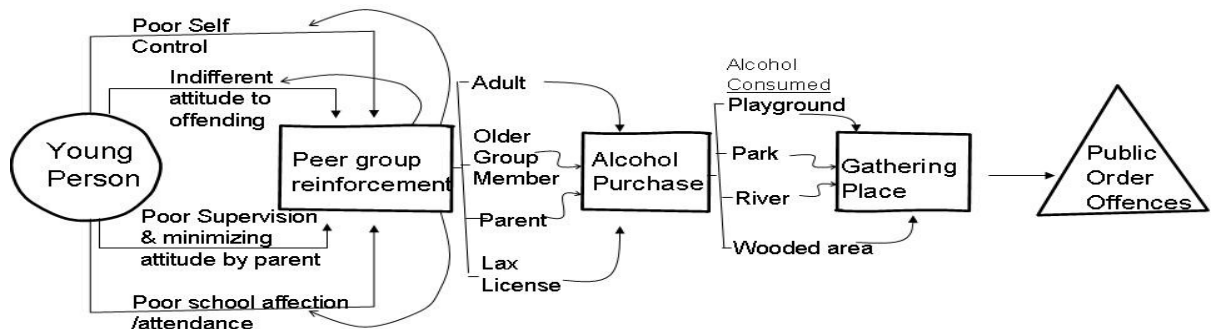
## Appendix C : Project funding in 2009

2009 allocated funding by Irish Youth Justice Service as a percentage of total budget.

<b>Community Based Organisation</b>	<b>Allocation 2009</b>	<b>Percentage of funding which IYJS provides.</b>
Adventure Sports	€103,000	22%
Aislinn Adolescent Addiction Treatment Centre	€300,000	22%
Candle Community Trust	€356,347	56%
Céim ar Chéim	€540,000	100%
Cox's Demesne	€168,231	22%
Dóchas don Óige	€282,000	100%
Kerry Adolescent Counselling Service	€103,400	37%
Le Chéile – Strengthening Families	€256,324	100%
Le Chéile – Mentoring	€1,244,125	100%
Matt Talbot Services – Day Centre	€232,000	100%
Matt Talbot Services – Drugs	€112,800	6%
Ógra Chorcaí	€184,434	100%
Southill Outreach	€415,480	100%
St. Vincent's Trust	€216,200	72%
Tallaght Probation Project	€200,000	33%
Tivoli	€100,000	50%
We Have A Dream	€122,200	100%
Wexford Centre	€103,400	66%
WRENS	€47,500	100%

## Appendix D: Example of Diagnostic Model developed in Garda Youth Diversion Projects.

### Profile 2: Alcohol and public order crime



### Profile 2: Regular membership/regular activity

In this profile the young person presents with a high degree of impulsivity, perceiving his offending behaviour to be 'normal' and thus appears to be indifferent to changing his behaviour. The young person also has poor attendance at school and more generally presents as having little interest in educational improvement. His attitudes are underpinned by similar presenting indifference by parents and by his peer group. The group will have organised how to secure alcohol, in this example by a) asking a known adult in return for cash or a share of alcohol b) asking an older member of the peer group to purchase on behalf of the group c) securing alcohol from a parent with or without their knowledge d) targeting the licensed premises in the town which is perceived to be lax in terms of supplying alcohol to young people. The group will use (in this example) one of four drinking locations, for example a playground, local park, riverbank or wooded area. Some of the group will become drunk and gravitate towards the town centre, more particularly fast food outlets, committing public order nuisance type offences and possibly minor assaults and criminal damage offences on the way. This activity is likely to occur on a regular basis with the same membership and can involve certain members of the peer group in other types of crime, for example theft, in offending episodes outside this profile.

## Appendix E: Pro-forma for Logic model

*Courtesy of Foróige*

Statement of Need:				
Inputs - <i>what we invest</i>	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	
	<i>Activities we do</i>	<i>Who we reach</i>	<i>Short Term</i>	<i>Long Term</i>



## Appendix F: Online Forum abstract -YJForum

The YJ Forum was developed in 2009 as part of an improvement programme for Garda Youth Diversion Projects (GYDPs) implemented as a consequence of the youth justice report 'Designing effective local responses to youth crime'. This report identified 3 specific improvement measures for projects, the alignment of project activities with local crime patterns, the development of new service designs with 5 trial sites, and the improvement of knowledge over all the Garda Youth Diversion Projects. There are currently 100 GYDPs in 25 counties throughout Ireland, managed by 40 different agencies. The diversity of location of projects presents a considerable challenge in terms of sharing practice innovation and learning developed in projects across the GYDP network as well as introducing and disseminating new knowledge. The YJ forum is one measure which aims to improve the knowledge and to champion promising practice in the Garda Youth Diversion Projects.

The screenshot shows the YJForum website interface. At the top, there is a navigation menu with links for Home, Create New Forum, Search, Profile, Members, Help, and Logout. Below the menu, a yellow banner displays a welcome message for Gráinne Roughan, indicating her last visit time and unread private messages. A 'Notices' section lists recent updates, including a new March Blog, a survey report, and a new book club read. The main content area features a table with forum details.

Forum	Posts	Topics	Lastpost
<b>Implementing Training into Practice</b> Use this thread if you want to share your challenges or successes in implementing the Pro-Social Modelling or Motivational Interviewing training. Tim Chapman and Hugh Campbell will be happy to share their thoughts on your posts and contribute to your discussions.	4	3	<a href="#">Pro-social modelling - Motivatio...</a> 22-10-2010 15:48 ( <a href="#">Maria Nyhan - Hayes</a> )
<b>Head of Young Offender Programmes Blog</b> Analysis and Commentary on Topical Issues by Sean Redmond	11	9	<a href="#">March Blog</a> 04-03-2011 14:28 ( <a href="#">Sean Redmond</a> )
<b>Presenting Challenges</b> Use this forum to discuss any challenges that your project is encountering and where you may want advice or support from colleagues in other projects	14	5	<a href="#">YJForum Survey Report</a> 04-03-2011 14:12 ( <a href="#">Sean Redmond</a> )
<b>Innovations</b> Use this forum to discuss any ideas that you believe may be of benefit to other projects. The idea may be a full blown programme that you have designed or an idea that you are working on when you'd appreciate other colleagues input.	46	11	<a href="#">Restorative Justice</a> 27-11-2010 15:14 ( <a href="#">Valerie Hogan</a> )

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## End Notes

### Executive Summary

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.iyjs.ie> – Report of the Committee to Monitor the Effectiveness of the Diversion Programme (2009)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.iyjs.ie> – Probation service Annual Report 2009

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.iyjs.ie>

<sup>4</sup> Objective 3.2 National Youth Justice Strategy 2008-2010

<sup>5</sup> [www.probation.ie](http://www.probation.ie) Mission Statement

<sup>6</sup> Renamed in 2010, Department of Justice and Law Reform

### Section One

<sup>7</sup> High Level Goal 3 objective 3.2 National Youth Justice Strategy 2008-2010

<sup>8</sup> Source Value for Money and policy review of CBOs funded by the probation service (2008). The review makes the point that the number of CBOs can vary from year to year as new CBOs commence and other CBOs withdraw from funding.

<sup>9</sup> According to 2006 census data. This age range is significant because it encompasses the minimum age of criminal responsibility and maximum age, in legal terms, for consideration under the criminal law, as a child.

<sup>10</sup> [www.iyjs.ie](http://www.iyjs.ie) Annual Report of the Monitoring Committee 2009 – An Garda Síochána

<sup>11</sup> [www.iyjs.ie](http://www.iyjs.ie) Irish Youth Justice Service Annual Report 2009

<sup>12</sup> Source: Probation Service communication July 2010.

<sup>13</sup> For example an Garda Síochána, Juvenile Liaison Officers, prisons and detention schools

<sup>14</sup> 1038 pre-sanction reports, 42 community service reports and 18 pre-sanction reports to consider Community service

<sup>15</sup> 383 orders for supervision, 43 community service Orders, 418 orders for supervision during Deferment of penalty, 35 Family Conference referrals

<sup>16</sup> 43 Community Service Orders, 32 Family Conference referrals

<sup>17</sup> Email communication Probation Service 23/08/10

<sup>18</sup> **Scope:** Includes 1) Adventure Sports<sup>18</sup> 2) Aislinn Adolescent Addiction Treatment Centre 3) Candle Community Trust 4) Céim ar Chéim 5) Cox Demesne 6) Dóchas don Óige 7) Kerry Adolescent Counselling 8) Le Chéile 9) Matt Talbot Drugs Treatment 10) Órga Chorcaí Westview Centre 11) Southill Outreach 12) St Vincent's Trust 13) We have A Dream, 14) The Wexford Centre.

**Outside scope:** Tallaght PP, Tivoli, WRENS (Cork Day Programme (MTAS), follow up visits are intended for these programmes following publication of the report.

<sup>19</sup> This was less straightforward with CBOs servicing regional or national catchment areas

<sup>20</sup> See Appendix B for description and rationale for structure of interview

<sup>21</sup> This list does not include Tallaght Probation project, Tivoli, WRENS and (Cork Day Programme (Matt Talbot Services)

<sup>22</sup> Specifically the area within the boundary of Summerhill Parade, Gardiner Street, Railway Street and Mountjoy square a population of 10-15,000 residents.

<sup>23</sup> Galway city constitutes on average 90% referrals.

<sup>24</sup> Other targeted referrals originate from Inchicore and lower Crumlin.

<sup>25</sup> This catchment accounts for approximately 80 percent of the workload

<sup>26</sup> At the time of writing the some parts of the north east and north west of the country are not fully serviced.

<sup>27</sup> Matt Talbot had also recently set up an Adolescent Day programme in Cork

<sup>28</sup> However most referrals originate from the Cherry Orchard area.

### Section Two

<sup>29</sup> Available at [www.iyjs.ie](http://www.iyjs.ie)

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<sup>30</sup> It is accepted that recorded and detected crime provides only a partial picture of the occurrence of youth crime. Reports from projects indicate higher levels of involvement in offending behaviour, particularly drugs misuse.

<sup>31</sup> Annual report of the committee appointed to Monitor the Effectiveness of the Diversion Programme (2009)

<sup>32</sup> The term *anti-social behaviour* has been used as a construct for similar offending behaviours which often occur within the same offending episodes - in this case, alcohol related 17.6% public order 9.5%, minor assault 4.4% and criminal damage 10.6% or 42% in total. (See '*Designing effective local responses to youth crime*' (2009) for a fuller discussion on the occurrence of alcohol related public order crime.

<sup>33</sup> It should be noted that *drugs related offences* do not appear in this list and this is significantly at odds with the experiences of YPP CBO staff. In order for a drugs offence to appear on the PULSE system it needs to be a) detected and b) linked with a person under the age of 18 years. This indicates under-reporting and detecting of this type of behaviour and suggests that caution is required in over-relying on reported and detected crime data.

<sup>34</sup> Redmond, S. Coonan, B, Quinn, C. (2011) 'Recognizing the complexity in describing youth crime in Ireland' (pre-publication)

<sup>35</sup> Projects identified different motivations in relation to theft behaviour, from thrill seeking peer influenced shop thefts, to subsistence theft for food and theft from cars, arguably requiring higher levels of risk taking and technical skill.

<sup>36</sup> For a detailed discussion relating to profiling youth crime in local communities See '*Designing Effective Local Responses to Youth Crime*' (2009) [www.iyjs.ie](http://www.iyjs.ie)

<sup>37</sup> Farrington, D and Welsh, Brandon C. (2007), , Hawkins, D, (2008)

<sup>38</sup> Case, S. (2007), Goldson, Barry and Muncie, John (2006) O' Mahony, P. (2009)

<sup>39</sup> '*Designing Effective Local Responses to Youth Crime*' (2009) [www.iyjs.ie](http://www.iyjs.ie)

<sup>40</sup> The standard risk assessment used by Probation Officers in relation to young people

<sup>41</sup> See Prior, David. & Mason, P. (2010)

### Section Three

<sup>42</sup> '*....the objectives of the Probation service (and IYJS) need to be more clearly communicated to the project...*' VFM report page 52

<sup>43</sup> See for instance Farrington & Welsh '*Saving Children from a Life of Crime*' (2009 )

<sup>44</sup> For interesting discussions on the role of the professional in promoting desistance and re-imagining the narrative of a young offender see '*Giving Up Crime: Directions for Policy* Weaver B and McNeill F (2009), Prior, David. & Mason, P. (2010), Trotter, C. (2000) (2009)

<sup>45</sup> For more information <http://www.strengtheningfamiliesprogram.org/>

<sup>46</sup> See also Sexton, Thomas L. & Alexander, James F. (2000)

<sup>47</sup> Farrington, D and Welsh, Brandon C. (2007), , Hawkins, D, (2008) Sexton, Thomas L. & Alexander, James F. (2000) and

*Strengthening Families* <http://www.strengtheningfamiliesprogram.org/>

<sup>48</sup> Drug Treatment service

<sup>49</sup> A Mentoring programme for young people, a mentoring programme for parents and delivery of the *Strengthening Families*, programme. However the fact that Le Chéile has developed new services indicates that it's service repertoire is not totally fixed.

<sup>50</sup> See Appendix C - 2009 allocated funding to YPP CBOs by IYJS as proportion of total budget.

<sup>51</sup> This need for communication of strategic requirements from the Probation Service to CBOs was a feature of the VFM report 2008

<sup>52</sup> See Appendix D for an example of a diagnostic model developed following similar consultation with Garda Youth Diversion Projects

<sup>53</sup> YLS/CMI statistics refer to 63 of these young people. YLS/CMI assessments were not available for 9 cases at time of referral

### Section Four

<sup>54</sup> '*Performance indicators for CBOs need to be specific to each CBO but should also be consistent with an overall framework which includes indicators related to the inputs used, the activities performed, the outputs delivered and the outcomes achieved..*' VFM report P70

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<sup>55</sup> VFM report 2008 p28

<sup>56</sup> This exercise will need to be undertaken with the remaining 'YPP' CBOs not included in the scope of this review

<sup>57</sup> Involvement of other key stakeholders, in particular An Garda Síochána would be desirable

<sup>58</sup> Subject to the normal caveat of funding being available.

<sup>59</sup> Le Chéile occupies more ambiguous ground having both a national and local presence.

<sup>60</sup> VFM report (2008) p2

<sup>61</sup> The trial sites in this programme receive significant mentor support from IYJS and An Garda Síochána, access to crime data and fast-tracked training opportunities in return for a commitment to openly engage, radically change practice where required and to disseminate the learning to the remaining ninety five sites. The five sites have developed and documented new outcome driven service models and the learning from the process is being disseminated to all Garda CBOs in 2011.