



**EDUCATION, TRAINING AND  
EMPLOYMENT PROJECTS**

**THE NATIONAL EVALUATION OF THE YOUTH JUSTICE BOARD'S EDUCATION,  
TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT PROJECTS**

Jane Hurry and Viv Moriarty  
Institute of Education, University of London

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## SUMMARY

1. Approximately 3,350 young people were offered some kind of education, training and employment provision under the Youth Justice Board (the Board) initiative (for the 42 projects for which data was available).
2. Projects were diverse but fell into three broad types: those which provided education, training or work experience; projects of a career service type which sought to match students to suitable training establishments or employers; and projects providing diversionary activities.
3. Projects providing education/training/employment were generally more intensive. Students on INCLUDE projects, which fell into this category, attended on average for 370 hours over a period of 17 weeks. Career service projects, on average, provided 11 hours per student over 19 weeks. Diversionary projects were somewhere in between, providing an average of 83 hours face-to-face contact over a period of 17 weeks, with an intensive burst of activity at the beginning and a tapered follow-up.
4. The cost of this intervention to the Board was approximately £4.5 million. The total cost was substantially higher, as the Board was only one source of project funding. The average actual cost per student enrolled on an education, training and employment project was £2,320.
5. Cost varied according to the number of contact hours with students: thus, for INCLUDE projects, the actual cost per student was approximately £5,600; for the career service type projects the cost per student was approximately £1,000; and for the diversionary projects, the cost per head was approximately £2,000. However, the cost per student was not directly proportional to the number of contact hours offered. Projects with high levels of contact were cheaper per hour of contact.
6. Cost per student is inflated by the fact that a significant number of projects took some time to run at full capacity. The Board intervention funding was intended, among other things, to encourage new project development, a kind of capacity-building. Around half the projects were completely new and took several months or even a year to start enrolling any students. All projects took some time to build connections with other agencies, both for referral and to place students.
7. Factors associated with successful project development were:
  - ❖ aims and objectives that were understood and agreed by all agencies and professionals;
  - ❖ a good understanding of the client group;
  - ❖ appropriate staff recruitment and professional development processes;
  - ❖ rigorous but manageable assessment and evaluation systems that all staff valued and were prepared to implement;
  - ❖ a programme of delivery that had been piloted with the target group;
  - ❖ these factors were more frequently found in bodies with some national organisation.
8. Projects differed in the type of young offender for which they were most suitable. Those projects providing education, training and employment, which were the most intensive, were able to cope with young people with serious offending histories who

- needed close monitoring. These projects provided a useful resource to courts looking for community placements for young offenders on supervision orders or community service orders. The projects providing diversionary activities were more suitable for less serious offenders, offering a fertile environment for learning social skills, how to work in a group and to manage anger. The career service projects were also more suitable for young offenders needing less close supervision, and there was evidence that this type of provision may be replaced by the Connexions service.
9. Two thirds of the young people who attended education, training and employment projects were aged 16-plus, 85% were male and 91% were of white ethnicity. Compared with the youth offending population as a whole, education, training and employment students were slightly older, and were more likely to be male and of white ethnicity.
  10. Projects were designed not only to provide young people with opportunities for education, training and employment, but also to deal with barriers to learning, such as problems with family, accommodation and drugs or alcohol. Local evaluators frequently commented on the multiple problems presented by these young people, and the fact that this led to disrupted attendance. Only 35% of these young people lived with both natural parents (as opposed to the norm of 80%), around a quarter were either in care or had experience of care, around half were regular drug users or were dependent on drugs and 80% had very disrupted school histories involving exclusion, etc.
  11. Even compared to the youth offending population as a whole, education, training and employment students tended to have relatively serious offending histories in terms of age at first offence and number of previous convictions. Eighty-one percent were reoffenders, as opposed to 40% in a large random sample of youth offenders drawn from the Police National Computer (PNC) in 1997. Nearly half (45%) were aged 13 or younger at first conviction. This puts this group in a high-risk bracket, according to Farrington (1996), who observed that males first convicted under 14 years of age tended to be the most persistent offenders and to have criminal careers lasting on average 10 years.
  12. Project outcomes can be considered in three layers: project objectives (sometimes described as the mechanisms employed to reach a further goal); the link between project objectives; and the Board goal of reducing youth offending.
  13. Taking the first layer, there was evidence that projects were achieving a number of key positive objectives for a proportion of their students. For those projects providing education and training, around half the students achieved some form of qualification, typically a Word Power or Number Power certificate. Most of these young people had no previous qualifications. Where information was available, there was significant improvement in young people's literacy and numeracy levels. Around 60% of all young people left projects to a positive destination (for example, to employment or further training). The better the student's level of attendance, the more likely a positive outcome.
  14. Considering the second layer, there was also evidence of a link between achieving these key objectives and a reduction in offending. Where students did make headway, in terms of literacy, qualifications or further training or employment, their levels of reoffending were lower than their less successful peers. It is possible that this merely reflects the fact that the students less prone to offend were the ones who were able to make most use of the provision they were offered. However, the most powerful predictor of reoffending was offending history, and even controlling for

differences in criminal history, all the above factors were related to lower rates of reoffending. This suggests that education, training and employment projects are tackling important issues for youth offending.

15. Finally, for the third layer, the reduction of offending, comparing rates of offending in the year prior to enrolment on an education, training and employment project with offending in the following year, a reduction of around 25% was observed. For the 1,153 young people for whom data were available, mean number of offences dropped from 4 in the year before enrolment to 3 in the year after. Sixty percent of these young people reoffended in the year after enrolment. While this level of reoffending is of concern, it may be unrealistic to expect either dramatic reductions in offending or results to be achieved immediately young people are enrolled. The objectives that projects are targeting take time to achieve, and this is particularly true for this population.
16. These projects were funded through the Board with the remit of reducing offending. Evidence that this goal has been met through education, training and employment projects is not convincing. However, in the course of evaluating the education, training and employment projects, it became clear that the young people involved were not only offenders but a very vulnerable group, often with low levels of support from families and social networks, with alcohol and drug problems, poor social skills and low levels of literacy and numeracy. In other words, these young people do need help to develop their education, training and employment opportunities. Without quite intensive support, it is likely that they will experience great difficulties as they move into adult life in securing work on a regular basis. In terms of social justice, it would be unfortunate if this support were not forthcoming. In terms of future offending, it is likely that neglecting their ability to become financially independent in adult life will have negative consequences.

# 1 INTRODUCTION

This report examines the implementation of a national strategy for the reduction of youth offending. In 1999, the Board invited bids for projects in England and Wales with potential to reduce youth offending. Funding was provided from mid-1999 to March 2002. The funded projects involving education, training and/or employment of at-risk young people are the subject of this report. First, the context is described and the existing evidence on this method of intervention reviewed. Next, the education, training and employment programmes funded under the Board intervention are described and classified, providing a useful map of what is currently on offer for young offenders in England and Wales. We then describe the projects in action, and characteristics of the young people they worked with. Following this, we look at the evidence on the impact of these projects, their costs and the critical issues surrounding implementation. Finally we consider what lessons can be learnt from the Board programme and the implications for future directions.

## 1.1 THE CONTEXT OF THE BOARD INTERVENTION PROGRAMME

Societies work to limit crime. Apart from the pain and misery caused, it is also costly in purely financial terms. The total cost of crime in England and Wales is an estimated £60 billion per annum (Brand and Price, 2000).

Young offenders are of particular interest to those seeking to reduce levels of crime for a number of reasons.

Ten to 17-year-olds are responsible for about a quarter of known offending in Britain (Home Office, 1998) and self-report surveys confirm that levels of offending in this age group are high (Graham and Bowling, 1995).

Previous research reported that 17 was the peak age for offending, and that most young people tended to grow out of crime. This position has been challenged by the Home Office youth crime survey. Young men now continue to offend into their mid-twenties (Graham and Bowling, 1995). This parallels trends elsewhere that show delay across a range of milestones of adolescence (leaving home, finishing education, gaining employment, achieving financial independence [Coleman, 1997]). If offending is becoming less self-limiting, the importance of mounting interventions which can reduce recidivism becomes greater.

Even if the majority 'grow out of crime', a proportion of those who start offending early will become serious and persistent offenders. Offending before the age of 15 is predictive of a serious criminal career (Wilson and Hernnstein, 1985; Yoshikawa, 1994; Rutter et al., 1998; Loeber and Farrington, 1998). The hope is that intervention with young offenders might nip things in the bud, and reduce the number of adult offenders and the severity and frequency of adult offending. After all, young people are laying the building blocks of their future through the qualifications they gain and their experience of work, both predictors of subsequent offending (Parsons, 2002). It seems logical to concern ourselves with this youthful population, if we wish to reduce crime in our society.

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 underscored the need for the youth justice system to develop the capacity to prevent youth offending. The prevention of offending was given statutory status for a range of professionals working with children and young people. Youth Offending Teams (Yots) were introduced in 2000 to 2001 as part of this initiative. The Board was established as an executive arm for the policies and provisions laid out in the Crime and Disorder Act. One of its aims is to encourage interventions which tackle the factors putting a young person at risk of offending. The Board Intervention Programme is part of this context. It provided funds for innovative programmes aimed at reducing offending in England and Wales. A further purpose of the Board programme was to advance our understanding of effective intervention, against a background of limited information on evaluations of offending reduction programmes for the 10-to-17 age group, especially in the UK. Thus, programme funds were contingent on evaluation.

The evidence we review below follows a fairly straightforward structure.

1. Identify factors associated with crime. The weakest evidence in this area is produced by cross-sectional studies, the strongest by longitudinal research.
2. Consider interventions which address these risk factors, and examine whether or not they reduce offending.

### **1.2 RISK FACTORS AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR INTERVENTIONS TARGETING EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT**

Researchers over three decades have identified a range of risk factors associated with persistent offending (e.g. Andrews, 1995; Loeber et al, 1983; Loeber et al 1987; Farrington, 1996; Hawkins et al, 2000, Utting and Vennard, 2000). Andrews (1995) provides a fairly typical list of factors as follows:

1. anti-social/pro-criminal attitudes, values, beliefs and cognitive-emotional states;
2. pro-criminal associates and isolation from anti-criminal others;
3. temperamental and personality factors conducive to criminal activity, including psychopathy, weak socialisation, impulsivity, restless aggressive energy, egocentrism, below-average verbal intelligence, a taste for risk, and weak problem-solving/self-regulation skills.
4. A history of antisocial behaviour evident from a young age, in a variety of settings and involving a number and variety of different acts.
5. Familial factors that include criminality and a variety of psychological problems in the family of origin and, in particular, low levels of affection, caring and cohesiveness, poor parental supervision and discipline practices, and outright neglect and abuse.
6. Low levels of personal educational, vocational or financial achievement and, in particular, an unstable employment record.

Of particular relevance for the current context are those factors relating to poor educational attainment and unstable employment. One illustration from the UK context, of the relationship between education, employment and offending, can be seen in the Social Exclusion Unit's report on reducing reoffending by ex-prisoners (2002). Prisoners were much more likely than the general population to have regularly truanted or been excluded from school, to have left school at 16, to have attended special schools, to have no qualifications, to have literacy and numeracy levels at or below Level 1, or to be



unemployed. Interpreting such relationships is difficult. For example, it is likely that there is no straightforward causal link between unemployment and crime but that there are other factors which mediate the association and that the relationship between the two variables is interactive.

Andrews provides further useful detail, estimating the relative importance of each set of factors. Based on an analysis of 372 studies of the correlates of crime published in English since 1970, he tabulates the mean correlation coefficients of each of these six categories of risk/need factors with criminal behaviour (with number of contributing studies in parentheses):

1. lower class origins	0.16	(97)
2. personal distress/psychopathology	0.08	(226)
3. personal education/vocational achievement	0.12	(129)
4. parental/family factors	0.18	(334)
5. temperament/misconduct/personality	0.21	(621)
6. anti-social attitudes/associates	0.22	(168)

Such a list demonstrates that educational/employment factors, while correlated with or predictive of crime, leave a lot unexplained. According to Andrews' list, they explain only 1.4% of the variance in criminal conduct. Other factors such as antisocial attitudes and temperament are slightly more predictive, explaining around 5% of the variance, but again they are only giving us a small piece of the picture. However, the more risk factors that a young person accumulates, the higher the likelihood of offending (e.g. Farrington (1995)). We can deduce two things from these findings relevant to our current purpose. The first is that since education/employment factors are associated with crime, interventions in these areas might be effective in reducing or preventing crime. The second thing is that they are unlikely to be very effective on their own. Nuttall et al (1998) argue that the most effective interventions for the prevention of offending and reoffending will be those that target more than one risk factor and present an integrated programme. As we shall see, the evidence regarding the effectiveness of interventions aimed at reducing offending is consistent with these deductions.

The value of multi-pronged intervention may be particularly marked for serious young offenders (those who commit particularly serious or violent crimes or are chronic offenders) (Loeber and Farrington, 1998). These young people tend to start getting into trouble early, while still in primary school. They tend to have multiple problems associated with their home environment (e.g. poverty, antisocial parents, neglect/abuse) and their behaviour (e.g. impulsivity and attention deficit disorder). They also have a poor attitude to school and poor academic results, but it seems likely that this may be as a result of their behaviour problems (Lipsey and Derzon, 1998). With this pattern of risk factors, these young people would have particular problems in entering training and employment, post-16. However, while help into training and employment would therefore seem critical, provision would also need to address their behavioural needs.

As one might expect from the fact that criminal behaviour is predicted from an accumulation of risk factors, those young people who are exposed to risk in one form or another may be protected by 'resilience' factors. Summarising the field, Hawkins and colleagues (2000) list the following as important:

- ❖ intelligence/ academic achievement;
- ❖ resilient temperament;
- ❖ appropriate values within community;
- ❖ social competence;
- ❖ pro-social involvement.

The presence of these factors has been found to reduce an individual's likelihood of offending. There is evidence that we could add employment to this list. Farrington and his colleagues (1986) found that official crime rates were lower for young men (14 to 18 and a half) during periods when they were employed than when they were unemployed (also see May, 1999). Interestingly, this difference was only observed for offences involving material gain (theft, burglary, robbery, fraud). There was no effect of unemployment on other offences (violence, vandalism, drug use). This suggests that legitimate access to money was protective. Pro-social involvement includes commitment to school for those in the compulsory schooling age range. For example, Ayers et al's (1999) longitudinal study of young people who had stopped offending found that young males who were bonded with society and had skills for conventional involvement in school and other social systems were more likely to desist from offending than those who did not have these attributes. For young women, maternal bonding was the most important factor. For both groups, commitment to school was significant.

Based on this evidence, a promising strategy for crime prevention is to minimise the risk factors and maximise the protective factors for young people at risk from offending or who have already offended. Interventions targeting education, training and employment are a logical option.

### **1.3 AVAILABLE EVIDENCE ON EFFECTIVE INTERVENTIONS AND THE PLACE OF STRATEGIES INVOLVING EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT.**

When we consider intervention, we balance the need to have a safe society and the desire to have a fair or good society. The choices in response to crime are broadly punishment, deterrence and/or rehabilitation. Here we are concerned with rehabilitation (and prevention). There are two perspectives on rehabilitation. The first is a utilitarian one; does rehabilitation work? Is it the best method of reducing offending? The second relates to social justice. It is well documented that to some extent offenders are a social product. A clear example of this is the over-representation of Afro-Americans in the US prison population. The most plausible explanation of this statistic is that it reflects the socially disadvantaged position of this group (see James Wilson in Loeber and Farrington, 1998). Behind the risk factors reviewed above, this shadow of social disadvantage can be detected (see also 'Bridging the Gap', SEU, 1999). From this perspective, we owe it to young offenders to try to redress their misfortune. The relevance of this debate in reviewing the effectiveness of interventions is that from the first position, the key issue is whether offending is reduced. From the second position, improving young offenders' lives is a goal in itself, key outcome variables would be things such as increased levels of employment or skills. Here, the focus is not on whether or not to offer these young people education, training and employment, but how best to do it.

The evidence of the effectiveness of British programmes at reducing recidivism in the young is very limited (Utting and Vennard, 2000). However, largely on the basis of research

carried out in North America, there is convergence that intervention can reduce offending both in adults and juveniles. Lipsey (1995) has carried out a meta-analysis of 400 studies exploring the effectiveness of treatments on young offenders. Overall, he reports a 10% reduction in offending as a result of treatment. While Lipsey warns of the difficulties of identifying effective programmes with great precision from such meta-analyses, the results suggest that certain broad types of programme are a better bet than others.

- ❖ Interventions that focused on the young people's behaviour and skills (rather than, for example, internal states) were the most effective, especially where these were delivered in 'multimodal packages'.
- ❖ Much less effective were programmes involving counselling (including vocational counselling or careers advice without a job-finding element).
- ❖ Of particular relevance in the present context, the most effective programmes run within the juvenile justice system (probation, prison or parole) were those targeting employment. This was not true for programmes run by voluntary and non-government organisations, although the reason for this was not clear.
- ❖ Lipsey found that greater involvement of researchers in treatment design and implementation was associated with effectiveness. He interpreted this finding to support the importance of supervision and monitoring in ensuring good implementation. This is intuitively sensible and is supported by Hollin (1995), who adds that adequate resource and staff training are also important factors in ensuring programmes work well.
- ❖ Provision of 100 or more contact hours, delivered at two or more contacts per week over a period of 26 weeks was associated with effectiveness.

Based on 'research and practice', McGuire (1995) adds to this list the following guidelines for more effective programmes:

- ❖ risk classification – high-risk offenders should receive more intensive services;
- ❖ criminogenic need – if the aim is to reduce offending, target the factors which are most likely to cause people to offend. The relationship between employment and offending explored by Farrington et al (1986) is consistent with this argument;
- ❖ responsivity – participatory methods are preferable to those which are didactic or loose and unstructured;
- ❖ community base – programmes based in the community tend to achieve greater effects.

Consistent with this, in the UK Nuttall et al (1998) have argued that crime reduction should be addressed through an integrated strategy, echoing Graham and Bennett's (1995) conclusions that interventions with more than one focus, which are integrated into a package, are more cost effective than those with a single focus. More recently, Morris et al (1999) have published a critical review of evidence published from 1988 onwards considering strategies that have been successful for engaging disaffected young people. They also conclude that longer-term, multi-stranded programmes which are devised and delivered through a multi-agency approach are the most effective. They add that this mix of programme elements should be delivered in a logical sequence and that there should be a focus on the individual young person through action planning, with clear target-setting. They recommend that programmes should aim to develop young people's confidence and self-esteem before raising education and employment issues, but this is not supported by

Lipsey's analysis (1995), which found that targeting internal states rather than behaviour rarely showed an impact on offending behaviour.

Lipsey and Denzin (1998) have carried out a meta-analysis of programmes delivered to serious young offenders. One might think that this group would be particularly difficult to treat but, optimistically, the results of Lipsey and Denzin suggest that the impact of such programmes is slightly greater for the more serious offenders than for the less serious. For this group, the most consistently effective programmes were those targeting inter-personal skills, individual counselling and behavioural issues. This may well reflect the particular significance of antisocial behaviour in the aetiology of serious offending. Multiple service programmes were also effective. The four employment related programmes (which only included those that actually involved paid work) and two academic programmes showed moderate effects overall (equated effect sizes = .30 and .29 respectively). Such effect sizes are good for social interventions and well worth having. However, there was a good deal of variation between the programmes within each of these categories (employment and academic), some were very effective and others were not effective. The four vocational programmes, which included vocational training, career counselling, job search and interview skills, actually showed a slightly negative effect. Four wilderness/challenge programmes were also found to be ineffective.

Specific to the area of employment and training, the US Task Force on Employment and Training for Court-Involved Youth examined programmes designed to prepare young offenders for the job market (Frey, 1999). The Task Force included a range of professionals - researchers, experienced service providers, local and government agencies, and representatives of the business world. Programmes were examined from all these perspectives. The Task Force concluded that programmes that were successful at getting young offenders into the labour market were:

- ❖ well tailored to the target-age group;
- ❖ addressed work-based learning, academic skills and life skills;
- ❖ provided young people with an adult project manager/mentor/advocate to support them and elicit the support of their family;
- ❖ followed up training with careers advice and job placement;
- ❖ followed young people up over a longer period.

The implementation of this type of programme required inter-agency collaboration, with all systems that affect young people working together, including the youth justice system, the education system and social services, as well as community-based organisations and the labour market.

In recognition of all the evidence in support of multi-factor programmes, the main thrust of recent UK social policy has been towards the integration of services at local and governmental levels to enable individuals to connect with appropriate services for their needs.

#### **1.4 THE RESEARCH BASE ON EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT INTERVENTIONS IN THE UK**

Utting and Vennard (2000) have published a useful review of promising UK programmes for youth offenders in the community. The overwhelming majority of the Board education,

training and employment projects which are the focus of this report are community based. Three of Utting and Vennard's categories are of relevance: education, training and employment projects; leisure, sport and constructive leisure activities; and motor projects and these are summarised below.

### **Education, training and employment projects**

The Apex Cue Ten project was funded by the Scottish Office and aimed to reduce offending in 14 to 16-year-olds by developing their employment-related skills. The first part of this 26-week programme focused on improving social skills and attitudes to training and education. The second offered placements in workplaces or further education. These persistent young offenders had the typical mix of problems: family dislocation; time spent in care; failure in mainstream education; health problems; and drug and alcohol misuse. Cue Ten staff found that these young people could not cope with the formal curriculum that had been used in previous projects. The programme had to be adapted as they went along, and some aspects of the programme, notably access to local employment opportunities, never happened. Fifty-five percent of the 86 young people who started the programme completed the first 13 weeks, 40% completed all 26 weeks. Some had to be excluded because of violence, drug use or seriously disruptive behaviour; others stopped attending, usually associated with difficulties in their home lives. Less serious offending histories in the 12 months before entry to the project predicted completion. In terms of outcomes, the evaluators conclude that no convincing case could be made for the impact of this programme on young people's immediate employment prospects. The reconviction rates of those who completed the project were better than those who did not complete, although not significantly so. However, the self-selecting nature of the completers, which dogs this area of research, makes such a comparison of limited value.

Two further probation-based employment and training schemes for 16 to 25-year-olds (not covered by Utting and Vennard) have also been the subject of a recent evaluation (Sarno, Hearnden and Hough, 2000). Unfortunately, these projects also experienced considerable problems. In particular:

- ❖ The mentoring side of the projects did not work well. There were plenty of volunteer mentors but offenders did not want mentoring.
- ❖ Various problems were experienced during the inception year, and the projects only really started functioning in their second year.
- ❖ Uncertainty over the future of a project made long-term planning impossible.

Participants in the projects (*Asset* and *Springboard*) had lower reconviction rates in the year following their enrolment than those who were referred to *Asset* but did not attend (43% and 45% of *Asset* and *Springboard* participants, respectively, compared with 56% of *Asset* non-attenders). However, as with the Cue Ten evaluation, the self-selecting nature of the groups being compared makes it impossible to draw any reliable conclusions from this information. Also, difficulties in obtaining longer term monitoring data made it hard to draw firm conclusions about whether offenders sustained employment or training outcomes. Nonetheless, offenders and probation officers valued the projects, and some young people gained jobs and qualifications as a result of the schemes. There was a general feeling that *Asset* and its clients had not benefited significantly from the introduction of New Deal. Fifty-eight percent of the 138 young offenders referred to New Deal left before joining an option.

### **Leisure, sport and constructive leisure activities**

The rationale behind these types of programmes is: that young people will have less time for crime; that they will build self-esteem and a sense of personal achievement; that they will learn team work, responsibility and self-discipline; to challenge their aggression (i.e. promote pro-social behaviour), to create opportunities for socially acceptable risk-taking; and that the fun activities will be a 'hook' for preventative and protective activities. As mentioned above, Lipsey and Wilson's meta-analysis identified 'wilderness' and outdoor challenge programmes as the least effective type of intervention for serious or violent young offenders. While these types of programmes are a significant element of the provision by youth justice, probation and the voluntary sector, there are few evaluations. The West Yorkshire Sports Counselling Project evaluated a programme which provided weekly three-hour sessions for a maximum of 12 weeks. As with the employment programmes reviewed above, there was a punishing drop-out. A third of those referred never attended. Only 50% of those young people who started completed the course. A comparison of two-year reconviction rates for 38 participants, comparing them with a matched group of probation clients who did not take part, found no significant differences between those who had spent fewer than eight weeks on the course and their controls. However, those who attended for eight or more weeks were significantly less likely to have been reconvicted. This may be interpreted as evidence of the effectiveness of the programme if received in a sufficient dose. Alternatively, those young people who could sustain interest in the course may be less likely to offend in any case. The lack of any comparison group once again makes unambiguous interpretation of the data impossible. In a review of a number of physical activities programmes, Taylor et al (1999) recommended that such programmes should offer a quick turnaround between referral and being offered a place to minimise the risk of drop-out, and there should be arrangements for continuing the learning process beyond the physical activities component.

Fairbridge is a physical activities programme that includes an extended opportunity for learning. Five Fairbridge projects have been funded in the Board education, training and employment stream and are discussed below. Some research by Kent Probation service suggests that 48% commit further offences in the two years following enrolment on a Fairbridge project, compared with a Home Office Offender Group Reconviction Score (OGRS) of 85% (Whitfield, 1995).

### **Motor projects**

Car crime is a significant factor in youth crime. Motor projects are aimed at those young people who are fascinated with cars and include car mechanics and maintenance. One such project, the Ilderton Motor Project, was the subject of a reconviction study. Thirty probation clients referred to Ilderton were compared with a matched group of 40 clients with similar criminal histories. The Ilderton group were significantly less likely to have reoffended in the following three years (Wilkinson and Morgan, 1995; Wilkinson, 1997).

### **SUMMARY**

There is good evidence that young offenders have often failed to gain a good level of education or qualifications. We know from cohort studies that this will predict an unstable employment pattern characterised by low-paid and casual work, with frequent episodes of unemployment. Young offenders are substantially more likely to be unemployed than their peers. Because of these relationships, programmes targeting education, training and

employment offer a plausible method of reducing youth offending. However, because of the complex nature of these young people's lives, interventions must be prepared to address not only their training and employment needs but also their family and living situation, drug and alcohol problems and anti-social or challenging behaviour. The research evidence on whether or not such projects have indeed proved to be effective in reducing offending tends to be inconclusive but generally supports the value of this type of intervention.

## 2 THE PROJECTS

Below we summarise the broad characteristics of the projects included under the education, training and employment stream. This provides an overview of the types of education, training and employment provision currently available in England and Wales. (Individual descriptions of each programme are given in Appendix 1.)

There are 42<sup>1</sup> Board projects under the category of education, training and employment for which we have data. These projects proved to be very varied but it was necessary to group them for analysis, in particular because individual projects often had fairly small numbers. Broadly speaking, they fell into three categories:

1. Those actually providing education, training and employment (what Lipsey would have classified as employment related and academic programmes).
2. Those acting as brokers for provision in the form of careers advice, etc. (Lipsey's vocational programmes).
3. Those providing diversionary activity (similar to Lipsey's wilderness/challenge programmes).

We subdivided the first category of education, training and employment providers into two, because 17 projects (40% of all the education, training and employment projects) followed a particular model, that of INCLUDE, and it was desirable to look at this substantial group on its own. The remainder of education, training and employment providers (referred to here as INCLUDE-type projects) were considered separately. In this category, projects offer a mix of educational courses, skills training and work experience, in the case of INCLUDE and the Prince's Trust, based on a national model and underpinned by a national organisation.

The majority of the 'diversionary' programmes were run by Fairbridge. Fairbridge and the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme emphasise physical activity as a positive and diversionary activity and try to lever in other skills training, counselling, etc. All have a national model and some national organisation.

The third broad category, school inclusion/careers advice projects offer varying degrees of limited skills training, but are mainly concerned with helping young people into suitable education, training and employment. These projects tended to be locally developed rather than applying a national model.

There were a number of projects which did not fit comfortably into any of the above and have been grouped as 'other projects'. This group of projects also tended to be locally developed.

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<sup>1</sup> The Board have grouped nine Welsh projects as one. However, these projects are run in nine separate locations by nine project teams, linked by a district manager and a national organisation.



The projects also differ considerably in terms of the amount of input involved, with the INCLUDE programme being the most intensive. Many of the projects have some element of mentoring.

## **2.1 INCLUDE**

### **2.1.1. Project description**

The INCLUDE projects involved in the Board Intervention Programme are based on an existing model which has been implemented in England and Wales for some time and is supported by a well-developed central administration. The traditional client group for INCLUDE has been young people aged between 14 and 18 who have become disengaged from education, training and employment for a variety of reasons. The core intention of INCLUDE is to reintroduce these young people into education, training and employment through a six-month intensive programme made up of input by both INCLUDE staff and local providers. The central administration ensures a clear structure for the programme and has in place a well-developed system for assessment and monitoring which ensures the collection of data at local level necessary to monitor the nationally set project targets.

There are 17 INCLUDE projects in the Board Intervention Programme being mounted throughout England and Wales. Sixteen are aimed at 16 to 18-year-olds and one at under 16s (142, see below). Although, in principle, the INCLUDE programme offered under the Board scheme is similar to the original model, the client group is slightly different, focusing explicitly on young offenders. Thus, referrals have been sought specifically from Yots, and in 15 of the 17 projects nearly all referrals come through Yots. This has been achieved by negotiating a very close relationship with Yots from the outset and, in most cases, the INCLUDE project manager has a desk within the Yot.

INCLUDE projects offer the most intensive provision of all the education, training and employment interventions, and students are expected to attend for six months (varyingly translated into 24 and 26 weeks). There are three main components to the programme:

- ❖ education/training through local providers such as further education (FE) colleges (this typically takes the form of input in literacy, numeracy and information technology [IT]);
- ❖ personal and social development through one-to-one work with the project manager, group activities, etc;
- ❖ work experience with local employers.

Ideally, after some preliminary work with the project manager, identifying the student's key skill deficits and areas of interest, the student will spend his or her time as follows:

- ❖ one day per week in college studying literacy, numeracy and information technology;
- ❖ one day per week on the Yot/INCLUDE premises, engaged in group work and activities aimed at personal and social development;
- ❖ three days per week work experience, where possible based on the student's preferences. Alternatives, where finding a suitable work placement is difficult, are vocational training, job search, outdoor activities or individual work with the project manager.

Students receive £45 per week plus a travel allowance of £10 while enrolled on the INCLUDE programme.

Although local employers and providers deliver a lot of the programme, the project manager's role is a critical one, underpinning both the provision and the student. On the provision side, the project manager needs to be aware of all the options in terms of available courses and must find suitable work placements for the students. For the students, they act as mentors; 'hand holding', helping smooth problems on placement, liaising with parents, chasing no-shows, contacting other helping agencies such as health services, drug and alcohol workers and etc. and just generally being there for young people to talk to and to encourage and build motivation to work. This is a fairly intensive job and the project manager's maximum case-load is 10 young people at one time.

### 2.1.2. Aims and objectives

The overall objectives of INCLUDE are to:

- ❖ identify key skills deficits;
- ❖ assist young people to improve their literacy, numeracy and life skills;
- ❖ assist young people in exploring employment options and help equip them for a working environment;
- ❖ help young people to achieve a broadly based, relevant training which leads to an approved qualification and assists them to achieve progression to employment;
- ❖ raise levels of motivation and self-esteem among young people to enable them to gain access to and maintain themselves in further education and training;
- ❖ support young people through periods of difficult transition;
- ❖ reduce offending.

The projects included in this group are:

- ❖ East Project – 34;
- ❖ North West Project -124;
- ❖ North East Project – 142;
- ❖ London Project – 208;
- ❖ Welsh Project – 212;
- ❖ Welsh Projects - 227 (includes 9 separate projects);
- ❖ South West Project – 279;
- ❖ North West Project – 296;
- ❖ North East Project – 391.

## 2.2 INCLUDE TYPE

### 2.2.1. Project description

These projects are variable in duration and intensity, but typically involve full- or part-time work or training. Typically, the projects include the young person working towards an accredited qualification and may involve a variety of agencies in their delivery. Unlike INCLUDE and the Prince's Trust most are locally developed and have adapted existing provisions or have had to develop provision from scratch. This has almost certainly contributed to the fact that many have made very late starts and have, as yet, taken rather a small number of referrals. The projects included in this group are:

- ❖ The Prince's Trust - a volunteer project running in London (72) and a more complex national programme (150) involving five sites;
- ❖ Getting Sorted - South East Project (223);<sup>2</sup>
- ❖ Step On - South East Project (243);
- ❖ London Project (I248e);
- ❖ The Fort - South East project (367);
- ❖ Springboard Solutions - North East Project (416).

### 2.2.2. Aims and objectives

These projects intend to:

- ❖ mentor young people;
- ❖ help them to gain education/employment related skills;
- ❖ enable the young people to gain work experience.

## 2.3 FAIRBRIDGE AND OTHER PHYSICAL OR 'DIVERSIONARY' PROGRAMMES

### 2.3.1. Project descriptions

Like INCLUDE, the Fairbridge model is well established (running for around 18 years) and has a national network and considerable previous experience of working with disaffected youth. Although individual projects have their own personality, there is a standard model underpinned by a particular philosophy. The programme offered is described as being unique to each young person, shaped by their interests and aspirations. It is central to the Fairbridge model that participation is entirely voluntary and it is up to the young person involved how long they spend at Fairbridge and what activities they participate in. However, there is a framework. Young people first attend an induction day to allow them to decide whether or not they are interested in getting more involved. This is followed by a residential week, involving outdoors activities and focusing on building group and social skills. After this, a range of follow-on courses are offered, addressing social skills, life skills and basic skills. In theory, the programme is intended to take 12 weeks, but in practice it is quite open-ended.

There are five Fairbridge projects involved in the Board Intervention Programme: West Midlands (204); London (252); South West (278); Merseyside (295); and North East (318).

There are three other programmes that focus on physical activity. These are the South East Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme (12) and the midnight basketball programmes (339, Wales and 404, East Midlands).<sup>3</sup>

### 2.3.2. Aims and objectives

The intention of the projects is to divert young people from negative behaviour, and in the case of the Fairbridge projects, to disrupt their current lifestyles and patterns by taking them away from their normal surrounds into a remote, predominantly outdoor location to

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<sup>2</sup> 223 had serious start up problems and only really started recruiting in June 2002. It therefore did not supply data for the reconviction study. In addition, the data received on this project were limited and it has therefore not been included in the 42 projects specifically covered in this report, although the findings are represented in the section on implementation.

<sup>3</sup> Descriptive data have been collected on these projects, but there is nothing available at the level of the young person. As the projects received small grants and they deal with large numbers of young people, this was not financially viable. They are not included in the 42 projects covered in this report.

reduce the risk of distraction. The activities they encounter are intended to demonstrate that learning can be exciting and fun, to develop their self-confidence, their self-discipline, give them a sense of personal achievement and to challenge their aggression. There are opportunities for socially acceptable risk-taking and that the fun activities will be a ‘hook’ for preventative and protective activities. There is an emphasis on group work through which the programmes seek to develop young people’s social skills, their ability to interact harmoniously with others, both peers and team leaders, and their sense of responsibility. In the Fairbridge projects, this work is then consolidated through welfare support and guidance and through further skills development.

## **2.4 SCHOOL INCLUSION/CAREERS ADVICE**

### **2.4.1. Project descriptions**

These nine projects focus on school inclusion for younger groups or career options for older young people, using a model similar to Connexions. This will certainly involve some conventional careers advice and work with local employers or training providers to establish opportunities for this hard-to-place group. Most projects also address ‘barriers’ to placement, such as housing, family, or drug or alcohol problems. The duration and intensity of the programmes vary, even within projects, some young people receiving considerably more attention than others. Contact time is typically more limited than projects such as INCLUDE, which provide a full-time training programme. Thus, 30 hours contact time on this type of programme would represent a heavy involvement, probably spread over a number of months. With the exception of Future Base (which is an Apex project), these projects are locally developed and do not have a national structure.

The projects included in this group are:

- ❖ North West Project (163);
- ❖ South West Project (18);
- ❖ RAFT - North East Project (97);<sup>4</sup>
- ❖ In 2 Win - North East Project (98);<sup>5</sup>
- ❖ Other Options - East Project (241);
- ❖ Future Base - East Project (282);
- ❖ Crime Cut - Yorkshire & The Humber Project (350);
- ❖ Scape - Yorkshire & Humber Project (49);
- ❖ Education Inclusion - South East Project (395);<sup>6</sup>
- ❖ Crossroads - South East Project (396).

### **2.4.2. Aims and objectives**

These projects aim to enable young people to make connections with education, training and employment and to sustain those connections.

## **2.5 OTHER PROJECTS**

### **2.5.1. Description**

The remaining projects do not fit into any of the above categories. Project 95 offers no training itself, but involves a wide network of referral services, including a drugs

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<sup>4</sup> 97 and 98, partner programmes, would not supply data for the reconviction study for confidentiality reasons.

<sup>5</sup> 98 submitted supplied too little information to be included specifically in the 42 projects covered in this report.

<sup>6</sup> This project merged with 396.

programme and a Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. Projects 399 and 418 target particular areas, ostensibly related to young offender's criminal proclivities, the former works on car skills, the latter deals with fire-fighting and the effects of arson.

Two projects focus solely on raising young people's literacy and numeracy skills; 108 offers computers and a literacy software programme to children's homes; 392 is a Dyspel programme, a national organisation which offers tutorials in literacy for young offenders with dyslexia.

The projects in this group are:

- ❖ RAP - London Project 108;<sup>7</sup>
- ❖ Dyspel - South East Project 392;
- ❖ North West Project 95;
- ❖ Trax - South East 399;
- ❖ Arson Task Force - North East Project 418.

### 2.5.2. Aims and objectives

These projects work with young people in diverse ways. Please see the appendix for fuller descriptions of the projects

#### **SUMMARY**

Projects funded under the education, training and employment stream were very varied and included programmes which would not typically be categorised as education/employment, for example the physical/diversionary activities group. Nonetheless, they did all address education/employment to some extent. In order to describe the effects of such a programme of intervention, it was necessary to consider projects in groups rather than individually, especially when looking at reconviction data, as numbers in individual projects were small.

Projects fell into three broad categories:

1. those actually providing education, training and employment;
2. those acting as brokers for provision in the form of careers advice, etc. (Lipsey's vocational programmes);
3. those providing diversionary activity. Around 40% of all the projects were INCLUDE projects, a subdivision of the first category (similar to Lipsey's wilderness/challenge programmes).

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<sup>7</sup> 108 operated in children's homes and was not suitable for the reconviction study.

## 3 BASIC DESCRIPTIVE DATA

This section provides more detailed information on the nature of the projects in action, and the young people they worked with.

### 3.1 METHODOLOGY

Three layers of data have been used.

- ❖ First, reports were provided by local evaluators. While a template was given for reporting, the reports varied in their format and quality and, despite everybody's best efforts to achieve uniformity, coverage in these reports differs in a number of ways. In terms of quantitative data, most evaluators have produced clear data on the number of young people going through the project, and around two-thirds report data on the average amount of time young people spend on the project (although in variable form, e.g. weeks, hours, sessions). Many projects (approximately 80%) have reported the age, gender and ethnicity of the young people - although in some cases, the data reported are incomplete for one reason or another. Beyond this, the quantitative data reported are more sparse, and reporting formats vary substantially between projects, making a quantitative summary across projects difficult. In addition to the quantitative data, local evaluators have described the nature and implementation of the projects and the characteristics and outcomes of the young people in qualitative terms. Some of these qualitative reports were of a very high standard, offering a thoughtful and objective account of how projects worked, the problems faced and student outcomes. Other reports were sound, but concentrated more on quantitative data with an overview discussion of implementation issues. A few reports were poor, in particular giving little information on how people were selected for interview and how the data were analysed to ensure that conclusions were not biased or overly impressionistic. In their defence, local evaluators were paid on average £12,000 to collect data and report on projects running over a period of two or three years. They had to supply the central evaluators with information, but also the projects they were evaluating. The young people being studied are a notoriously difficult group to research. They are not good at keeping appointments, there is a high drop-out rate and the information being collected is sometimes highly sensitive. These factors make complete data sets expensive to collect. Evaluation strategies were planned and costed at local level and only once projects were under way was a national evaluation tier put in place. This made a consistent approach difficult to achieve.
- ❖ Secondly, we have compiled our own database of 1,713 young people. We requested names, dates of birth, PNC where available, start and end dates on projects and project duration from all projects offering provision for young offenders (N=42). Data were requested for all young people enrolled on projects between the beginning of September 1999 and the end of May 2001. Thirty-six projects provided some information. The database represents a 68% sample of the total number of young people on these projects (see Table1). This shortfall is largely due to the fact that the reports covered the period up to approximately November 2001 as compared to May 2001 for the database. Since most projects only started recruiting in April 2000

and a significant number did not get started until around October 2000 we estimate that the May 2001 cut off represented approximately 70% of the total recruitment. The particularly low number of students on the database for the 'Other' category is due to the fact that one large project (IS 95) with a recruitment of 350 did not provide data. In any case this project would be difficult to categorise as it was made up of a number of widely differing projects. In the 'school inclusion/careers' category one large project supplied only a sample of their data. In summary, the database is a fairly complete and therefore unbiased sample of the young people attending the 36 projects which supplied data.

- ❖ Thirdly, for students on the database, we attempted to collect fuller information on student characteristics and outcomes from the three principle programme types: INCLUDE, Fairbridge and school inclusion/careers. We were quite successful for INCLUDE and Fairbridge, as both of these projects have a national organisation which includes a database. Additional information for the school inclusion/careers group was more patchy. In addition, for the remaining projects, we collected all available data on the students on our database, most notably reconviction data which could be obtained through the PNC.

The database is used in this section to provide basic descriptive data, in section 4 to examine outcomes and in section 5 as a base for the study of reconviction and offending. The data from the database were always compared with the local evaluator reports. In most cases, the findings agreed. Where they did not, this has been discussed. Sometimes local reports gave quantitative data not available on the database, and this is also mentioned where applicable. Finally, qualitative accounts and interpretation made in the local reports have been interwoven with the picture emerging from the database in sections 4 to 6.

### 3.2 ENROLMENT AND STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

Table 1 Enrolment and course duration by category of project

Category of Project	N of students enrolled	N of students on database	Percent enrolled students on database <sup>8</sup>	Average duration of contact with student	Average number of hours contact overall	Average hours contact weekly (intensity)
INCLUDE (education/work exp.) (n=17)	611	495	84%	17 weeks	370 hours	22 hours
INCLUDE like (education/work exp.) (n=7)	741	347	57%	12 weeks	72 hours	6 hours
Fairbridge plus (physical/diversionary) (n=6)	454	273	60%	17 weeks	83 hours	5 hours
Careers (n=7)	989	440	54%	19 weeks	11 hours	1 hour
Other (n=5)	607	164	68%	2 weeks	8 hours	4 hours
Total (n=42)	3,353	1,718	68%			

\* missing data on one project

All 42 projects supplied information on the numbers of students they dealt with, the approximate number of sessions attended and over what period (Table 1). These aggregated figures have to be interpreted with care. An important difference between projects is the intensity of contact with the project during the period of enrolment. INCLUDE is by far the most intensive provision, with young people being in contact for on average of 22 hours per week over the period of their enrolment. INCLUDE students also had by far the highest average number of hours attended. INCLUDE projects kept good records of attendance and we can be fairly confident about these figures. On aggregate, the intensity of contact estimated for the other projects offering education/training/employment experience was much less (six hours weekly), although there were was substantial variation between projects.

Students on The Prince's Trust Volunteer programme (72) attended an average of 39 full-time days over 12 weeks. In the Community Service (probation) project (163), students attended the number of hours ordered by the court (on average 100 hours). The Prince's Trust Five project varied hugely from site to site, with intensity of contact varying from 17 to 18 hours per week, to two hours per week. The Fairbridge programmes started with an intensive residential week. Subsequent follow-up stretched over 12 weeks or more, but accounted for a relatively small proportion of the average hours spent on the programme (about 25% of the total). The career-type projects, predictably from their focus, involved

<sup>8</sup> Percentage of students enrolled on projects providing data for database (n of projects= 36; n of students =2516)



relatively small numbers of contact hours spread over quite a long period (19 weeks). Two projects in the 'Other' category offered highly specialised weekly activities, and local evaluators report that student turnover was very high. The small average duration of this group of projects overall reflects a high drop-out rate. Despite variations both between projects and within projects (some young people stayed a long time, others had very little contact), it is clear that INCLUDE students received a substantial programme (relatively speaking), programmes offering education/ training/employment or physical/diversionary activities were in between, and careers projects and the 'Other' category gave relatively low amounts of input.

**Table 2 Age in years by category of project**

Percentages

Category of Project	13 and under	14	15	16	17	18+
<b>INCLUDE</b> (education/work experience) (total n=495) (known n=437)		1%	3%	45%	45%	7%
<b>INCLUDE like</b> (education/work experience) (total n=307) (known n=280)	1%	4%	18%	35%	22%	20%
<b>Fairbridge plus</b> (physical and diversionary activities) (total n=273) (known n=264)	4%	27%	38%	18%	13%	1%
<b>School inclusion/ careers</b> (total n=393) (known n=323)	6%	15%	21%	29%	23%	5%
<b>Other</b> (total n=164) (known n=118)	12%	19%	24%	29%	10%	6%
<b>Total</b> (total n=1718) (known n=1529)	4%	11%	18%	33%	27%	8%

\* N of missing cases=210

The mode age for students was 16 years and 85% of all students were aged 15 or over. This represents a sample of young offenders biased towards older age groups. For example, in the unpublished reconviction study carried out on a cohort of offenders in 1997 (Jennings and Howard, 2000), only 66% of offenders were aged 15 or over. The older age bias is particularly noticeable for the INCLUDE group, where 96% were 16-plus. All but one of the INCLUDE programmes were specifically for the 16-plus age group. Students attending Fairbridge projects tended to be younger, with 75% under 16. Fairbridge project managers reported this as a difficult readjustment. The inclusion of a specifically youth offending stream of referral had led to a younger intake, which they experienced as rather disorganised and chaotic.

**Table 3 Gender and ethnicity by category of project**  
Percentages

Category of Project	% Male	% White
<b>INCLUDE</b> (education/ work experience)	84%	90%
<b>INCLUDE-like</b> (education/ work experience)	80%	92%
<b>Fairbridge plus</b> (physical and diversionary activities)	86%	84%
<b>School inclusion/ careers</b>	83%	95%
<b>Other</b>	87%	98%
<b>Total</b>	84% (n=1681)	91% (n=1404)
<b>N of missing cases</b>	37	314

The percentage ratio of males to females (85% to 15%) is very similar across the different types of projects and fairly much in line with the percentage of male to female offenders, although, even compared with this population, males are slightly over-represented. In the Jennings and Howard study (2000), the male-to-female ratio was 80% to 20%, which mirrors national rates (e.g. see Farrington, 1996). We considered the possibility that this may reflect reluctance on the part of females to attend male-dominated groups. However, the project types which emphasise group activity, the INCLUDE-like projects, Fairbridge and the 'Other' category were not significantly different in their gender breakdown.

The vast majority of the sample were reported white (91%: 4.5% Afro-Caribbean, 1% Asian and 3.5% other non-white) a slight under representation of non-white offenders compared with the ethnic breakdown for the adult offending population. In 1999/2000, of 1.3 million notifiable offences, 12% were committed by people classified as non-white (7% black, 4% Asian and 1% other non-white). There was variation at local level with some projects, particularly in inner cities, having high percentages of non-white students. Where discussed by local evaluators, the ethnicity of the students on the education, training and employment programmes mirrored their local population.

**Table 4 Referral agency by category of project**  
Percentages

Category of Project	Yot	ESW/ PRU/ School	Careers service	Probatio n Service	Social services	Self	Police	Other
<b>INCLUDE</b> (n=477)	83%	1%	8%		2%	2%		4%
<b>INCLUDE- like</b> (n=290)	26%	22%	5%	36%	1%	1%		9%
<b>Fairbridge plus</b> (n=217)	54%	18%	6%	3%	7%	4%	2%	7%
<b>School inclusion/ careers</b> (n=278)	64%	6%	2%	1%	2%		25%	
<b>Other</b> (n=79)	65%	18%	1%		10%			6%
<b>Total</b> (n=1,341)	60%	11%	5%	9%	3%	1%	6%	5%

N of missing cases = 301

While the majority of referrals came from Yots, the probation service and the police, 17% of young people were being referred from school, the careers service, social services or self-referral. Not all the young people attending these projects were offenders, although all were considered at risk of offending. Within the INCLUDE-like group, there was considerable variation between projects. One was based within the probation service, which supplied all referrals. The Prince's Trust Volunteer project took a large number of referrals through New Deal. This illustrates the point that projects offering education/training/employment provision were part of the provision network for national training programmes such as Learning Gateway and New Deal (for many of the careers projects, young people were simply referred on to Learning Gateway and New Deal).

**Table 5 Profile of ‘risk’ characteristics by category of project**

Percentages

Category of Project	Living (% living with both natural parents)	Care (% currently or previously in care)	Drugs (% regularly using or dependant on drugs)	School history (% not attending or excluded from school)
<b>INCLUDE</b> (education/work experience)	23%  (not known=7%)	21%  (not known=24%)	60%  (not known=24%)	66%  (not known=16%)
<b>INCLUDE like</b> (education/ work experience)	27%	*	*	100%
<b>Fairbridge plus</b> (physical and diversionary activities)	**	23%	30%	88%
<b>School inclusion/ careers</b>	28%	57%	92%	76%
<b>Other</b>	26%	20%	0%	89%
<b>Total</b>	35% (n=839)	24% (n=634)	51% (n=532)	80% (n=732)
<b>N of missing cases</b>	879	1,084	1,660	1,186

\* Data not available

\*\* The Fairbridge database did not distinguish between single parent and both parents; 75% of students lived with either both natural parents or one parent, with or without partner.

Table 5 provides a description of a population of young people with problems in a range of major areas, their current living situation, their experience of major family upheaval, their reliance on illegal drugs and their disrupted schooling. The national figure for young people living with two natural parents is 81%, for those currently in care 0.5%. This group deviates substantially from the norm. We should exercise caution because of the large amounts of unknown data. However, the INCLUDE projects, where the level of missing data are relatively small (between 15 and 25%), confirm a picture of high risk. Also numerous individual projects supply further data to demonstrate the problems experienced by this group. For example, one project reports that 29% of the 1999-2000 cohort had statements of special educational need (as opposed to 3% of the school population).

Another reports that approximately one-third of the students have special needs such as global learning difficulties, dyslexia and attention deficit/hyperactive disorder. A further local evaluator cites that 42% of students had low levels of literacy and numeracy or other special educational needs at referral, 85% had been excluded from school, and an important sub-group had a substantial history of care. We have data for 283 students tested on their literacy and numeracy levels on entry to INCLUDE - 57% were below Level 1 on

the Basic Skills Agency numeracy assessment and 63% below Level 1 in literacy. This demonstrates pervasive and quite severe basic skills deficits in this population.

Although such hard data are not available for other projects, it is likely that the situation is similar. Generally, reports describe a group of young people at high risk in a number of the crucial aspects of their living, consistent with Table 5. Later in the report, we provide further corroboration for this in terms of previous history of offending. The profile of students is likely to interact with the kind of provision they need. One local evaluator on a careers project commented that where youngsters had multiple problems, in particular a history of school exclusion and being in care, the provision offered was not sufficient to be helpful. These young people needed an intensive input. Matching the young person to the correct placement is an important issue to which we will return.

### **SUMMARY**

There were clear differences between the categories of projects in terms of the amount of contact provided. INCLUDE programmes were by far the most intensive, followed by the other education/training/employment providers and the physical/diversionary activity programmes. Predictably, the career service projects were much less intensive. Generally, the young people attending the projects (predominantly white males) had a range of problems alongside offending. They were unlikely to live with both parents; around a quarter had been in care; 50% used drugs regularly; 80% had truanted frequently from school or had been excluded; and around 60% were functioning in literacy and numeracy below the level of the average 11-year-old. Young people with lots of problems need more intensive provision.

## 4 OUTCOMES

### 4.1 ENGAGEMENT AND ATTENDANCE

A number of local evaluators argued that the very fact that projects kept working with students over an extended period was a positive outcome. The INCLUDE projects record attendance per session and, for the students on the database, attendance rate was on average 81%. The Prince's Trust Volunteer programme (72) and the Community Service programme (163) also reported similar high rates of attendance. In one of the school inclusion/career projects targeted for additional data collection, attendance rates vacillated between 65% and 90%. These are positive outcomes, as it has been found that attendance levels on post-16 training programmes are a significant factor in predicting future employment.

However, not all projects where attendance rates were recorded found such satisfactory rates. In the other project in the school inclusion/career category, only 16% of young people attended all sessions. The reasons for these differences are not completely clear, although a tight organisation, some degree of compulsion in the form of a court order or incentive in the form of payment are factors which encourage attendance. Pro-active work by a project manager or advisor was also described as increasing participation. Drop-out rates were an issue for many projects, with early leavers averaging around 50%. Some projects had higher drop-out rates, in particular the open group night format of two of the projects in the 'Other' category produced high average turnover. Fairbridge projects, with their open door policy, did not monitor 'drop-out'.

In the domain of adult basic skills, keeping students coming to courses is a well recognised problem, and it is little surprise that it should emerge in the current context. It is of interest to explore what factors predict good attendance. We looked at the INCLUDE students on our database, for whom we have relatively good data. Students who lived with both parents had a significantly higher rate of attendance than other students (mean n of sessions =145, as opposed to 116,  $t=2.79$ ,  $p<.01$ ). Interestingly, the small number of students currently in care (residential or foster,  $n= 19$ ) also had high rates of attendance). Students not using drugs regularly also had higher rates of attendance, but this did not reach statistical significance. Previous offending history was also related to levels of attendance, the fewer the previous offences, the more sessions attended, the greater the age at first conviction the more sessions attended. Higher levels of literacy at entry were also associated with more sessions attended.

All of this is as one might expect: the fewer problems the student has, the better their level of attendance. This confirms the local evaluators' reports, which frequently identify the need for projects to address barriers to learning. It suggests that reducing young people's levels of offending and increasing their literacy levels are not only a positive short-term goal but may allow them to benefit more from future education or training. Interestingly, in the Community Service project (163), length of order was found to be associated with successful completion: the longer the order, the higher the likelihood of successful completion. Presumably, the young people on longer orders had committed more serious

offences or had more serious criminal histories but could be retained, and benefited from a longer programme, an optimistic finding.

Many local evaluations identified that many of the young people were leading chaotic and unstructured lives at the time of referral to the projects. This would often lead to disengagement from the project. However, some young people were able to remain engaged. One case study dealt with a young person whose family life had become increasingly chaotic. This led to a period of instability in his living accommodation. In this period of chaos and difficulty, Other Options (241) provided the only consistent, stable and familiar contact available to him. It also gave him the opportunity to make a choice about taking part in the project and engaging with the people and activities it could provide.

#### 4.2 QUALIFICATIONS AND SKILLS GAINED

We collected data on qualifications from 21 projects, 14 being INCLUDE projects. The data shown in Table 6 is fairly crude, equating a number of different levels of qualification under one heading in the interests of simplicity. The two types of projects which aim to educate or train are managing to support 50% or so of their students through to qualifications, and in the case of INCLUDE, a substantial proportion of those students without qualifications are working towards them. Most of these young people had no previous qualifications. Gaining some kind of qualification was highly related to the number of sessions attended for the INCLUDE students, the mean number of sessions attended for those gaining qualifications was 178, for those without qualifications, 91 ( $n=313$ ,  $t=9.15$ ,  $p<.0001$ ). This was not the case for the project for which we had data in the 'INCLUDE like' category. None of the other project types were directly involved in student qualification and the missing data almost certainly represents the absence of any qualifications gained by young people on these projects.

**Table 6 Qualifications gained on project**

Category of Project	None	Basic skills (e.g. Word Power)	Vocational	Other
<b>INCLUDE</b> (education/ work experience) ( <b>n=324</b> ) (missing=114)	52%	31% (mostly Word Power and or Number Power)	8%	10%
<b>INCLUDE like</b> (education/ work experience) ( <b>n=94</b> ) (missing=26)	15%	85% (these students all gained National Vocational Qualification Skill Power certificates)		
<b>Fairbridge plus</b> (physical and diversionary activities) ( <b>n=53</b> ) (missing=172)	72%		8%	21%
<b>School inclusion/ careers</b> ( <b>n=109</b> )			(4)	(1)
<b>Total</b> ( <b>n=475</b> )	46%	38%	7%	9%

There was pre- and post-project data on literacy and numeracy levels available for approximately one-third of the INCLUDE students on the database. The Basic Skills Initial

Assessment was used and scored as follows: 1 = below Entry level, 2 = Entry level, 3 = below Level 1, 4 = Level 1, 5 = above Level 1. Modest but highly statistically significant gains were made on both literacy and numeracy (Table 7: Literacy, Wilcoxon  $z=3.98$ ,  $p<.0001$ ; numeracy,  $z=2.98$ ,  $p<.003$ ). Typically of this database, we must be cautious in interpretation because of the high levels of missing data. It seemed likely that the sample of students for which pre- and post-test data were available would exclude early drop-outs. The tested group do indeed have a higher average of sessions attended than those for whom no test scores were available (a mean of 147 sessions attended versus a mean of 109 sessions, a highly statistically significant result,  $t=3.5$ ,  $p<.0001$ ). However, the rarity of this kind of data makes the finding a valuable one, suggesting that such projects can improve the basic skills of this population, at least for those young people who attend over a period of 15 or so weeks. In the field of adult basic skills, the National Centre for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy has found that students attending courses for 150 hours or more have a 75% chance of improving their literacy and numeracy by the equivalent of a years worth of schooling.

**Table 7 Change in literacy and numeracy attainment (as measured by the Basic Skills Agency Initial Assessment) for INCLUDE projects**

	Literacy before	Literacy after	Numeracy before	Numeracy after
<b>N</b>	155	155	154	155
<b>Mean</b>	3.0	3.3	2.85	3.1
<b>Standard Deviation</b>	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4

### **4.3 STUDENT DESTINATIONS**

Overall, approximately 60% of the students on the database left their project for a positive destination and in view of their range of problems, this level of ‘success’ was seen as a real achievement by local evaluators. Of course, the data are rather crude, as there is no information on how long young people stayed in work or training, and this was beyond the scope of the evaluation. Nonetheless, in many cases, projects did follow young people up for a month or two into their placement, so it is likely that in the short term, the picture is a fairly accurate one. Progression to employment, education or training was frequently cited as a positive outcome by local evaluators. There were no substantial differences between project types, although the open door ethos of the Fairbridge projects meant that project staff were frequently unaware of what alumni were doing. The emphasis in Fairbridge projects was more towards building self-confidence and life skills rather than directly targeting progression to education, training and employment.



**Table 8 Exit data by project**  
Percentages

Category of Project	Employment	Ed/training	Custody	Disengage/abscond/unemployed	Other	Lost contact/moved away	Success	Part success	Fail
INCLUDE (n=453)	28%	21%	13%	23%	10%	3%			
INCLUDE like (n=231)	17%	20%	1%	7%	2%		36%	8%	9%
Fairbridge plus (n=195)	5%	33%	3%	3%	4%	52% <sup>9</sup>			
School inclusion/careers (n=129)	17%	31%	4%		13%		13%		21%
Total <sup>10</sup> (n=1,077)	18%	28%	7.5%	12%	5%	12%	11%	2%	5%

N of missing cases = 477

#### **4.4 SOCIAL SKILLS**

Young offenders are known to be likely to have negative attitudes towards mainstream organisations and authority figures. Even with peers they sometimes find it difficult to work harmoniously in groups. These poor social skills have serious implications for functioning smoothly in the world of education, training and employment, vividly illustrated in the television series Jamie’s Kitchen. The Fairbridge programme works with a group dynamic, helping young people who may have difficulty in making relationships get on with others. Many of the evaluators reported that the value of Fairbridge was in developing social skills and anger management. Young people who were interviewed talked about social skills learnt, about being able to get on better with others and make good relationships. Young people also commented that the Fairbridge programme had helped them to become less aggressive. Project managers and Yot staff also commented positively on this dimension of Fairbridge (e.g. project 278 – Yot staff remarked that Fairbridge changes young people, making them calmer and giving them more self-respect.) The Princes Trust Volunteers and Five, Duke of Edinburgh, Scape, Trax and Arson Task Force projects also focused on group work and this element tended to be positively evaluated young people, especially the residential element that was often a feature of provision.

#### **4.5 COPING WITH ‘BARRIERS TO LEARNING’**

An important focus for a number of projects, and to some degree all projects, was to work with students to establish some stability in their lives and to remove ‘barriers to learning’. For example, one local evaluator cites a reduction in the number of students in care from

<sup>9</sup> Students on Fairbridge projects generally did not formally leave and as a result, project managers were often unaware of student progression out of Fairbridge.

<sup>10</sup> The category of Other projects was excluded from this table as the project for which we had data involved only the slightest contact with young people in a group night context.

30% to 17% as a significant positive outcome. Local evaluators also mentioned improvements in self-confidence, though the evidence provided for this was generally qualitative and the data collection process only broadly described.

Many of the young people interviewed by the local evaluators mentioned the positive relationships they had with the project staff. One young person from an INCLUDE project said:

*The [Project manager] was all right, tidy to talk to, a good listener. helped me get on the schemes, build my confidence up... I didn't want to meet people or nothing, wouldn't get up in the mornings.*

A Fairbridge local evaluator asked open-ended questions of young people. Respondents were also very positive about the staff at Fairbridge, the support they gave and their 'welcoming' nature. This was often a feature of the Fairbridge project evaluations.

Another INCLUDE project participant commented about the project manager:

*It's great, I'd rather come here with M. because I know M. is always willing and helpful, he's always trying to get me something...*

It is probable that young people who did not find projects useful voted with their feet and were therefore not interviewed by local evaluators. Nonetheless, for those young people accessible to evaluators, the experience of a supportive, interested adult was particularly valued.

One local evaluator commented that, while the project was effective in contributing to personal development, improving positive integration in the community and reducing offending, the degree of effectiveness differed for different groups. For young people with a substantial history of care and school exclusion, reoffending was almost certain.

It is important to acknowledge that the young people enrolled on these projects were complex to work with and we include three sketches which illustrate this. These are all reasonable 'success' stories, and are not necessarily typical, but add some life to the numbers and description.

#### 'Alice'

'Alice' was referred to the Crime Cuts (350) worker as she was on a Supervision Order. After an initial meeting, it was agreed that her first priority was to re-engage in education. As she was in her final year and had moved from Harrogate there was no opportunity for her to enter another school. She was supported by the Crime Cuts worker in looking at alternative packages including visits to college, etc. 'Alice' had no career ideas and a lot of time was spent using guidance packages and researching various careers. She lacked confidence and, as a result of this, she stated that she did not want to go to college but would look at work experience in a small business. A placement interview took place but 'Alice' moved back to Harrogate to live with her father. A link was made with the Harrogate Crime Cuts worker and information shared on what was happening in her life. 'Alice' did not attend any appointments and she got back in touch with the project worker to say that she was back in the area. At

this point, she officially left school so an interview was arranged around options. 'Alice' agreed that she would benefit from doing summer activities and an action plan was agreed.

'Alice' had myself as a personal advisor, and a lot of work was done raising her self esteem and discussing appropriate dress and confidence. 'Alice' attended the residential part of the activity and made a number of new friends.

A phone call was received from 'Alice' 3 days later to say that she had gone to York to stay with her uncle, as she had been thrown out of home by her mum. The project worker spoke to her uncle who confirmed this and arranged issues around benefits and informed social services, etc. 'Alice' was asked if she would like help settling into York and she agreed to see a personal advisor in the Careers Centre. Appointments were arranged and information was passed to York. A number of problems with attendance and where she was living developed. Yot breached her for not keeping them informed of her address and 'Alice' turned up at the Yot office in Scarborough some time after apologising.

She was again back in Scarborough after making amends with her mum and she was also pregnant. More interviews were arranged and 'Alice' was very keen to start something before the baby was born. Her benefits were arranged and she was also "fast-tracked" on to Lifeskills. 'Alice' is doing well and has accessed ante-natal classes via Lifeskills and is looking forward to her baby being born. She has not reoffended and is still in touch with the project worker, as she will need support in securing a home; total contact time: 26 hours over 6 months.

### **'Mandy'**

'Mandy' is 16 years old and appeared before the youth court for an unprovoked attack on a 12-year-old boy on a bus on the way home from school. This was not her first offence of this type. Her order was 100 hours community service. 'Mandy' attended her interview with the Community Service team, and she enrolled for the scheme (163)

'Mandy' was supported by her mother and father, but had a violent relationship with her older brother. It soon became clear that her offending behaviour was her way of being accepted by her peer group. 'Mandy' was assigned to a community farm to work her order. She undertook tasks such as brickwork, painting, and looking after the animals.

'Mandy' did not offend while on the scheme, and in one-to-one work with her she recognised that she needed to break away from the group of friends she was associating with. 'Mandy' successfully completed her Order, gaining certificates in Health and Safety, and Management of Learning. Her certificates helped her gain full-time employment, and she also works voluntarily in her spare time on the community farm. She has been visited there by her former Community Service Officer, who reports that she has not reoffended and is still working hard to make the change in her life.

## 'Neil'

'Neil' is 17 years old and lives with his mother and her partner. The household is dependent on benefits and financial difficulties create tensions within the household. His family and accommodation situation has not always been stable. Previous social service involvement resulted in 'Neil' being cared for by foster parents and his younger siblings continue to be 'looked after' by the local authority

'Neil' lives in a fairly isolated area that lacks facilities and resources for young people and is poorly serviced by public transport. He spends much of his time 'hanging out' with friends who are involved in offending. 'Neil' himself has been convicted of a number of offences that include assault, theft and criminal damage. Before his referral to the INCLUDE project (296) 'Neil' was subject to a 12-month supervision order with specified activities.

Prior to joining the INCLUDE project, 'Neil' had attended mainstream school and a pupil referral unit, but had not achieved any qualifications. He participated in the INCLUDE project for 23 weeks gaining accreditation in City and Guilds Word Power Entry level and Number Power Level One and left the project to take up an offer of full-time employment.

### **SUMMARY**

Only around 50% of these young people completed their programme on average, a higher drop-out rate than normally experienced on such programmes with other at-risk young people. This almost certainly reflected the troubled nature of this population. Young people living with both parents, those with less serious offending histories and those with higher levels of literacy at entry stayed longer on programmes. One project did find that when young people were required to attend (through court order), longer orders worked better, with higher proportions of young people achieving qualifications, etc, and lower drop-out rates. Sixty percent of all young people left education, training and employment projects for positive destinations of education, training and employment. Fifty percent of young people on education/training/employment projects gained qualifications, usually their first. For those young people for whom pre- and post-test data on literacy and numeracy were available, (average number of sessions attended = 147) there was a significant gain on literacy and numeracy scores. Some programme objectives were less easily measured, in particular, improving young people's ability to work with others. A number of programmes, for example the physical /diversionary projects, focused on group work and interviews with young people - project managers and Yot teams suggested that they improved young people's social skills.

## 5 OFFENDING AND RECONVICTION

All the students on the database (n=1718) were submitted to the Police National Computer for matching. This provided 1228 matched cases.

### 5.1 BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDENTS

The age, gender and ethnicity of this sub group were very similar to the full database. Eighty-six percent of students were referred from Yots, the probation service or the police, slightly higher than the 79% referrals through the criminal justice system for the total database, some of whom were not offenders. The profile of risk characteristics (percentage living with both parents, with a history of care, with dependence on drugs, not attending school or with a history of exclusion) was similar to that of the total database.

### 5.2 HISTORY OF OFFENDING

Of the 1,228 matched cases for which we had reconviction data, project start dates were missing in 75 cases. For the remaining 1,153 young people, we examined their offences before and after the day they started the project. All offences leading to a conviction or police disposal were included. Overall, the young people attending the education, training and employment projects had relatively serious criminal histories (Table 9). Eighty-one percent were repeat offenders, compared with only 40% repeat offenders in the Jennings and Howard study. The mean age at first conviction was 13.6 years; 47% were aged between 10 and 13 at first conviction. This puts this group in a high-risk bracket, according to Farrington (1996). He observed, on the basis of the Cambridge Study, that males first convicted under 14 years of age tended to be the most persistent, and to have criminal careers lasting on average 10 years. The number of previous convictions was also high. The mean number of previous offences was nine, and 28% had 10 or more previous offences. INCLUDE students had a particularly high rate of repeat offenders.

**Table 9 Offending history by project**

Category of Project	Age at first conviction	Highest gravity score of offence before project	No. of previous convictions	% Repeat offenders
<b>INCLUDE (n=367)</b>				
Mean				
N	14.3	5.3	12.0	
Std. Dev	371	372	367	88%
	1.6	1.5	12.5	
<b>INCLUDE like (n=237)</b>				
Mean	14.4	5.0	8.5	81%
N	239	190	201	
Std. Dev	1.6	1.9	9.5	
<b>Fairbridge plus (n=167)</b>				
Mean	13.8	4.8	7.7	74%
N	169	114	122	
Std. Dev	1.7	1.4	13.4	
<b>School inclusion/ careers (n=301)</b>				
Mean	14.4	4.9	8.7	79%
N	349	210	222	
Std. Dev	1.6	1.4	12.1	
<b>Other (n=81)</b>				
Mean	13.7	4.5	6.9	73%
N	81	80	84	
Std. Dev	1.7	1.3	10.6	
<b>Total (1,153)</b>				
Mean	14.3	4.9	9.4	81%
N	1,209	1,225	1,153	1,153
Std. Dev	1.6	1.3	11.6	

### **5.3 CHANGES IN OFFENDING BEHAVIOUR**

The PNC records were searched at the end of November 2002 and we assumed that records were up to date until the end of May 2002. This provided a full year of reconviction data, following enrolment in an education, training and employment project for each young person on our database. Offences in the year following admission to an education, training and employment project were recorded, using the date of offence rather than the date of conviction, as this was more appropriate for measuring programme effects.

Statistically significant reductions in offending were observed, compared with offences committed in the same period before starting on an education, training and employment project, both in terms of the number of offences (Wilcoxon's  $z = 9.60$ ,  $p < .0001$ ) and gravity of offence (Wilcoxon's  $z = 14.21$ ,  $p < .0001$ ). However, 60% of these young people committed an offence in the year following enrolment on an education, training and employment project.

A number of predictors of reoffending within a year were explored using stepwise regression. Previous offending was highly related to reoffending, (both total number of previous offences,  $t = 5.7$ ,  $p < .0001$  and number of offences in the last year,  $t = 6.6$ ,  $p < .0001$ , independently predicted reoffending) and these two variables explained 26% of the

variance. Seriousness of previous disposals and age at first conviction also predicted rate of reoffenders ( $t = 3.15, p < .002$  and  $t = 2.13, p < .03$  respectively), explaining a further 2% of the variance. Maximum gravity of previous offence also predicted reoffending  $t = 8.3, p < .0001$ .

There were no significant differences between project types, once the number of previous offences was taken into account, using a fixed order regression model (see Table 10). There was also no relationship between the number of hours a young person spent on a project and reduction of offending. These are rather chastening findings. It seemed clear from comparing the different categories of projects that they did truly differ in the amount of input they offered and the type of provision. It is tempting to conclude from the absence of any measurable programme effect on reconviction that none of the programmes had an effect on reoffending. After all, the young people attending projects in the 'Other' category received very little input, yet they did not have significantly higher reconviction rates than those who attended INCLUDE for several months. However, we had no information on what provision the young people went on to after completing their enrolment with the education, training and employment projects which were the subject of this evaluation. We know that one of the projects in the 'Other' category (IS 418) typically referred its students to another education, training and employment project in the careers advice group (IS 416). The projects in the careers advice group passed students on to national training and employment schemes such as Learning Gateway and New Deal - indeed this was their role. Other projects in the INCLUDE-like education/work experience category received referrals from New Deal and Learning Gateway. We have to conclude that it is impossible to make very meaningful comparisons between project types in the absence of better information about what young people did over the period covered by the reconviction study.

**Table 10 Changes in offending by category of project**

Category of Project	Offences in the year before entry to project	Offences in the year after entry to project	Gravity of most serious offence in the year before entry to project	Gravity of most serious offence in the year after entry to project	Reconviction in year after entry to project
<b>INCLUDE</b>					
Mean	4.8	3.9	5.4	4.0	67%
N	367	367	364	367	
Std. Dev	5.2	6.0	1.2	2.4	
<b>INCLUDE like</b>					
Mean	4.0	2.8	3.8	3.3	59%
N	237	237	250	237	
Std. Dev	4.0	4.6	1.2	2.4	
<b>Fairbridge plus</b>					
Mean	3.7	1. 6	4.6	3.4	55%
N	167	167	167	167	
Std. Dev	4.8	4.2	1.8	2.4	
<b>School inclusion/ Careers</b>					
Mean	3.7	2.7	4.7	3.2	55%
N	301	301	301	301	
Std. Dev	4.1	4.4	1.7	2.5	
<b>Other</b>					
Mean	3.1	2.5	4.4	2.8	57%
N	81	81	81	81	
Std. Dev	3.0	3.8	1.5	2.4	
<b>Total</b>					
Mean	4.0	3.1	4.9	3.5	60%
N	1,153	1,153	1,150	1,153	
Std. Dev	4.5	5.0	1.6	2.4	

It was more possible to explore the factors that would predict who would reoffend and who would not. The relationships between reoffending and gender, age and the several risk factors (living with two natural parents or not, record of school exclusion/truancy, drug dependence) were explored using fixed order regression to control for previous offending history. Gender and drug dependence were found to predict reoffending significantly. It is clear from Table 1 that males and those using drugs regularly had more serious criminal histories. They were also significantly more likely to reoffend. Gender improved the percentage of variance explained by previous offending by 1% ( $t=2.0$ ,  $p<.04$ ). Drug dependence improved the percentage of variance explained by previous offending by 3% ( $t=3.7$ ,  $p<.0001$ ). There was a large amount of missing data for drug dependence for the data set as a whole, but these findings were confirmed for the INCLUDE group where the data set was relatively complete.



**Table 11 Changes in offending by gender and drug dependence**

Risk/protective factor	Offences in the year before entry to project	Offences in the year after entry to project	Reconviction in year after entry to project
<b>Males</b>			
Mean	5.1	3.8	73%
N	259	206	
Std. Dev	5.3	5.1	
<b>Females</b>			
Mean	4.0	2.7	48%
N	201	142	
Std. Dev	4.0	4.1	
<b>Regular drug users</b>			
Mean	3.8	3.0	77%
N	123	84	
Std. Dev	4.5	4.4	
<b>Occasional or non-users</b>			
Mean			
N	3.6	2.9	60%
Std. Dev	222	150	
	3.6	4.5	

The rationale behind offering education, training and employment interventions to young offenders is that by improving their educational standards and their employment experience and opportunity we reduce the likelihood that they will offend. We therefore examined the relationships between key project outcomes (what happened to young people on leaving projects, literacy and numeracy gains, qualifications gained) and reoffending. Each of these outcomes was significantly related to reoffending, controlling for previous offending (Table 12). Comparing those deemed by the project to have a successful outcome (e.g. entering further education, training and employment) with those deemed to have had unsuccessful outcomes (e.g. Drop-out and unemployment), those with a successful outcome reoffended less (results from fixed order regression, controlling for previous offending,  $t=2.9$ ,  $p<.003$ , additional variance explained = 1%).

Students who gained qualifications on education, training and employment projects were also less likely to offend ( $t=3.0$ ,  $p<.003$ , additional variance explained = 2%). For a small number of INCLUDE students ( $n=127$ ), we had information on both offending and literacy and numeracy pre- and post-project. Literacy gains predicted lower rates of reoffending in the year after entry to project ( $t=2.8$ ,  $p<.01$ , additional variance explained = 4%). These findings suggest that where positive education/training/employment outcomes can be achieved, offending will be reduced.

**Table 12 Changes in offending by student outcome**

Outcome	Offences in the year before entry to project	Offences in the year after entry to project	Reconviction in year after entry to project
<b>Success</b> <sup>11</sup>			
Mean	3.8	2.4	56%
N	438	438	
Std. Dev	4.4	3.7	
<b>Fail</b>			
Mean	5.0	4.6	68%
N	224	224	
Std. Dev	5.2	6.9	
<b>Qualifications gained</b>			
Mean	4.5	2.5	57%
N	210	210	
Std. Dev	4.8	3.7	
<b>No qualifications gained</b>			
Mean	5.2	4.8	72%
N	172	172	
Std. Dev	5.1	6.3	

Since many of these young people have been referred to a project because of a recent offence, it might be expected that offending rates would decrease over time with or without the experience of an education, training and employment project. In the absence of a contemporary control or comparison group, the reconviction study carried out by Jennings and Howard (2000) on reconvictions in the first half of 1997 has been used for comparative purposes. The percentage of reconvictions within a 12-month period reported by Jennings and Howard was 34%, substantially lower than the 59% for education, training and employment participants (Table 13)<sup>12</sup>. However, as already reported, the education, training and employment participants were twice as likely to be repeat offenders. Jennings and Howard reported a reconviction rate for first-time offenders of 21%, still substantially lower than the percentage for first-time offending education, training and employment participants.

To the extent that the reconviction rates found by Jennings and Howard can be seen as a suitable comparison, these results are rather disappointing for the impact of education, training and employment projects. However, the method used to calculate reoffending/reconviction in the two studies is not identical because of their different purposes. For more precise comparative purposes, we have replicated Jennings and Howard's method as closely as possible.

<sup>11</sup> Students who were taken into custody (n=69) were excluded.

<sup>12</sup> In this comparison we excluded young people who had not offended before they started their project, in line with Jennings & Howard who followed offenders only.

**Table 13 Reconviction in year after programme start by first versus repeat offenders**

Type of offender	No reconviction	Reconviction
First-time offender (n=169)	68%	32%
Repeat offender (n=932)	36%	64%
Total (n=1,101)	41%	59%

#### **5.4 SIX-MONTH RECONVICTION STUDY**

For the six-month reconviction study, we first selected education, training and employment participants enrolling on projects from July to December, 2000 (n=606). Of this group, those with an offence prior to their enrolment on the project and within the six-month period July to December, 2000 were selected for the reconviction study (n=195). As before, convictions and all police disposals (Caution, Reprimand, Final Warning) were counted. Reoffending leading to conviction in the 12 months following entry to the project was calculated.

**Table 14 Reconviction by selected variables**

Variable	Category		% Reconviction within 12 months	% Reconviction within 18 months	
		Number			Percent
Current principal offence category	Violence	33	17%	73%	79%
	Burglary	23	12%	78%	78%
	Robbery	10	5%	*	*
	Theft	57	29%	70%	77%
	Fraud	1	1%	*	*
	Criminal damage	22	11%	50%	59%
	Drugs	7	4%	*	*
	Motoring	18	9%	72%	83%
	Other	23	12%	76%	81%
Current age	12- 13	11	6%	64%	66%
	14	24	12%	67%	83%
	15	21	11%	62%	67%
	16	71	37%	70%	79%
	17	65	34%	66%	74%
Sex	Male	177	91%	68%	77%
	Female	17	9%	53%	59%
Age at first conviction	10-12	59	30%	71%	81%
	13	28	15%	93%	96%
	14	44	23%	57%	68%
	15	32	17%	62%	66%
	16+	28	15%	54%	64%
Number of offences at current appearance	1	96	49%	65%	73%
	2 or 3	65	33%	68%	77%
	4 or 5	23	12%	65%	70%
	6 – 10	11	6%	91%	100%

Number of previous appearances	0	28	14%	32%	43%
	1	26	13%	63%	73%
	2	33	17%	67%	70%
	3	21	11%	81%	86%
	4-9	68	35%	78%	84%
	10 or more	19	10%	745	95%
Number of previous imprisonments	0	156	80%	65%	73%
	1	23	12%	70%	78%
	2 or more	16	8%	94%	100%
Disposal of current offence	Custody	21	11%	80%	100%
	Supervision Order	21	11%	90%	95%
	Action Plan	12	6%	64%	64%
	Reparation Order	6	3%	*	*
	Other community	43	22%	61%	61%
	Fine	19	10%	72%	72%
	Discharge	23	12%	73%	73%
	Caution/ Reprimand/	39	20%	47%	58%
	Final warning				
	Other	8	4%	86%	86%
All offenders		195		67%	75%

\* numbers too small for reconviction to be meaningful

The sample size was uncomfortably small, once broken down into sub-categories, and interpretation of the data must be cautious. The overall reconviction rate was substantially higher than that reported by Jennings and Howard. However, the criminal histories of the education, training and employment group were more severe than the offenders followed by Jennings and Howard on a number of counts: 51% of the education, training and employment group had more than one offence at current appearance, as opposed to 22% reported by Jennings and Howard; only 14% of the education, training and employment group had no previous court appearances, compared with 60% in the comparison group; only 14% had a police disposal, as opposed to 65% in the comparison group; 19% had previous custodial sentences, as opposed to 2% in the comparison group. Comparing the reconviction rate for first-time offenders in the two samples, 32% of the education, training and employment first-time offenders were reconvicted in 12 months, as opposed to 21% in the comparison group (a statistically insignificant difference). The education, training and employment sample size is too small to be confident about interpreting differences. There were only 28 young people in the education, training and employment group who were first-time offenders, and only nine of these had reoffended. The comparison does not, however, provide evidence of a clear positive effect on reoffending as a result of attending an education, training and employment programme.

### SUMMARY

Offending was lower in the year following admission to education, training and employment projects than in the year preceding admission, but this might be expected. Overall, 60% of the sample offended in the year after admission to the project. In the absence of good comparative data, it is hard to interpret this figure. Reconviction rates were certainly higher than those of a random sample of young offenders drawn by the Home Office, but the Home Office sample had much less serious criminal histories than the education, training and employment group. There were no statistically significant

differences between project categories in terms of offending, despite the fact that the amount of provision varied considerably.

Previous criminal history predicted reconviction, as did being male and being a regular user of drugs. Positive project outcomes (leaving for a job or further training, gaining qualifications, making gains in literacy) were all associated with lower reconviction rates). While this partly reflects the fact that those who had positive outcomes had fewer problems in the first place, we did control for criminal history. The relationship between positive outcomes and lower reconviction was still statistically significant.

## 6 INTERVENTION COSTS

The Board kept records of money paid to funded projects. These data were available for 40 of the 42 projects included in this report<sup>13</sup>. The cost to the Board of funding these projects was £4.586 million. The actual cost was substantially higher, as the Board was only one source of project funding.<sup>14</sup> Table 15 shows the estimated actual cost.<sup>15</sup> The figures tabulated in Table 15 are subject to a number of sources of error. The number of students enrolled in projects was sometimes an approximation, as was the number of contact hours per student and the overall costs of the projects was itself an estimate. Nonetheless, the data give an approximation of costs involved.

The average cost of one student enrolment on an education, training and employment project was £2,320. There was substantial variation between categories with the INCLUDE projects involving the highest cost per student and School inclusion/careers projects, the lowest cost per student. As to be expected, the types of projects offering the most intensive support were the most costly. Arguably, these intensive projects offer good value for money, once the average number of student contact hours is taken into account.

Within categories, there was some significant variation in cost per student, which is revealing. Within the INCLUDE group, the cost per student was remarkably similar across projects, which confirms the consistency of this model and the thoroughness of the record keeping. The accuracy of record-keeping in these projects was striking. However, one project in the North East ran into trouble with recruitment and matched funding, and the cost per student doubled as a result. This project folded. In the INCLUDE-like category the Prince's Trust Volunteer programme (72) stood out as being good value for money at £1,040 per student (in contact for an average of 39 days). The Prince's Trust Five programme (150) appeared to offer poor value for money, with an average cost per student of £5,905.

The information available on the amount of input given to students was very incomplete for this project, but some of these students were receiving only two hours contact per week and the maximum was 17 to 18 hours weekly. As discussed a little further in the next section on implementation, this project took a long time to start working effectively, despite being underpinned by a national organisation. A well-run project in this group (163) cost £1,924 per student for an average of 100 contact hours. Within the physical/diversionary activities group, all but one project was Fairbridge. There was substantial variation in cost per student between Fairbridge projects, but the explanation for this is not clear. Records of student numbers were not always unambiguous and this may explain the variation. Fairbridge took students from a number of different sources and sometimes had a complicated patchwork of funding. The projects in the careers category were consistently cheaper than the first three categories, reflecting the much smaller

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<sup>13</sup> Data was missing for 108 and 204.

<sup>14</sup> The Board funded 100% of costs in the first year, 60% in the second year and 30% in the final year.

<sup>15</sup> Actual costs were estimated by calculating 100% funding in years two and three, based on the Board fractional contribution.

number of contact hours per student. In the ‘Other’ category, the Dyspel project stood out as being rather expensive (£4,213 per student) for a fairly small average of tutorial literacy sessions delivered, although part of this cost was due to the much larger number of students assessed who did not start the programme.

**Table 15 Actual project cost by category of project and numbers of students enrolled**

Category of Project	No of students enrolled	Estimated actual cost	Cost per student	Average duration of contact with student	Average number of hours contact
<b>INCLUDE</b> (education/ work experience) (n=17)	611	£3,410k	£5,581	17 weeks	370 hours
<b>INCLUDE like</b> (education/ work experience) (n=7)	590	£1,373k	£2,286	12 weeks	78 hours
<b>Fairbridge plus</b> (physical and diversionary activities) (n=6) *	454	£908k	£2,000	17 weeks	83 hours
<b>School inclusion/ Careers</b> (n=7)	989	£1,017k	£1,028	18 weeks	12 hours
<b>Other</b> (n=5) *	590	£682k	£1,156	2 weeks	8 hours
<b>Total</b> (n=42)	3,185	£7,390k	£2,320		

\* cost data missing on one project in this category

## 7 IMPLEMENTATION

The evidence on implementation is taken from local evaluators' reports. While a template was given for reporting, the reports varied in their format and quality. Much of the evidence relied upon interviews with key members of staff and young people. While these data can be robust, many evaluators have not reported in any detail the methodologies used or the analyses conducted. The process data are therefore rather impressionistic.

### 7.1 ORGANISATIONAL PROCEDURES AND STRUCTURES

Over half the projects were run by INCLUDE or Fairbridge (n=22) and were either developments of existing projects or used a well-established model with a national organisation. These projects were at a great advantage to begin with, because the structure of the programme was already clear and the national organisation could provide support and guidance in terms of basic running and monitoring. For example, both organisations had clear requirements for data to be collected by each project, and a national centre that collated and analysed this data. There were still hurdles to be overcome relating to the new client group of youth offenders and to the ubiquitous problems relating to funding. Also, one or two INCLUDE projects did report some problems with the central organisation, but, relatively, these projects benefited tremendously from the maturity of the programme.

It might be expected that the two Prince's Trust projects would similarly benefit from being part of a national organisation. However, this was not the case. The central organisation was poor and the projects only managed to operate satisfactorily when they stopped expecting much from the centre. The Prince's Trust Volunteer project (72), working in partnership with the youth service, began to thrive largely through the support from the youth service. Central monitoring never materialised. In the case of Five (150), the lack of an effective central organisation was responsible for major delays in offering a service to young people, and the overall cost per young person was very high, largely as a result of this.

Another group of projects used established programmes for delivery to young people, but without the strong central organisation. These projects included Dyspel (392) and Future Base (282), which used the APEX model. Generally, these projects were also at an advantage compared to newly developed programmes, but some did experience difficulties. The Scape project (49), for example, originally used materials that had been produced by careers officers for delivery to young people. However, it became clear that the young people being referred to the project were not benefiting from these.

It became necessary, therefore, to adapt the materials as the project was being delivered. Similarly, the Trax project (399) had been developed previously, but it was found that the content was not necessarily appropriate for the young people being referred by Yot managers. Once again, the material had to be adapted simultaneously to the project being delivered. Materials really need to be developed and piloted with the intended target group before programmes start.



Where projects were locally developed, infrastructures were normally lacking, at least at the beginning, and this led to serious delays in accepting referrals. In these circumstances, projects that were staffed from permanent services, such as the probation service (163) or the careers service (350 and 396) were at an advantage in terms of strong internal procedures, staff stability and staff training. Some projects never developed their administrative systems properly - for example, Fort Amherst (367) had a lack of managerial and organisation infrastructure and faced financial crisis as a result. While the project's lack of formality and flexibility in its work with young people was viewed as a strength by Yot managers, the project was unable to continue because the organisation was weak.

## **7.2 INTER-AGENCY WORKING**

All the projects aimed to reduce offending using a partnership approach, where inter-agency working is necessary. This flows logically from the consistently identified need for 'multi-modal' intervention programmes. However, inter-agency work is not straightforward and a number of issues emerged.

### **Differences in organisational structures**

Difficulties were experienced when agencies with different organisational structures and administrative procedures collaborated. Initially, reorganisation of these structures and procedures was not considered, and this often led to delays and difficulties. The Prince's Trust Volunteer's project (72) was a joint venture between the Prince's Trust and the Youth Services.

Staff reported that procedures for funding, accounting and monitoring were different within these two organisations, causing difficulties with advancing the project. In the Sefton project (95), where diverse interventions are offered within a package, all partners were not clear about the status of the service users. Staff from the Community Service project (163) reported that inter-agency collaboration not tightly managed had led to inappropriate systems of monitoring and assessment being established with unmanageable levels of paperwork. Well-established projects, such as Fairbridge and INCLUDE, were again at an advantage because at least their procedures and structures were clear at the outset.

Projects that had to work in Youth Offender Institutions (YOIs) had particular problems. Project 223 involved making contact with young people before they were released, but the young people were often moved away without notice. Five (150) mentions that running the group in prison meant that a guard always had to be available at the door while the group was running.

### **Differences in goals, values and ideologies**

A number of projects reported that initially it was difficult to work alongside other professionals, who may have different ideologies and understanding of young people. In particular there was a tension between the emphasis of some programmes on voluntary participation and the needs of the criminal justice system to contain young offenders. Fairbridge projects, for example, have an 'open-door' policy, where young people can re-engage with their service at any time. In one Fairbridge project (318) Yot staff had thought that Fairbridge would provide a credible alternative to custody. After some experience with the project, the Yot manager came to the conclusion that the Fairbridge programme was useful for aspects such as anger management and social proficiency, but was better suited to Final Warnings than Community Orders and other more restrictive dispositions: He said:

‘Overall, I think that they provide a quality service at a particular point to offenders.’ In his opinion, Fairbridge was better suited to young people who had not got into the more serious aspects of offending (a similar point was made by the Yot manager of 204). These difficulties in working across agencies were not merely a matter of values but of practicality. Yot managers commented that the waiting time for the residential placements meant the Fairbridge was not suitable for persistent young offenders in the short timescales imposed by the courts. However, from the point of view of delivering the programme, the residential element was important. Residential courses are used across a number of programmes that aim to develop young people’s ability to work with groups. They are popular with young people and are seen as critical in fostering group cohesion. Some programmes simply cannot offer immediate placement. In fact, where group work is central, a ‘roll-on/roll-off’ formula, employed by Trax (399), was ineffective. Trax had a very high drop-out rate, which was attributed to the lack of group cohesion.

Some programmes, such as INCLUDE, which offer full-time provision within a more prescriptive model, found it easier to operate within the criminal justice system. INCLUDE was seen as accepting of a range of referrals, and as offering placement rapidly.

Projects not only had to negotiate relationships with the criminal justice system but also with service providers, such as FE colleges and employers. These young people have lots of problems in the form of drug and alcohol misuse, the absence of family support, low numeracy and literacy levels, etc. in the context of standard educational provision. Local FE colleges offering courses which were not geared to these troubled young people, sometimes claimed that education and not ‘social work’ was their central concern. The quality of the basic skills provision experienced within the secure estate was described as rather poor: “Much of the time all we did was word searches and some colouring. It was a bit basic,” was one comment.

Partnerships with businesses were also difficult to sustain and, in some cases, these relationships have broken down. Difficulty with offering a wide variety of jobs was a consistent problem: ‘all that painting and decorating’. Most projects report difficulties in setting up work experience for these young people. In the projects where young people undertake voluntary work in the community (for example, Prince's Trust Volunteers (072)), the support of people in that community is crucial and this support has not always been forthcoming. Similarly, projects that aim to provide work placements for young people have found enlisting local employers very difficult. One project manager remarked that 50% to 60% of employers would not offer placements to offenders. Many projects have also found external training providers, such as FE colleges, difficult to work with due to their inflexible systems and lack of staff expertise in dealing with young offenders.

Improvements in the relationships between agencies may be attributed to an increasing understanding of the objectives of projects and a developing respect for individual professionals working with the young people. As we have seen, the education, training and employment projects were diverse. This diversity becomes useful when those referring young people understand the range of provisions available and what is best for particular groups of young people.

## Referral

It has been consistently reported that projects had to work hard at getting referrals. In many cases, referrals were expected from Yots, but Yots did not start to operate reliably until April 2000, months after projects were supposed to have started. Projects that have overcome these difficulties best have organised a physical presence in the Yots. Where this is not an option, demonstration days and networking have in some cases been effective, but these approaches seem to be vulnerable to individual factors - for example, they may break down if a key member of a Yot team moves.

The situation improved over time. The evaluator of the Crime Cuts project (350) reported that after a slow start, the Yot managers came to value having a known careers service professional as part of their referral network. Similarly, the Arson Task Force project (418), which involved joint working between the Yot and the fire service, was spoken of in positive terms despite initial misgivings.

As these understandings were developed, more referrals were received. In many cases the project managers made presentations directly to Yot managers so that awareness of the project and its aims were more fully developed by the referring agency. Where projects were located geographically within Yot premises, this was particularly successful. An example of this is the Wessex Yot Duke of Edinburgh project (012), which initially was sent inappropriate referrals because of a misunderstanding of the project's objectives within the Yot. Because the project was located within the same building as the Yot staff, this was a temporary situation which improved during the life of the project. INCLUDE projects were also normally sited within Yot offices and this made working with the Yot run more smoothly.

## Inter-agency work as a dimension of provision

While inter-agency work poses difficulties it is also valued. Projects were seen as providing a valuable source of expertise to the Yot teams (e.g. the INCLUDE projects, crime cuts (350) and Arson Task Force (418)). INCLUDE managers are drawn from a range of professions, e.g. teachers, youth workers, career advisors and social workers, and this varied experience can enrich the young offender's experience.

As described above, these young people have a number of needs which require input from different agencies. The majority of projects worked as a mediator between young people and a range of services. For example, INCLUDE managers were seen by their students as a valuable link with training providers, on occasions negotiating disruptions. Projects liaised with health services, families, and agencies providing accommodation with drug and alcohol clinics.

The Five project reported that "at Ashfield YOI, homelessness is an issue that affected three of last year's group. The Five staff worked with relevant agencies to resolve the problem". Similarly, another report (223) describes how a 14-year-old boy released from Medway Training centre was sent to his dad, who threw him out. Social services in breach of their statutory responsibility refused to find him anywhere to stay. The problem was tackled by the education, training and employment project. This does raise the question of why something like this is the job of a voluntary initiative rather than an established national service provision; however, the problem is a real one requiring inter-agency work. This was a real contribution from many of the education, training and employment projects, but it is

time-consuming work, as clearly described in the excerpt below for the evaluators report for project 241.

*The time needed to implement initiatives, to begin to make things happen in large complex organisations, is easily underestimated. Moreover, the implementation process is much more complicated at organisational interfaces. A great deal of time and work is required to implement and develop even relatively small projects. In the case of this project, considerable consultation was required in order that the project could accommodate itself to a number of existing arrangements and processes. The number of agencies involved with the young people has already been seen (different areas, social services, education, YOS [Youth Offending Service] – not to speak of the contacts set up for the young people). On accommodation issues alone, consultation was needed with 25 different people including the managers of the various facilities which catered for the young people.*

This is part of the service that many education, training and employment projects provided, what careers project 350 described as ‘a one-stop shop’. It is precisely because it is so difficult and time consuming to work across agencies that these young people need someone to do this for them. One lesson, therefore, is that developing these networks takes time, and it would not be efficient to have frequent changes of direction. Rather, care should be taken to build on any progress made.

The Connexions service was being introduced during the period covered by the Board initiative. Connexions is a national development of the careers service for young people with particular difficulties, and allows for the provision of an advisor (a sort of personal mentor). All the careers projects are bound to be affected by the development of Connexions and arguably may be replaced by this new service. Projects 350 and 396, which already had close connections with the careers service, saw Connexions as a useful development.

Project 396 developed procedures for working with Connexions which have been adopted in other counties. Such a development addresses a number of the issues raised by the experience of the education, training and employment projects, relating to the need for national structures, a professional workforce, stability of funding and working practices. This may leave a rump of young offenders not easily absorbed into a lighter touch provision who still need an intensive programme.

### **7.3 STAFF RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION**

It is clear from the evaluation reports that the quality of the staff running the projects is key to the quality of experience the young person receives. Many of the evaluators reported difficulties with the recruitment and the retention of staff. The Community Service project (163) had a fluctuating staffing situation, and it was felt that this impinged negatively on the outcomes of the project. One of the INCLUDE programmes (296) had similar staffing difficulties. The Step On project (223) was delayed for some considerable time because the project co-ordinator left and there were difficulties in recruiting a replacement.

The role of the project manager has also been highlighted by many of the evaluators. The manager is seen as an important factor in the success of the project. The manager is the main liaison between the partners running the project and the Yot, and is also directly involved with the young people. Comparing the different INCLUDE projects, where the

programme was very similar across sites, clarified the difference the manager could make. An INCLUDE project evaluator (124) indicated the significance of the personality of the project manager. This individual was pro-active in promoting the project with the Yot and was able to have the project co-located with the Yot. The manager of this project was also involved closely with the young people, keeping their attendance levels in check and maintaining contact with them once they had left the project.

Despite the apparent importance of the manager, most of the other INCLUDE projects ran successfully, suggesting that the manager is only one part of the jigsaw and that central organisation and staff support can ensure 'quality control'. However, one of the 17 INCLUDE projects apparently failed largely because of poor management combined with problems with funders and referral agencies. It is also the case that the same style of project manager does not suit every young person. Again, in the context of INCLUDE, some managers felt that a nurturing support was important, others warned against the dangers of 'unsolicited and unwanted nannying'. Reliance on a charismatic project manager is not necessarily an advantage for a project. If that manager leaves the project, other workers may not be able to operate effectively, having relied upon that key individual. There is also a personal toll on such an individual whose responsibilities are so extensive.

Interviews with young people conducted by some evaluators revealed the importance of the relationship with and between the project staff. A small number of young people, who attended the Fairbridge project in London (IS 252), were interviewed and reported that they felt respected and valued by project staff. They were able to talk to the staff frankly about themselves and appreciated the relationships that had developed. Similarly, young people attending the Crime Cuts project (IS 350) appreciated the respectful advice they had been given and reported that they would like to keep in contact with the project staff. Young people attending INCLUDE programmes also appreciated the individual concern shown to them by project managers.

Staff training was also mentioned as an issue in many projects. Some project partners did not necessarily understand the needs of young offenders at the beginning of the funding period and did not have appropriately trained staff in post. Training is also difficult where staff turnover is high. Projects often mentioned the difficulty of outreach work and the lack of training in this area. These issues mainly arose where the programme was not established and where there were different agencies were coming together. The Prince's Trust Volunteers programme (72) had such difficulties. Similarly, staff interviewed by the evaluator for the Community Service project (163) mentioned the lack of training that had been available to them before the project started.

Projects run by staff seconded from the careers service, the probation service, etc. were at an advantage to projects where the workers were casualised and part-time because training levels were higher and there was a safety net to cope with staff changes. Generally, the use of part-time casual workers is worrying. We need a trained and unfragmented workforce. Initiative funding will tend to exacerbate this problem.

#### **7.4 THE CLIENT GROUP**

Projects had to be tailored to suit the client group. Where projects already existed, adaptations had to be made to the programme to cope with young offenders. Projects that were in development also had to adapt rapidly to the needs of the young people. The

Prince's Trust project, Five (150), is an example of an existing programme which had operated with young people who had dropped out of school or who had been excluded. The existing programme did not work well with young offenders and had to be rapidly changed. Similarly, the Wessex Yot Department of Employment project (12) underwent fundamental changes as the needs of the client group became apparent. In the case of the Scape project (49), as more referrals came from educational sources, the programme was changed to include increased educational content.

Project managers and staff interviewed for the evaluations often mentioned the difficulties faced by the young people referred to their projects. Many projects were dealing with young people with difficult living circumstances and few life skills, compounded by having committed offences in the past. Many of the young people had literacy and numeracy difficulties and were disengaged with education. This meant that offering them basic skills provision was challenging.

The projects that operated in more rural areas reported difficulties with accessibility. Many of the young people found attending the project difficult due to the location of the project and the lack of transport available. This was not only the case in rural areas such as Oxfordshire. Fairbridge projects located within inner cities reported a reluctance on the part of young people to travel to other areas of the city to attend the project.

Generally, reports suggested that there was no particular ethnic bias, although three projects (49, 278 and 204) felt that ethnic minorities were under-represented. One project (204) made a special effort to recruit from minority groups and this resulted in a much higher uptake by these groups.

There was quite wide reporting that women were under-represented, but no solutions were identified.

There was recognition that there was a variation in the young people attending projects and this had an impact on project effectiveness. For example, 241 mentioned that, where a young person had a history of school exclusion and an extensive experience of care, they were almost certain to reoffend. The evaluator's argument here was that the project was more successful with young people who did not have this profile, and that one would have needed a different and more intensive type of provision to help this sub-group.

Different projects were suitable for different groups. Fairbridge, as mentioned above, may be more suitable for Final Warnings. INCLUDE was recognised by a number of Yots as particularly valuable for high-tariff offenders because of the high level of support and the close nature of the supervision. Unfortunately, this feature of INCLUDE made it expensive, leading to closure in one or two cases, even when the Yots felt that INCLUDE provision was valuable. For example, the Yot team associated with project 124 commented that they had learnt lessons from the INCLUDE approach which, although viewed as costly, had proved to be very effective in engaging with some groups of young people.

Overall the Yot was very positive about this project and the manager said that they had three times as many young people as INCLUDE could cope with, but it was closed because of its high cost. INCLUDE project 208 has now closed because it has failed to secure funding although people thought highly of the programme. Arguably, with the introduction

of Connexions, all but the most difficult cases might be mopped up and it will be intensive provision which will be required. Generally the difference between the projects that provided education and training and the careers service type was this support element. For project 350, Learning Gateway was a destination. For INCLUDE it was something which happened at the start of a young person's INCLUDE programme, something that went on alongside the day a week with the project manager and the ratio of one manager to a maximum of 10 young people .

There were marked differences between the client groups of different projects. We have argued that this is a sensible response to the variation in type of provision. However, it makes it difficult to know whether projects were differentially successful because of the project or the clients. For example, projects 163 and 223 were not dissimilar in terms of the provision, but 163 was apparently more successful than project 223. However, the two projects had different clients: 163 took Community Service orders, whereas 223 worked with the community end of Detention and Training Orders. The young people on the Detention and Training Orders often reported feeling frustrated at having to attend the project once they had been released. This makes it difficult to understand what was responsible for the differences in the relative success of the two projects.

### **7.5 FOLLOW-UP SUPPORT**

Many evaluators reported a lack of follow-up support available to the young person on completion of the project. This was true of newly established and some existing projects. Other projects have established links with other agencies in order to offer such support. Crime Cuts (350) has linked with the Learning Gateway and the Springboard Solutions project (416) has established connections with the Pathway projects. Similarly, the Crossroads project (396) is now part of the Connexions service. Given the evidence from Easen et al (2000), it would seem important that networks of formal and informal contacts be established before the project begins working with young people. This would aid inter-agency working and ensure appropriate exit dispositions for the young people.

### **7.6 SYSTEMS FOR MONITORING**

Systems for monitoring the outcomes of projects were often weak. This is especially true of projects without an organisational infrastructure. The project Dyspel (392) has anecdotal evidence only about improvements to young people's literacy levels and, similarly, the RAP project (108) had no formal mechanism for recording the progress of young people despite the fact that literacy progress is relatively easy to measure. Other projects, such as Community Service (163) and Fairbridge, have improved their monitoring systems during the life of project.

### **SUMMARY**

Projects without a national organisation and strong existing design and structure took a long time to set up. They needed to build up expertise at dealing with young offenders, a particular and challenging client group. All projects took time to work smoothly and effectively with other agencies. This development time is easily underestimated and had implications for cost efficiency. Selected projects would benefit from being funded on a fairly stable basis in the long term, rather than on initiative funding. The Connexions initiative in essence is now offering such a stable, long-term funding for an enhanced careers service. However, even providing a career service for this group of young people

with unstable lives and considerable needs can be very time consuming and Connexions may find it difficult to absorb these demands.

Projects funded under the education, training and employment stream offered a range of provision. Some projects worked better for particular profiles of students. This offers Yot teams the opportunity to be selective in their referrals, for example, referring less serious and younger offenders to physical/diversionary activities programmes and older, youngsters with Community or Supervision Orders to more closely supervised and intensive provision such as INCLUDE.

A range of factors influence implementation. The most critical is the structure and organisation of the project. However, other factors are also influential: the individuals managing projects; the characteristics of the students; and the imperatives of the agencies with which all education, training and employment projects must work (funders, those making referrals, and those offering some of the provision).



## 8 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Roughly 3,350 young people were offered some kind of education, training and employment provision under the Board initiative.

### 8.1 THE FORM OF EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT INTERVENTIONS

Broadly speaking, projects fell into three categories: those offering provision; those acting as brokers for provision in the form of careers advice, etc., or those providing physical/diversionary activity. The most intensive programmes are given by those offering provision (i.e. those who provide education, training and employment), and these programmes tend also to be of longer duration (e.g. INCLUDE is a full-time programme with an expected duration of 6 months). The diversionary programmes normally offer a short and intensive burst, followed by something like an hour or so weekly for around 17 weeks. The careers service projects which try to marry young people up with education, training and employment opportunities are much less intensive (an hour or so a week). Nearly all projects were 'multi modal', that is, they addressed a range of aspects of young people's lives, reflecting current views of good practice in provision for young offenders.

The age of the target population is also important, with 16 years of age being the critical cut-off. Projects working with under-16s must negotiate with schools and the compulsory education system. Several projects report that, where they have been used to working with older students, they must adapt their provision to allow under-16s to attend school. Those working with post-16s are frequently trying to make strong connections with the world of employment. Nonetheless, both target populations appear to be drawn from a similar pool in terms of the severity of problems of the young people. The younger group have severe problems with schooling and often report drug and alcohol problems in the same way as their older peers.

### 8.2 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE

#### Gender and ethnicity

The majority of the young people on the projects were male (around 85 to 90%) and of white ethnicity. Broadly speaking, this reflects the characteristics of the population from which these young offenders are drawn but it does raise questions about provision available to girls or those belonging to ethnic minorities, especially where there are racial tensions within the community.

#### Special needs

The young people participating in the vast majority of the projects had a range of special needs. In particular, a significant proportion had problems with literacy and numeracy, with drug and alcohol abuse, with aggressive and disruptive behaviour, with engaging in mainstream education and with family support. Their offending histories tended to be relatively serious in terms of age at first offence and number of previous convictions. Even programmes which have traditionally dealt with disaffected young people found that the group being referred from Yots had more severe problems. This has a number of implications for programme delivery. Special care must be taken where young people are participating in FE courses that those with low levels of literacy and numeracy can cope,

and that providers are supported in dealing with behaviour problems. Negotiating work experience becomes more challenging. This may require project managers to spend considerable time with certain individuals, negotiating access to the world of education and employment, getting the young people up in the mornings, etc.

In general, projects developed strategies to address these issues over the course of the funding period. It also has implications in terms of appropriate expectations. This group of young people are hard to engage, they are more likely to drop out or leave courses early, and they have the additional problem of being taken into custody mid-way through their courses. The INCLUDE and Fairbridge projects found that drop-out rates were higher than would be predicted from past experience with less problematic youngsters. The provision of payment while attending courses has probably been helpful to the INCLUDE projects, at least in keeping up attendance rates.

## **8.2 OUTCOMES**

In the Introduction, we discuss two perspectives on rehabilitation: a criminal justice one - does rehabilitation reduce offending, and a social justice one - does rehabilitation increase young people's levels of employment or skills, and does it redress social disadvantage?

There is little convincing evidence here of education, training and employment programmes causing a reduction in offending. Sixty percent reoffended in the year following enrolment on an education, training and employment project. Although this did represent a 25% reduction in offending compared with the year before enrolment, it is not a reassuring figure. Unfortunately, in common with most other available studies looking at the link between community interventions and offending (reviewed by Utting and Vernard, 2000), no suitable comparison group was available. There was reconviction data available on a random sample of young offenders drawn from the PNC files in 1997 (Jennings and Howard, unpublished). The 12-month reconviction rate for this group (11,562) of offenders was 34%. However, the education, training and employment group had a substantially more severe offending history than this random sample. Eighty-one percent were repeat offenders, compared with only 40% in the Jennings and Howard study. Forty-seven percent were aged between 10 and 13 at first conviction. Farrington (1996) observed that boys first convicted under the age of 14 years tended to have criminal careers lasting on average of 10 years. Number of previous convictions was also high (mean= 9), particularly in INCLUDE projects.

We compared project categories within the education, training and employment group as an alternative strategy to understanding the relationship between provision and offending. After all, projects within education, training and employment differed considerably in what they offered. We found no significant differences between project categories, despite the substantial differences in the amount of input provided. It could be concluded from this that none of the education, training and employment provision had an impact on offending - but this interpretation is insecure. We had no detail of what other provision young offenders were receiving once they left an education, training and employment project, but we do know that many young people went on to other projects funded under the Board initiative. We also know that many went on further education and training from the careers service projects. Nonetheless, the lack of any statistically significant differences between project categories is indicative that they were not producing substantial reductions in offending in the short term.

What should be the policy response to such findings? We would argue that it is simply not a viable response to conclude that education and training needs of this group of seriously disadvantaged youngsters should therefore be ignored. This is the second perspective on rehabilitation - that there is a social justice element to the provision for young offenders. There was evidence that projects were achieving a number of key positive outcomes for a proportion of their students. For those projects providing education and training (Categories 1 and 2), around a half of the students achieved some form of qualification, typically a Word Power or Number Power certificate. Most of these young people had no previous qualifications. Where information was available (INCLUDE, category 1), there was significant improvement in young people's literacy and numeracy levels. Around 60% of young people left projects to a positive destination (for example, to employment or further training). Positive outcomes were found to be associated with levels of attendance - that is, the better a young person's literacy levels, etc., the longer he or she would stay in a programme. This suggests a cyclical picture where a young person would improve incrementally over a number of training experiences, possibly over a number of years. More information is needed, however, of what happens to young people and their skills levels between projects. Where students did make headway, in terms of literacy, qualifications or further training or employment, their levels of reoffending were lower than their less successful peers, even controlling for differences in criminal history. This suggests that education, training and employment projects are tackling important issues for youth offending, but that they are more successful with some than others.

### **8.3 COSTS**

The Board spent around £4.5 million on the 40 projects costed in this report. The average cost per student for attending an education, training and employment project was around £2,300. Not surprisingly, the more intensive projects cost more and the less intensive tended to be cheaper. A few projects did seem to offer poor value for money in terms of the amount of contact they offered with the students, often because they had start-up problems, leading to low student numbers in the early stages.

### **8.4 LOCAL PROJECTS IN RESPONSE TO NATIONAL INITIATIVE**

We are reporting on a national initiative to reduce youth offending and this top-down model has had a noticeable impact on the projects being reported. Around half the projects are adaptations of well-established national programmes, the other half have drawn on local provision, and this has often involved extensive development work. Generally speaking, those with well-established models have been at an advantage and have been able to start up much more rapidly. Locally developed programmes have frequently taken much longer, typically coming on stream only in September/October 2000 or even later. Almost all projects have experienced difficulties in attracting referrals. This would seem in part to be due to the fact that they have had to carve out a niche locally. In some cases it would seem that the priority was to take advantage of national funding, and that the precise nature of the provision and the client group has had to be worked out after funding was secured. This may produce valuable projects in the long term, but it also seems to be associated with a period of uncertainty and inefficiency.

A number of the local evaluations reported that projects had increased their capacity to engage with targeted young people over time. This was due to the development of local capacity and growing understanding between agencies (for example, Crime Cuts [IS350]). However, some projects continued to experience difficulties, even towards the end of the

funding period because structures and mechanisms for delivery were still contentious. This suggests that before projects seek funding they should have in place the following:

- ❖ aims and objectives that are understood and agreed by all agencies and professionals;
- ❖ a good understanding of the client group;
- ❖ appropriate staff recruitment and professional development processes;
- ❖ rigorous but manageable assessment and evaluation systems that all staff value and will implement;
- ❖ a programme of delivery that has been piloted with the target group.

### **8.5 THE NATIONAL EVALUATION**

The evaluation process was problematic. In particular, quantitative data collection is best managed by one central evaluator. Aggregated data from each project are difficult to summarise and is inflexible to analyse. Qualitative data, on the other hand, benefits from the local perspective. The absence of suitable comparison groups has dogged British research into the relationship between interventions and offending. In subsequent research, the identification of comparison groups should be a priority. Outcome data on what happened to young people after they left projects were also incomplete as there was no way of knowing how long young people stayed in their training or employment destinations. The experience with the New Deal employment initiative was that fewer than half those who had completed the programme kept a job for more than 13 weeks. Longitudinal data are necessary.

## APPENDIX I

### DETAILED PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS FOR PROJECTS OTHER THAN INCLUDE AND FAIRBRIDGE

#### Duke of Edinburgh Award – South East Project (IS 12)

The award project has been operating since 1 October 1999, offering young people opportunities to participate in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, with the aim of steering them towards, and supporting them through, constructive leisure activities that challenge and provide either qualifications or experience to benefit their future lives. The project is the first of its kind and works with young people from the boroughs of Havant, Gosport and Fareham who have been referred to the Wessex Youth Offending Team

The basic requirement is for each young person to complete a sectional certificate for the Bronze Award. This requires 30 hours involvement in an activity and, while this might be achieved at one week-long, residential session, for most participants the hours accrue at a rate of only one hour a week. The programme is delivered from a range of sources, youth workers, outdoor education specialists, FE college, specialist clubs, etc.

The length of time a young person spends with the project is variable, depending on the activity pursued and how concentrated the contact. The intensity of contact also varies. If young people are engaged with programme staff directly, then contact may exceed 50 hours. However, if the programme is delivered through a FE college or specialist club, then direct contact may be minimal with the initial interview and placement followed by regular telephone contact only to monitor progress.

#### Plymouth Education and Employment Inclusion Project (IS 018)

The Plymouth Education and Employment Inclusion Project (EEIP) is conceived as a project with the following specified aims:

- ❖ to improve the young offender's awareness of entitlement to education and employment opportunities;
- ❖ to contribute towards crime reduction and to reduce youth offending behaviour;
- ❖ to reduce exclusion;
- ❖ to advocate the young person's equal right to opportunity.

It has the following set of objectives:

- ❖ to intervene early in order to improve awareness and open doors to educational and careers opportunities as a healthy distraction to offending behaviour;
- ❖ to improve the young offender's self-awareness, to assist in goal setting, and to enable the young offender to make informed choices about educational and career opportunities;
- ❖ to improve the young offender's access to educational and careers opportunities.

The project works by means of a referral process. Young offenders on Final Warnings or court orders are allocated to a supervising officer who is a Yot worker. In the course of

completing the Asset form, the supervising officer is in a position to identify education and/or careers needs, and in the cases where such needs are identified, the young person is then referred on to the specialist Board-funded education worker or careers worker. The form of intervention provided by the worker will depend upon the presenting needs of the young person and, in the case of those subjected to final warnings, the young person's willingness to participate. This means that the interventions are highly individualised: there is no such thing as a typical intervention, and interventions may vary from a single telephone call to a school, through to an initial assessment continued by a series of follow-up sessions.

Throughout the duration of the project, the focus was on young offenders on Final Warnings or Court Orders. However, in the longer term, it is hoped that such provision might extend to all looked after children and all young people referred to pupil referral units, thereby giving education and employment inclusion a more preventive focus, given their known role as risk factors in criminal behaviour.

### **SCAPE - YORKSHIRE AND HUMBER PROJECT (IS 49)**

The programme consists of young people who have been referred from the education welfare officer/schools, Yot team and two voluntary organisations, undertaking a programme consisting of 12 or 13 two-hour sessions, held fortnightly, that use material from a programme known as 'Rainbows'. It also includes a group cognitive behaviour course, and uses drama as a medium for work with young people.

The programme has been developed since its original inception, and is now based on a curriculum developed for schools. It has been adapted to include a curriculum on relevant issues such as drugs and the criminal justice system. The programme consists of participants setting aims for the three months after the end of the programme and longer-term goals. The young people compile a portfolio for accreditation. It is not clear how the programme's components are delivered and the exact content of the curriculum is not known.

The project aims to reduce offending or the risk of offending, and has the following objectives:

- ❖ to improve school attendance;
- ❖ to improve self-esteem;
- ❖ for the young person to establish a portfolio of work for accreditation.

### **PRINCE'S TRUST (IS 072 AND IS 150)**

The Prince's Trust has mounted two programmes under the Board Intervention Programme, a volunteer project running in London (IS 72) and a more complex national programme (IS 150) involving five sites.

The Volunteer Programme (IS 72), which started in November 1999, is managed and delivered directly by the local youth service, in partnership with the Prince's Trust. Each Prince's Trust volunteer team consists of up to 14 young people between the ages of 16 and 24 who undertake an intensive 12-week Personal Development programme. Those young people who are on the New Deal programme also take a further 14-week Individual Challenge programme. The Personal Development Programme consists of five stages:

- ❖ Stage 1 – induction and team-building. The induction week is residential and held at an outdoor pursuits centre. This is an intensive period of team-building, facilitated through rock climbing, abseiling, problem-solving and reflection/discussion on the experience. It gives the volunteers time to get to know each other while planning and preparing for the rest of the 12-week programme. Each volunteer undertakes a self-assessment that sets out personal targets and an action plan. During this week, the team also looks at health and safety issues by participating in a risk assessment and first-aid course.
- ❖ Stage 2 – community project and work placements. The team of volunteers raises funds to support a local community group within a two-week time scale, undertaking tasks such as redecorating various community premises. Following this, the team contacts voluntary agencies and businesses for three-week individual work placements.
- ❖ Stage 3 – next steps. Volunteers participate in a week of job-search skills including preparing a CV, presentation skills and interview techniques.
- ❖ Stage 4 – team challenge. This part of the programme involves working with people. The volunteers approach local community groups to identify areas of support they can offer. To date, the teams have provided 11 to 14-year olds with activity days, taken older groups out for the day, and working on a youth summer scheme.
- ❖ Stage 5 – final presentation. Volunteers organise a presentation to thank all the community groups, organisations, local businesses and sponsors who have been involved over the 12-week programme.

The young people are drawn from a number of sources, with each team ideally being composed of:

- ❖ three employed young people;
- ❖ three young people on New Deal;
- ❖ eight young people who are unemployed.

#### **THE PRINCE'S TRUST FIVE PROJECT (IS 150),**

This project started on October 1999, and is targeted at young people with poor attendance records and who are in their final year of school (or, in one case, in a Young Offender Institution). It is an extension of The Prince's Trust xl clubs, a voluntary in-school programme for 14 to 16-year-olds who are disaffected or at risk of exclusion. Five is run in Pupil Referral/Support Units (PR/SUs), YOIs and community-based projects, and participation is usually non-voluntary. The duration of Five varies from one institution to the next, up to a maximum of two years. The intensiveness of contact also varies from around 17 to 18 hours weekly in one location, where young people have no other schooling, to two hours weekly for young people in other areas, where Five is part of a regular timetable. The project is currently running in three sites and tends to be delivered by a combination of youth workers, teachers and Yot staff. Ideally, each Five group should be run by two individuals, ensuring safety, and enabling one-to-one interaction. A central intention of the programme is to develop individual learning and action development plans. The programme involves a range of activities aimed at building self-confidence, motivation and skills, such as learning to write formal letters, making phone calls to businesses, developing creativity and initiative, and discussions on a range of topics such as drug/alcohol abuse and housing. Particular attention is paid to the following areas:

- ❖ personal and interpersonal skills;
- ❖ active citizenship;
- ❖ transition to employment and working life;
- ❖ problem-solving.

Additional materials being developed are:

- ❖ conflict resolution and anger management;
- ❖ preparation for further education and training;
- ❖ employment related training;
- ❖ issues around substance abuse;
- ❖ mentoring;
- ❖ pro-social modelling.

The content covered by Five groups varies according to the background and experience of the advisor. For example, in one location the project manager has expertise in group work, another group can focus on cognitive skills with the input of a psychologist, while other groups tend to draw upon more art- and drama-based activities. Food technology lessons have also proved unexpectedly popular with one group.

The Prince's Trust has supplied a curriculum model and learning materials loosely derived from xl programme content. Advisors adapt this material to meet the specific needs of the group. Material specifically written for Five by the trust is under development.

Content is primarily group-work related: for example, discussions or organising a trip away. The keynote is enabling achievement and making young people think about themselves and their dealings with the world.

#### **MULTI-SITE (IS 150) - THE PRINCE'S TRUST FIVE PROJECT.**

The overall aim is 'to change mindsets and attitudes and help this group of young people to steer away from destructive offending behaviour and towards a more positive, constructive behavioural model.' The programme aims to re-engage young people and to boost their self-esteem and motivation before leaving school. Shorter term objectives are to establish basic skills and group work abilities and to gain the trust of the young people.

#### **NORTH WEST PROJECT IS 095**

The programme involves a range of agencies in the provision and management of eight distinct but inter-related projects that aim to prevent offending among 10 to 17-year-olds. The programme addresses a range of factors, including social skills, poor academic achievement, unemployment, misuse of drugs and alcohol, social exclusion and being 'looked after' by the local authority. A project co-ordinator/manager is responsible for the day-to-day management of each project, and is, in turn, managed by the Yot or the relevant partner agency. The local Yot project steering group oversees this and all other projects funded by the Board development funds.

The eight distinct but interrelated projects are as follows:



- ❖ Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme - providers: youth service and social services. The project provides support, activities and access to accredited courses and the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme for young people involved with the Yot and/or the Board Development Fund projects.
- ❖ Education guidance outreach (known as the Careers Education and Training Project) - providers: Career Decisions. A careers advisor provides one-to-one support for young people in relation to education, training and employment opportunities.
- ❖ Extra-curricular programme (known as 'Xact') - providers: youth service (statutory). The project provides education and diversionary programmes for offenders or children and young people considered 'at risk' of offending.
- ❖ Face-to-face and drugs education - providers: Merseyside Youth Association, youth service and health education. Provides short-term, one-to-one support on drug and alcohol use to young people and their parents/carers.
- ❖ The Peer Group Mentoring Programme (formerly the 'Free To Be Me' Peer Education Project) - providers: the local Yot. The development of this project has altered from that proposed in the bid documentation. The project has been renamed the Peer Group Mentoring Programme, and is being directly provided by the local Yot. The training course will be facilitated by the project co-ordinator and the Yot's health authority nominee. The Peer Group Mentoring Programme is an initial training programme accredited through the Merseyside Open College Network offering preparation for young people who want to work as volunteers in peer education/mentoring. The training is available to young people aged 16 to 18 years and involves participation in a 25-hour training course over 10 weeks and a 12.5-hour weekend residential. The training will address a range of skills – including listening skills and assertiveness – and issues – including family and relationship breakdown, drug issues and homelessness – considered relevant to peer mentoring. The first course is planned for March 2001 and places are available for up to 15 young people.
- ❖ Health Care, Drugs and Alcohol (known as the Merseyside Drugs Project) - providers: Merseyside Drugs Council and the local Yot. A drugs misuse advisor is providing structured individualised interventions addressing drug awareness, drug education, drug use and issues related to drug use.
- ❖ Parents Support Group - providers: the local Yot. The development of this project has altered from that proposed in the bid documentation and the local Yot is now directly providing the Parents Support Group. An initial eight-week programme facilitated in a local family centre by the project co-ordinator and a family centre worker was initiated on 16 February, 2001. The group provides an informal forum for parents to meet, to access advice and support to discuss common issues.
- ❖ Young People's Training Project - providers: youth service and Training Employment Council. The project provides a 13-week pre-vocational course focusing on basic skills and employability for 16 to 17-year-olds not ready to enter mainstream provision.

### **NORTH EAST PROJECT (IS 97)**

This project is based in a YOI and is targeted at young men aged 15 to 17 years who have been remanded. It is the result of multi-agency collaboration and aims to reduce the risk of reoffending by facilitating a seamless continuity of education, training and employment,

and helping to facilitate transition from the YOI. The programme has five stages, in which the following are undergone by the young people:

1. assessment of needs;
2. plan of action agreement;
3. plan of action implementation;
4. plan of action completion;
5. destination.

The stages are facilitated by a mentor for each young person who is based at the YOI. The project duration for each young person is variable depending on perceived need and the length of time the young person is on remand. The range appears to be from two weeks to six months. The intensity of contact is said to be 'short but intense.'

### **IN 2 WIN - NORTH EAST PROJECT (IS 98)**

This consists of a series of programmes developed to help young people with multiple barriers to learning and work to re-engage in these activities. The target group is young people aged 14-16 years who are excluded from school or are at risk of being excluded and at risk of offending. The length of the project is undefined, the intensity of contact is variable and is delivered by a dedicated team

The aims of the project are to reduce reoffending and to overcome the obstacles preventing young people from engaging with education, training and employment. The objectives of the programme are:

- ❖ the construction of alternatives to home during exclusions;
- ❖ the development of life skills, learning relevant to work;
- ❖ the creation of work and learning activities;
- ❖ the achievement of a positive learning transition in preparation for leaving statutory education.

### **RAISING ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAMME - LONDON PROJECT (IS 108)**

The Raising Achievement Programme (RAP) involves placing computers with a literacy and numeracy software programme called Successmaker in local authority children's homes. Successmaker starts users off with a baseline assessment and then they work through the programme at their own rate. Children have a minimum of three and a maximum of five sessions weekly. The projected numbers for use at any one time are 15. The programme is managed by the senior peripatetic worker (social services). There is a steering committee with representatives from education, social services and the Yot which meets regularly to review progress. The programme is delivered by care workers in children's' homes. Each worker has received two days of training in the use of Successmaker. It is hoped that, by providing computers, project 108 will also be helpful to children in residential homes when doing homework and will provide continuity of educational activity over school holidays.

### **NORTH WEST PROJECT (IS 163)**

This project is targeted at offenders on Community Service Orders and Combination Orders, so that all the young people are persistent offenders. The programme consists of young offenders engaging in basic skills education and other skills training based within the

community, such as gardening, catering and woodworking. These are to be accredited towards a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ).

The project aims to reduce offending and has the following objectives:

- ❖ to enhance the education, training, and employment opportunities of offenders;
- ❖ to teach, motivate and encourage offenders to develop social and practical skills which will be assessed and accredited within the framework of national awards.

The objectives are to be fulfilled through the motivation, support, and teaching of the young people in social and practical skills, which will be assessed and accredited within the framework of national awards. In line with national standards, 10% of the time of the order can be spent on education. Links are made with career partnerships to ensure continued support in furthering their opportunities, after the order is finished. The types of skill offered to young people, cover basic skills such as timekeeping, health and safety, action planning and teamworking, as well as more practical skills such as painting and decorating, gardening, and taking part in environmental projects. The community service supervisors are also able to gain from the project by become skilled and qualified assessors, accredited by an NVQ.

The length of time spent on the project depends on the length of the order. The intensiveness of contact is similarly variable so that the range will be from between 10% of 5 hours a week, to 10% of 21 hours a week. The programme is delivered by the community service officer, the community service supervisor (as trained to do so by city colleges); and the careers link and support given by the local authority careers advisor. There is no selection procedure, and any young person on one of the two orders who wants to take part in the programme is entitled to.

### **GETTING SORTED - SOUTH EAST PROJECT (IS 223)**

The content of the course is covered by six broad headings: working with others; life skills; planning and problem solving; communication skills; practical skills; and positive attitudes. Both theory and practice are covered in classroom sessions, which are mostly conducted by the two project workers. Visiting professionals also give talks. Additionally, the course offers a number of out of the classroom activities including day trips to local educational attractions, day walks and a two-day residential trip at an outdoor centre.

The main aim of the project is to engage young people aged between 14 and 18 who are unable to access or are excluded from mainstream education and training and are involved in criminal behaviour or at risk of being involved. The objectives are given as:

- ❖ production of coursework and the achievement of certification;
- ❖ the inclusion of the young people through progression to school, college, training, other projects and voluntary work;
- ❖ personal development and self-assessment;
- ❖ recognition of achievement by local and wider communities through the project and out-of-hours works;
- ❖ improved social awareness;
- ❖ progression from looked-after status for those so referred.

### **OTHER OPTIONS - EAST PROJECT (IS 241)**

This is a small project made up of one part-time co-ordinator and three part-time youth workers. All staff work directly with the young people on the project. The primary aim of the project is to reduce offending by young people aged between 13 and 17 years. It aims to achieve this through forming and maintaining close relationships with the young people and providing them with a programme of personal support, activities and informal education. The project has identified a number of objectives:

- ❖ to encourage young people to take responsibility for their own actions;
- ❖ to empower participants to work together to reduce reoffending;
- ❖ to ensure peer support and an appropriate curriculum are provided;
- ❖ to encourage accreditation of prior learning and new skills.

The project has adopted a curriculum which covers three phases. Phase one of the curriculum concentrates on individual development in which the participants work predominately with a dedicated support worker. In this phase, the emphasis is on assessing the needs and position of the young person, and working with him/her individually to promote her/his personal development. Phase two broadens phase one into a series of group experiences in which the young people develop the skills of engaging with other young people and working to achieve agreed goals. This phase involves a total of three days in which different aspects of skills development are covered. Phase three moves the focus on to working towards independence. Within this phase there are two complementary strands. First, the main emphasis is on the development of skills, attributes and attitudes which will help the young person create a more stable and structured relationship with the wider society, possibly through employment, education or further training. The second strand is to help the young person give something back by engaging with local communities in ways which enhance community well-being.

### **STEP ON - SOUTH EAST PROJECT (IS 243)**

This project is an intensive intervention project for young people primarily aged 16 to 17 years who are persistent offenders. It has now broadened to accept young people who have been excluded from school or are persistent truants and young people who have offended once only. The project consists of an intensive eight-week education and training programme (comprising 12 hours per week) including courses in cognitive and behavioural skills, social competencies, information, communications and technology skills, drugs and substance awareness, sex education, careers advice education and training opportunities, employment and work experience opportunities.

The course is run by one staff member and volunteers. The programme aims to prevent reoffending and has the following objectives:

- ❖ to divert young people from crime;
- ❖ to provide guidance and support to young people to enable them to gain skills that would facilitate their access to employment;
- ❖ increase the number of young people taking up constructive extra-curricular activities, entering training, education or employment;
- ❖ addressing key social factors relating to offending behaviour.

### **LONDON PROJECT (IS 248E)**

The project offers furniture restoration and carpentry skills training to young people at risk of committing, or who have committed, an offence, and is carried out in small groups of no more than five, with a dedicated workshop leader. Each young person spends up to 12 weeks on the project, or longer on a voluntary basis, one or two days a week. As a minimum, each young person is required to attend one session per week, lasting four hours. It is planned that accreditation of these skills will be given, but as yet the form of this accreditation has not been formally agreed.

The project aims to reduce offending. One of the principle objectives is to offer practical skills training to young people who have either not been able to access Design Technology classes at school, due to their status as refugees, or school non-attenders, or those at risk of offending and for whom closely supervised activities will enhance confidence and reduce offending. Other objectives include equipping young people with a skill which will lead to employment within a building firm, or encourage them to pursue further education as carpenters, joiners or cabinet makers. The target group is young people who are:

- ❖ at risk of offending;
- ❖ subject to Final Warnings;
- ❖ subject to Reparation, Action Plan or Supervision Orders;
- ❖ on bail;
- ❖ in or recently released from custody;
- ❖ looked after young people referred by social workers.

### **FUTURE BASE - EAST PROJECT (IS 282)**

This project, Future Base, unlike the others in this category, is attached to a national voluntary organisation concerned with offender, employment and training issues. The focus of the project is on young people's education needs, training needs, job-search skills, job application, interview skills, positive attitudes, work and work placements. Each client is normally offered three appointments where an action plan is formulated, based on the young person's interests, problems, etc. The project manager continues to monitor and support clients in their placements, although with a light touch, for up to three months. The project also undertakes work in schools with Year 9, 10 and 11 pupils (13 to 16-year-olds). Talks are provided about the consequences of criminal history, what constitutes criminal behaviour and the 'drift' into it. Better informed, non-criminal choices are being encouraged.

The aims of the project are:

- a) to prevent involvement in criminal activity through work with young people designed to enable them to obtain, or improve their chances of obtaining education, training, work or work placements;
- b) to prevent involvement in criminal activity by enabling and encouraging better informed and non-criminal choices.

The following objectives (depending upon the needs of individual referrals) have been agreed in pursuit of these aims:

- a) build up a list of supportive employers (employers willing to provide equal opportunities to offenders). This will involve the target of contacting 20 employers per week with the aim of securing the support of at least six of these.
- b) increase the number of referral agencies (target six per year);
- c) meet with referrals, undertake risk assessment of offending behaviour and refer to appropriate bodies for advice, support and help as necessary;
- d) identify the interests and ambitions of referrals;
- e) assess the employability of referrals (through the identification of educational qualifications, vocational skills and experiences, and personal and social skills);
- f) agree employment/education and training goals with referrals;
- g) assist the referral with job searches, education and training searches;
- h) assist the referral in producing a CV;
- i) assist the referral in developing good interview and telephone skills.
- j) obtain placements for at least 60% of those referred;
- k) monitor referrals in their employment and training places, identify problems which might put these places at risk and work to resolve these problems;
- l) the preparation and delivery of lectures in the consequences of delinquent behaviour, its causes and forms. Content will be informed by ongoing monitoring of these lectures to establish attractive presentational forms and informative content.

#### **MIDNIGHT BASKETBALL - WALES PROJECT (IS 339) & EAST MIDLANDS PROJECT (IS 404)**

Midnight Basketball is a programme developed by the National Playing Fields Association and delivered in the community by a range of local partners (e.g. youth workers, social workers, teachers.). The programme targets young people with diverse needs (by no means only young offenders), aged between 13 and 18, offering them sport and lifestyle workshops within their community. The programme consists of 12 three-hour sessions conducted over 12 weeks. A maximum of 30 young people can register on each programme. Each session involves one hour of basketball coaching, a 40 to 50-minute lifestyle workshop and one hour of competition in a basketball league. Qualified and experienced coaches are recruited to run the coaching sessions, and qualified referees and table officials are employed to support the running of the league. The lifestyle workshops cover a range of topic areas such as sexual health, drug use, citizenship, nutrition, racism, and are responsive to the interests of the individual groups.

#### **CRIME CUT - YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER PROJECT (IS 350)**

This project is based within a Yot in Yorkshire. The project focuses on two main client groups – young offenders and those at risk of offending. Two careers advisors have been seconded from the careers service to the Yot team and two advisors from the local business education partnership are linked to the project. The advisors offer a range of services that focus on supporting clients to progress into education, training and employment opportunities.

The average length of time that a young person spends in contact with the project is five to six months. There is considerable variation in the intensiveness of contact, but 30 contact hours (including follow-up work and paperwork) would represent a heavy commitment. The shortest interventions can be a few hours through to several days work with one individual client over a period of months.

The mentoring and support activities carried out by the project workers over the last year have comprised a menu of specific support interventions offered to young people underpinned by networking and training activities to build workers' skills and knowledge. In the first six months of the project, up to a third of workers' time was spent developing their knowledge and networks through staff training, meetings and visits to other agencies. One outcome from this work has been the development of referral processes and protocols. Support for young people has embraced a range of activities from practical help with addressing barriers to education, training and employment opportunities through to in-depth careers guidance.

The objectives of the project are as follows:

- ❖ to improve education and training opportunities for individual clients;
- ❖ to raise training and employment issues with local employers to facilitate equal opportunities;
- ❖ to ensure that a multi-agency approach is taken;
- ❖ to address motivational behaviour;
- ❖ to contribute to an holistic (whole person) approach focused on client needs.

#### **DYSPPEL - SOUTH EAST PROJECT (IS 392)**

Dyspel-Yot (based on its sister project, Dyspel for adults) is a programme for young people being dealt with by Oxfordshire Yot who have dyslexia or related problems (such as poor spelling) and are not already receiving individualised attention. The intention is that at the time of any first assessment of a young person being made by a Yot officer, the young person should also be given a preliminary screening for possible dyslexia or difficulties with basic literacy skills. If this initial screening reveals such difficulties, they should then be referred to Dyspel, on a voluntary basis, for a more thorough assessment. If the in-depth assessment proves positive and if the young person is not already receiving help, they are then offered a period of one-to-one support from a specialist tutor attached to the scheme.

A software package called the Lucid Assessment System for Schools is used for assessment purposes. This, together with the initial interview carried out by the co-ordinator, produces a profile of the young person's difficulties. The co-ordinator writes a report based on the assessment and assigns the case to one of the tutors, discussing with them the specific needs of the young person. The tutor then arranges an initial meeting with the young person and a member of staff at the school. The tutoring sessions generally take place in school or, occasionally, at the young person's home in circumstances where this is considered appropriate. The programme of support is tailored to the needs of the individual depending on what problems are thrown up in the introductory assessment. The co-ordinator has explained that:

*There is always some sort of spelling programme because there is generally a spelling deficit, and there will be some input in place to improve their auditory memory if either are impaired, leaning on the one which is working better. If they are both impaired then we use the multi-sensory approach.*

No finite period is set for the duration of support. As the co-ordinator has put it, "Supporting for dyslexia is: 'How long is a piece of string?' When do you stop?' The tutors

work with the young person on an individual basis, usually at the young person's school and sometimes at their home.

The overall aim is to reduce the risk of offending by young people assessed as dyslexic, and the specific objectives are to:

- ❖ screen all Yot referrals for potential dyslexia and then rigorously assess those with suspected dyslexia or literacy problems;
- ❖ provide one-to-one tuition and support for those with a 'positive' assessment;
- ❖ improve participants' literacy and related self-confidence;
- ❖ improve participants' access to education, training and employment;
- ❖ communicate awareness of dyslexia and appropriate provisions to sentencers, young offenders and their parents and carers.

#### **THE PROCESS AND TYPE OF SUPPORT PROVIDED**

After a positive assessment, and after checking whether the young person is already receiving support, the co-ordinator allocates the case to a tutor and they discuss the assessment report and the sort of programme that the young person might need. The tutor is given the name and phone number of the school and they then make contact and arrange to go for an initial meeting with the young person and the special education needs co-ordinator or the head of the year. The co-ordinator sends a copy of the assessment report to the school and advises them that the named dyslexia specialist will be contacting them within the next week. Apart from introductions, this initial meeting provides information about what other forms of help, if any, the young person has already been getting, so that input from Dyspel can be co-ordinated. The tutors keep a record of work done with their young people and provide monthly feedback to the co-ordinator about the work achieved and any problems experienced.

The tutors are imaginative in the material they use to engage the interest of their young people, responding sensitively to their needs and interests. Self-help is encouraged where problems are not so great - especially for those who have left school.

#### **EDUCATION INCLUSION - SOUTH EAST PROJECT (IS 395)**

The project is intended to consist of a number of interwoven elements, the purpose of which is to draw together strands of work aimed at the linked problems of school non-attendance and high exclusion rates. This project is intended to complement the local education authority targets for the reduction of exclusions and trancies. It also has elements that overlap with the Restorative Justice project which has received separate Board funding.

There are several separate sub-projects brought together under the heading of Education Inclusion:

1. restorative justice interventions within Pupil Referral Units;
2. developing Yot links with schools where non-attendance and exclusion rates are high;
3. intensive work with young offenders within the local Education Action Zone;
4. provision of an education worker in the local YOI to assist young people back into school or on to further education.



The overall objective of the project is to assist and advise the unit managers in understanding issues relating to education and, where appropriate, providing guidance, pro-formas and statements to facilitate links between the Yot, schools and education-based developments.

### **CROSSROADS - SOUTH EAST PROJECT (IS 396)**

This project is affiliated with the Learning Gateway for young people past the statutory school leaving age who have difficulties in obtaining or retaining employment. The project was formed as a sub-section of the Learning Gateway specifically for young people who have offended, in order to focus on getting them through the Learning Gateway and to develop an associated group-work programme, Job Track. Young people are referred to the project by Yot officers when they are being assessed for court appearances or Final Warnings. Any young person of 16 or 17 who is deemed as needing help towards the goal of gaining employment may be referred, and everyone referred is offered an appointment.

The aim of the project is to enhance the support given to 16- and 17-year-old offenders who lack basic employability skills in order to improve their access to training and employment and thereby reduce the risk of their reoffending. The specific objectives are to:

- ❖ help the targeted individuals access work, training or education by providing them with in-depth support from a personal advisor;
- ❖ make an assessment in order to provide them with an individual development plan;
- ❖ work with them in ways appropriate to their needs, including provision of a group-work programme;
- ❖ build effective working relationships with the multi-agency personnel of the Yot;
- ❖ share knowledge and expertise about the target group with other career service staff.

A member of staff from the local careers service has been seconded since January 2000 for an initial period of 12 months to act as a 'personal advisor' for young offenders referred to the Learning Gateway.

For the individualised work, the careers worker spends varying amounts of time with young people referred to her, the duration and intensiveness depending on their individual needs and their willingness to co-operate. All contact to date has been on a one-to-one basis. A four-week, group-work programme is to be piloted in April, 2001. The nature of support provided is variable and can consist of discussions within the careers office, home visits and visits to young people who are in custody, accompanying the young person to the Job Centre and other agencies connected with employment. The main elements of support appear to be:

1. provision of information;
2. encouragement and motivation;
3. increasing self-awareness of skills and abilities;
4. linking young people into training and job placement.

### **TRAX - SOUTH EAST (IS 399)**

The Responsible Road Users Programme is delivered primarily by staff members of Trax: The Local Motor Project, a company with charitable status that has been in existence since summer 1992. There are usually two members of staff running the programme, one with

expertise in youth justice work, who leads the group programme. and one with mechanical expertise, who runs the motor mechanics workshop and also attends the group sessions. The programme consists of a seven-week 'rolling' course. Participants meet for a two-hour period, and half this time is spent in a motor mechanics workshop.

The group-work element of the programme gives emphasis to legal aspects of driving, but the programme is much wider in coverage. It is intended to be both educational and practical. It consists of an introductory meeting and seven sessions:

1. offence analysis;
2. decision-making and the consequences of crime;
3. sexual health, rights and responsibilities (this session is provided by a member of the Terrence Higgins Trust);
4. victim awareness;
5. hazard awareness 1;
6. hazard awareness 2;
7. career, CVs, education and training (this seventh session is sometimes provided by staff from the career guidance services).

Modifications to the programme are introduced from time to time in response to staff suggestions. On successful completion of the programme, the young people then become eligible to join Trax workshop teams on a voluntary basis, or to attend an advanced programme. This gives them the opportunity to continue developing their interest in motor vehicles, and to gain more help in developing skills relevant to training and employment.

The stated aim of the project is to prevent and reduce offending by young people aged 13 to 17 years with a history of offending, especially motor-related offending. The specific objectives are to:

- ❖ help young people understand their offending behaviour and to challenge the attitudes associated with their offending and irresponsible motoring activity;
- ❖ examine the effects such activities have on themselves, their families, friends, victims and the wider community;
- ❖ help young people to develop strategies to avoid further offending;
- ❖ provide information to encourage responsible road use (e.g. highway code, hazard awareness);
- ❖ help young people make constructive use of their leisure time;
- ❖ provide opportunities to develop key skills (literacy, numeracy, social interaction, information technology skills).

#### **ARSON TASK FORCE - NORTH EAST PROJECT (IS 418)**

The overall aims of this set of partnership projects are to reduce levels of anti-social behaviour and disorder-related offences by children and young people. There are four strands to this partner programme which are:

- ❖ work experience. A one-week intensive work-experience course with the fire service, which is mainly a physical activity course focused on team work, discipline and structure. The course takes place from Monday to Friday between 9 and 5. Group numbers vary from between 8 and 12 young people. Young people that attend are

- given the opportunity to sample the tasks associated with the training that firefighters undergo. Target groups are young offenders, or those at risk of becoming young offenders. This programme's objectives are: to enable young people to experience being part of a team; increase awareness of impacts of offending/anti-social behaviour; enhance employment opportunities; develop personal and social confidence; and offer the possibility of reparative activity.
- ❖ Young Firefighters' Association (YFA). Provides activities for excluded young people aged 13 to 16. It entails a longer commitment, and focuses on mentoring, training and education, as well as carrying out training tasks associated with being a firefighter. Although the bid specifies that the YFA will target up to 20 excluded young people and young offenders, in practice, the places have been filled by school pupils. The objectives of this programme are to involve young people in a group that will foster character development and a positive role in society; enhance educational achievement; develop personal and social confidence and have a positive impact in other areas of life.
  - ❖ Firesetters Intervention. Consists of home visits from operational firefighters, community fire safety officers and civilian fire service employees to try to turn them away from their interest in fire. This intervention is intended for 5 to 13-year-olds who are either at the early stage of setting fires, or have displayed curiosity about fire in such a manner so as to cause concern. The objectives of the programme are to: provide focused counselling and support for children and young people with a history of arson-related behaviour and/or an unhealthy interest in fire in order to reduce the incidence of such behaviours; highlight any other areas of counselling/emotional-psychological issues for referral back to Yot or on to other agencies; and to strengthen the individual/family ability to avoid further incidents.
  - ❖ The Arson Task Force (ATF) operates independently and is a constituent part of the Community Fire Safety department of the fire service. It employs environmental arson prevention methods through the removal of rubbish and abandoned cars, and the boarding up of empty houses in partnership with the local authority. The ATF also targets schools in areas of high arson / hoax calls in terms of presenting an arson-prevention message to children. The ATF responds to target 'areas' rather than young people. Groups of young people in schools in these areas may well then be targeted. The objectives of ATF are to: target for action particular areas of concern in relation to malicious fire-setting, and to use the fire service's information systems to reduce fire-setting incidents.

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