

YJB Pathfinder – Tackling Serious Youth Violence

The Youth Justice Board (YJB) is working to support frontline service improvement through grants and activity which target system-wide challenges. This involves a pathfinder approach whereby local authorities and partners can pilot, develop and disseminate whole system solutions.

Organisation(s)

London Borough of Islington Youth Offending Service/ London Borough of Haringey Youth Offending Service

What does your project aim to achieve?

The YJB's strategic plan for 2019-22 highlights serious youth violence as one of the YJB's priorities, including an aim to see a sustainable reduction in serious youth violence within the cohort of local authorities in the upper quartile of serious youth violence for at least three out of four periods in the last 12 month data cycle.

The funding allocated to the Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) within the serious youth violence reference group is for the purpose of those YOTs to develop and deliver best practice and disseminate this with others to meet that priority. This fits with the YJB's mandate under S41 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to make known and promote good practice across the sector.

Overview of planned activity

The Disproportionality Project aims to ensure that the YOS and local partnership response to young people involved and at risk of involvement in crime and youth violence from BAME backgrounds is culturally aware, sensitive and inclusive.

Due to the sensitive nature of the project, and due to the fact that there have been long-standing issues encompassing disproportionality, over-representation and discrimination, it will be beneficial to ensure that there is an academic base and framework to this theme. It is also hoped that the research, which the Youth Justice Board (YJB) will have access to, will be able to be used to drive change and influence policy, practice and outcomes at a national level.

City University have recently carried out research in relation to Islington's Integrated Gangs Team and will assist with this new piece of work. The funding will be used to drive this part of the project forward and there will be a report published next spring.

The objective of the research component will be to:

- triangulate and analyse the qualitative and quantitative data collected from the project which would provide more detail and evidence from professionals and service users about the ways that disproportionality can be tackled systemically
- assist with the interpretation and analysis of whether objectives have been achieved and of overall findings from the project
- suggest and uncover hypotheses for the future in relation to the subject matter.

Milestones & length of funding

The Grant funding is to run from September 2019 to March 2020.

How will the outcomes and benefits of this work be shared with YOTs and others?

This will be achieved by sharing outcomes and findings from the consultation the Disproportionality project evaluation report findings. In addition, updates can be provided to the YJB serious youth violence network. Training materials and work sheets will be made available to all and shared via the Youth Justice Resource Hub.

How will the project be evaluated?

The data will be captured through:

- The number of young people and families involved in the disproportionality consultation sessions and feedback gathered within the disproportionality report
- The number of families engaged with support through BAME families' engagement programmes through sign in sheets and number of outcomes delivered i.e. signposting to other agencies, reduction in inactivity levels, support with CV writing etc, and
- Training feedback forms and evaluation from the workforce development training
- Feedback from parents and carers who participate in the programmes and receive support
- A reduction in breaches and Reoffending rates
- Reaching some of the harder to engage BAME groups such as the Somali community

The project management group will lead on the evaluation and collect data through contract monitoring Key Performance Indicators and deliverables given to the commissioned services, analysing performance (including training feedback), community engagement in programmes and robust quality assurance programme. The project Management group will be chaired by the Director, Youth and Community and/or the Head of Youth Offending, Targeted Youth Support and Integrated Gangs Services in Islington.

Measures monitored through feedback and attendance logs will include:

- project reach and engagement
- resilience of BAME families and young people to;
 - be able to raise issues and know who to talk to
 - keep safe (including regarding knife crime, peer pressure and healthy relationships)
 - be confident in their own emotional and physical wellbeing including healthy body image perception and improved physical health
 - feel safe whilst in their local community
 - be aware of and engage in school and out of school positive activities including extra-curricular e.g. adventure playgrounds
 - be confident when using social media and more aware of online safety
- parenting capability and family functioning;
- service user feedback, quotes and interviews;

- training feedback from practitioners, including ability to better understand the needs of BAME families and young people and utilise the gained knowledge in day to day practice;
- improved partnership working and engagement with local grass-root, community organisation

Contact

Heather Alvey - Heather.Alvey@yjb.gov.uk

Why this project was chosen:

The grant is designed to develop and share effective practice to reduce the number of children involved in serious youth violence in the YOTs experiencing the highest levels of serious violence.

The Youth Justice Board identified the local authorities with persistent high levels of serious violence. For the purposes of the YJB's analysis, 'serious youth violence' is defined as the most serious robbery, drugs or violence against the person offences (those with a gravity score of 5 or more as outlined in the Police National Legal Database).

We took the rate of these offences per 10,000 of the general 10-17 population for each YOT and identified those YOTs that had been in the top quartile for three or more quarters during the 2017/18 financial year. We applied these criteria so that it would select the YOTs that consistently had high levels of SYV over the year, rather than one anomalous quarter that would increase their rate.

From that group we identified 12 YOTs to fund as pathfinders.

Due diligence:

All Youth Justice Board grants for pathfinder activity have been through the Ministry of Justice Grant Challenge Panel. This panel scrutinises grants made by the MoJ and its arms-length bodies to ensure public money is being spent effectively and responsibly. It provided objective scrutiny of our business case for the grant in line with guidance on managing public money. The YJB will monitor the project at intervals agreed with the grant recipient.