

# The contribution of Youth Offending Teams to the work of the Troubled Families Programme in England

*A Joint Inspection by:*  
*HM Inspectorate of Probation*  
*Care Quality Commission*  
*HM Inspectorate of Constabulary*  
*Ofsted*

**January 2015**

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## Foreword

The National Troubled Families programme is an ambitious initiative. It provides a framework whereby a number of agencies, including Youth Offending Teams, can work together on the most pressing employment, educational, antisocial behaviour and offending challenges presented by families across England. The approach offers enhanced packages of support to families, to bring about substantial and sustainable change. The programme has clear objectives which are tackled through locally designed and delivered Troubled Families schemes.

In this inspection we specifically focused on the contribution of Youth Offending Teams to their local schemes. We found they had invested heavily in the work and had played an important part in the development and delivery of their local services. However, we also found a number of important practice issues that needed to be addressed, in order that the benefits of the programme could be fully realised.

The work of Youth Offending Teams centres on the offending and antisocial behaviour challenges presented by children and young people. Thus, for these two Troubled Families objectives at least, we expected to see Youth Offending Teams make an important contribution. We found many examples where the work had the potential to bear fruit and the reoffending patterns in the sample we reviewed were positive. However, the local services had been running for a relatively short period of time and there had been limited evaluation of the progress being made by Youth Offending Team service users. This meant we could not readily track the outcomes from the work.

Working in partnership is at the core of the Troubled Families approach. In the areas we inspected, considerable investment by some partner agencies was evident but this varied across the country. Consistently, Youth Offending Teams, children's social care services and educational services were active participants. We also saw examples of innovative police and health involvement in some of the schemes, but this was not the case in all areas. Other local partners, including probation and third and private sector providers, also varied in their participation.

Crucially, there were a number of core practice issues that needed urgent attention. Some concerned Youth Offending Team practices, but many related to the operation of the local schemes overall. The consequence of this was that, in most cases, Youth Offending Team records could not show how their plans of work fitted with the wider Troubled Families objectives. Uncertainties about the role of the lead professional often meant that the partnership work was not as focused as it could have been. We also found that the arrangements for responding to non-engagement by families, particularly in cases where there may be the need to take statutory action on child safeguarding, or school non-attendance, were not sufficiently robust. Many front line staff reported that they had not had adequate training to undertake their Troubled Families duties. To help make progress on these issues, we have identified good practice examples and we offer practical recommendations geared at bringing about improvement at a number of levels.

The Troubled Families programme is a commonsense approach which, significantly, has the support of families, children and young people and practitioners. At this stage in the development of these services, the need to improve aspects of practice means the effectiveness of the work with Youth Offending Team service users is not yet clear. If the results from the Troubled Families programme were to show that it helps to reduce reoffending and make progress on the factors linked to offending, there would be a clear case for further investment in this work by Youth

Offending Teams. On balance, our findings about the contributions of Youth Offending Teams to the Troubled Families programme give rise to cautious optimism. However, currently we must conclude that, for Youth Offending Teams, the Troubled Families programme offers a promising approach which is, as yet, unproven.

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*January 2014*

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# Summary of Findings

## The inspection

This inspection was commissioned by the Criminal Justice Chief Inspectors' Group and formed part of the work stream identified in the Joint Inspection Business Plan 2013-2015. The objectives of the inspection were to assess the effectiveness of the efforts of Youth Offending Services, and their partners, in achieving the objectives of local Troubled Families initiatives and to disseminate good practice.

We visited six areas and met strategic and operational staff at all grades from organisations involved in the delivery of local Troubled Families services. We conducted individual and group interviews relating to 107 cases and we spoke to 30 service users (children and young people and parents/carers) who had participated in the local Troubled Families programmes.

## Context

The Troubled Families programme focuses on turning around the lives of 120,000 troubled families through integrated, keyworker led, whole family working. It addresses antisocial behaviour and offending, educational engagement and employment issues within families. It commenced in April 2012 and was initially intended to operate until 2015. This has subsequently been extended to 2020. Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) work with children and young people who have offended and address the factors associated with their offending, such as educational engagement, decision making skills and family issues. YOTs also work with others to address a range of issues that may contribute to the Troubled Families objectives. There is clear overlap between the objectives of the Troubled Families programme, the work of YOTs, and the methods used to achieve the goals of these bodies. Implementation of the Troubled Families programme has led to many strategic and operational challenges and while progress has been slower than expected, it is picking up pace.

## Outcomes

Some promising work was seen and we noted that progress had been made against factors linked to offending in many cases. In many of the YOT Troubled Families cases, the quality of work we saw was higher than the norm. However, we could not track progress against the specific Troubled Families outcomes in the majority of YOT case files.

## Assessment and Planning

YOT staff and their partners had attempted to form positive working relationships with those receiving services and this was crucial in working towards Troubled Families objectives. We noted that, as standalone documents, YOT specific assessments and plans were often of good quality and these had benefited from the multi-agency arrangements. However, we found that Troubled Families work was often hindered by inadequate integration of multi-agency assessments and plans. In too many cases single agency perspectives had not been pulled together in a

multi-agency plan. YOT practitioners needed to be clear about the priorities and outcomes being addressed for the families in a multi-agency context. The role of the Troubled Families lead professional had not been adequately defined in several locations and this compounded the planning difficulties.

## **Delivering interventions**

Uncertainties about the Troubled Families lead practitioner/lead professional role limited the ability of staff to deliver coordinated packages of services. YOT staff, and others, had a tendency to default to work relating to the core priorities of their host organisation and this diluted the Troubled Families focus of their work. Some areas had undertaken mapping exercises to ensure that the required range of Troubled Families services were in place and to promote improved partnership working.

Service users were generally positive about the ways in which Troubled Families services were being delivered. For those families that had not engaged with the services, several areas had developed processes to address non-engagement. However, in many of the relevant cases, these processes were not being followed as intended.

## **Leadership and Management**

The scale and ambition of the Troubled Families programmes varied across the local authorities we inspected. Plans to support the implementation of the local programmes needed more attention as did addressing the practice challenges that arose from Troubled Families work. Practitioners were positive about the potential of the programmes, but they needed clarification on a number of key practice issues and training to undertake the work. More needed to be done to ensure that all relevant partners were contributing effectively to the Troubled Families programmes, at both the strategic and operational levels. YOTs had played a full and active part in these developments and they were enthusiastic participants in the work. Troubled Families work represented a sizable and growing profile of YOT workloads.

# Recommendations

## **The Department for Communities and Local Government should:**

- with other Government departments, ensure that Troubled Families guidance provides clear authoritative statements about the expectations of partnership involvement in local Troubled Families programmes.
- explore the extent to which Troubled Families work is contributing to academic, vocational and safeguarding outcomes for the children involved in Troubled Families services.

## **The Youth Justice Board should:**

- ensure that YOTs clearly outline their Troubled Families work within annual Youth Justice Plans and respond to any national performance and capacity issues that may arise.
- in collaboration with youth justice services, develop a self assessment tool for YOTs to assess their contributions to achieving Troubled Families outcomes.
- support YOTs in addressing the findings and recommendations in this report.

## **Local Troubled Families Teams and their partner agencies should ensure:**

- staff produce, share and review integrated multi-agency Troubled Families assessments and develop outcome-focused plans for each case.
- each Troubled Families case can demonstrate partnership agreement on a clear set of prioritised and measurable outcomes, which are regularly reviewed and monitored.
- lead practitioners understand the remit of their role in respect of all family members to be included in the Troubled Families programme and the requirements and authority of their role.
- that all staff receive sufficient training and support (on subjects detailed in the main report) to enable them contribute effectively to achieving Troubled Families outcomes.
- that all relevant partners including; social care, education, health, police and probation, are sufficiently involved in the delivery of Troubled Families services.
- staff are aware of and implement service user non-engagement policies, ensuring that the families with whom they work are aware of the consequences of non-engagement.
- in matters relating to child safeguarding and educational non-attendance there are clear procedures for statutory interventions to be undertaken, which detail how practitioners should address these issues and which are monitored and evaluated for impact.

## **Youth Offending Team managers should:**

- monitor and evaluate the Troubled Families outcomes being achieved for YOT service users, in order that future performance can be enhanced.
- where relevant, address the findings and recommendations in this report.
- ensure that regular case reviews are held to maintain the focus on achieving good outcomes for children and families.
- ensure that quality assurance and management oversight arrangements support achieving both Troubled Families and YOT outcomes.

**The context - shared goals,  
shared methods; Youth  
Offending Teams and the  
Troubled Families Programme**

**1**

# 1. The context - shared goals, shared methods; Youth Offending Teams and the Troubled Families Programme

## Summary

The chapter outlines the development of the Troubled Families (TF) programme and the links with the work of YOTs. It notes their overlapping objectives and the similarities in the methods used to achieve results. A recent report published by the National Audit Office (NAO) sets the context by commenting on the implementation of the TF programme and the associated Department of Work and Pension's (DWP) employability programme for families with multiple problems.

## Key findings

- The TF programme focuses on partnership approaches to addressing antisocial behaviour and offending, educational engagement and employment issues within families.
- YOT work centres on children and young people in their family context. They use partnership approaches to address offending and this can contribute to achieving TF objectives.
- There is clear overlap between the work of the TF programme, the work of YOTs, and the methods used to achieve their goals.
- Implementation of the TF programme has thrown up many challenges. While progress has been slower than expected, it is picking up pace.

## The Troubled Families Initiative

- 1.1. The Troubled Families initiative is an England-wide, payment by results programme: *'In December 2010, the Prime Minister stated his commitment to turning around the lives of 120,000 of the country's troubled families by the end of this parliament. As part of this, the Government set out a clear vision about what needed to change in these families: getting children into school, cutting crime and anti-social behaviour and putting adults on the path to work. To deliver this, the Government pledged to invest an additional £448m in the Troubled Families programme, to work in partnership with local authorities to help change these families' lives and to establish a Troubled Families Team in the Department for Communities and Local Government, ...'* (DCLG report on Working with Troubled Families<sup>1</sup>). The programme was also seen as an important part of the coordinated response by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) to the disturbances which took place in England during August 2011. In December 2011 the Prime Minister promised: *"...a network of troubleshooters"* to deal with unemployed families who offended and committed antisocial behaviour (BBC item on Troubled Families<sup>2</sup>). Four months later the TF initiative began. A troubled family was considered to be one in which there was worklessness, antisocial behaviour was exhibited and one in which there were children or young people who had offended or had poor engagement with education.
- 1.2. The TF programme was commissioned to run from April 2012 until the end of the current parliament in 2015. More recently the government has announced its intention to continue the programme until 2020, subject to the spending review. On April 1st 2015, the programme will enter its fourth year and will extend its focus to a further 400,000 families. The first three years of the programme were designed to turn around the 120,000 families who caused most expense to the public purse (DCLG

1 Department for Communities and Local Government: *The Fiscal Case for Working with Troubled Families: Analysis and Evidence on the Costs of Troubled Families to Governments*, February 2013

2 BBC News (2011) *Troubleshooters Scheme to Tackle 'Troubled Families'*

report on Working with Troubled Families<sup>3</sup>). The Government asked local authorities to identify and engage with these families, assess their needs and deliver a package of coordinated support to bring about positive change.

- 1.3. The financial support of this work is important. The DCLG offered an attachment fee and a retrospective payment to local authorities of 40% of the estimated £10,000 it costs to turn around a troubled family. It was anticipated that engagement with the families could save an average of £75,000 per annum per family; the sum estimated to be spent annually on reactive and targeted services to these families (UK Government paper on Troubled Families<sup>4</sup>).
- 1.4. TF results use a range of different time frames. However, the crime, education, antisocial behaviour and progress to work measures should be achieved within simultaneous time periods for each family. Local authorities could be paid up to £4,000 per family, depending on the actual results achieved for each family. The results required are illustrated below:
  - The education result required; all children in the household who are in school, a Pupil Referral Unit or Alternative Provision to have had fewer than three fixed term exclusion and less than 15% unauthorised absences in the last three consecutive terms. All children in the household who were not on the school roll to have moved into a school, Pupil Referral Unit or Alternative Provision, and to have had fewer than three fixed-term exclusions and less than 15% unauthorised absences in the last three consecutive terms.
  - The antisocial behaviour required; at least a 60% reduction in antisocial behaviour across the household in the last six months.
  - The reduction in crime by under 18 year olds in the family required; the overall level of proven offending across all under 18 year olds in the household to have reduced by at least 33% in the last six months, in comparison to their average level of proven offending in the previous six months.
  - The progress towards work (but not in a job) result required; an adult in the household had volunteered for the Work Programme or to have been attached to the European Social Fund Provision in the last six months.
  - The move into continuous employment result required; an adult in the household to move off out of work benefits and into continuous employment.
- 1.5. The payment arrangements supported setting up the schemes in their early stages, by paying 80% of the fees as up front attachment fees and 20% being paid on a results basis, to a 40%/60% split between upfront payments and results based payments by the third year of the programme.

## The work of YOTs

- 1.6. The background to the creation of YOTs shows the clear overlaps between their work and the objectives of the TF programme. The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (part 3 section 37) established that the aim of the youth justice system was to 'prevent offending by children and young persons'. It established over 150 YOTs across England and Wales and brought together a range of local agencies, both strategically and operationally, to help achieve the vision for the youth justice system, where:
  - more offenders are caught, held to account for their actions, and stop offending
  - children and young people receive the support they need to lead crime-free lives
  - victims are better supported
  - the public has more confidence in the youth justice system.

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<sup>3</sup> Department for Communities and Local Government: *The Fiscal Case for Working with Troubled Families: Analysis and Evidence on the Costs of Troubled Families to Governments*, February 2013

<sup>4</sup> GOV.UK (2011) *Tackling Troubled Families*

- 1.7. For children and young people who have offended and are subject to supervision, YOTs undertake a detailed assessment of the child or young person and their circumstances. This explores the reason(s) they offended and identifies what will make them less likely to reoffend. A national assessment tool (Asset) provides a structure to examine a range of issues. This includes the child or young person's risk of causing harm to themselves and others, their level of vulnerability and the likelihood of them reoffending. Asset covers criminal history, employment, training and education, health issues, family issues, lifestyle, accommodation and the child or young person's attitudes, motivation and thinking skills.
- 1.8. There is often a range of factors that makes a child or young person more likely to offend. Through the creation of multi-disciplinary teams, backed up by broad partnership arrangements, YOTs were designed to be able to provide comprehensive packages of interventions to address those factors that were linked to offending. Thus they aim to make reoffending less likely. Research into criminal justice work has shown that, to be successful, interventions must target the right people, focus on the right things and be delivered in ways that are most likely to secure participation.
- 1.9. The scale and objectives of the TF programme, in particular the focus on the behaviour, offending and educational engagement by children and young people within the relevant families, points to the obvious strategic overlap between the aspirations of the TF programme and the day-to-day work of YOTs. We undertook this inspection almost two years into the TF programme and we hoped to see that the work of YOTs had been integrated into the local TF schemes. We considered the ways in which YOT work added value to, and benefited from, engagement with the local TF services. In the main, we inspected the work undertaken with children and young people who had been sentenced to community or custodial penalties and whose families were identified as being part of the local TF programmes. We also looked at a small number of cases where YOTs were providing services under the auspices of the local TF arrangements, but to children and young people who were being engaged on a preventative basis.

### **The NAO review of the TF programme and the employability programme for families with multiple problems**

- 1.10. Some of the key findings from a recent NAO review of the TF programme, and the DWP's employability programme for families with multiple problems, concluded that the TF initiative<sup>5</sup>.
  - has a design which recognises that addressing the intractable problems encountered by families facing multiple issues can lead to social improvements and fiscal benefits
  - has significant potential benefits but was inherently challenging given the lack of national data
  - has learned from experience
  - was designed as a separate initiative from the DWP's family employability programme without joint governance or programme structures. This has led to poor integration of the two programmes
  - performance of the DCLG's programme has been stronger than that of the DWP
  - there are large variations in performance between local authorities.
- 1.11. Data from the programme showed that, understandably, early progress was slow, but it was gaining momentum. Given the need to allow time to develop the local schemes and for outcomes to be achieved, it was to be expected that performance would improve over time. By January 2013 1,675 of the families officially recorded as 'troubled' had achieved a positive outcome around their offending, antisocial behaviour, school attendance and worklessness (DCLG Troubled Families paper 2013<sup>6</sup>). By May 2013 the position had improved as expected. Councils in England had identified

<sup>5</sup> National Audit Office: *Programmes to Help Families Facing Multiple Challenges*, December 2013

<sup>6</sup> Department for Communities and Local Government (2013) *Troubled Families: Progress and Families Turned Around at October 2013*

66,000 of the country's estimated 120,000 troubled families and were actively working with 35,000 of them.

- 1.12. Approximately two months before our joint inspectorate thematic review the DCLG released figures showing the outcomes achieved by local authorities up to and including quarter two of the financial year 2013-2014. This data showed that the lives of 22,000 families had been turned around, which equated to 18% of the cohort.
- 1.13. The NAO review<sup>7</sup> concluded: *'In setting up the Troubled Families and Families with Multiple Problems programmes the Government is addressing an important problem with innovative thinking. This is a complex area in which Departments need to make a consistent effort to understand what works and target their programmes at incentivising that activity. However, the Government's approach was hampered by some of the features of the design of each programme. Although there were benefits to early roll-out, the decision not to pilot some of the programmes' innovative features meant that the Departments did not have the required insight into the likely impact of each programme's delivery mechanism at the point of roll-out. The two programmes were run, approved and set up as separate initiatives and, despite considerable efforts from both Departments, there have been difficulties integrating the programmes'. They further added that: 'While it is too early to make a definitive statement about value for money, the programmes are starting to help some families address complex challenges, including moving towards employment. Whether they can deliver these benefits at the rate required to meet their ambitious targets will only become clear towards the end of their planned lives. However, performance of the programmes to date shows that considerable challenges remain. Early indications also suggest that the incentives may not work in the way that the Departments envisaged. We would expect the Departments to reflect on the experience of the current programmes in designing new programmes after 2015'.*

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7 National Audit Office: *Programmes to Help Families Facing Multiple Challenges*, December 2013

# Achieving outcomes

# 2

## 2. Achieving Outcomes

### Summary

This chapter outlines our findings on the evidence within case records to show that outcomes had been achieved and that progress was being made by those accessing TF services. It comments on the practice challenges for retaining an outcomes focus to the work when having to integrate a range of outcome measures from a variety of agencies.

### Key findings

- Much promising work was seen and we noted that progress had been made against factors linked to offending in many cases.
  - In general, the quality of practice for YOT TF cases was higher than for non TF cases.
  - We could not track progress against the broader TF outcomes in the majority of YOT case files.
  - The tools and processes to enable practitioners to map out the outcomes in individual cases were underdeveloped.
- 2.1. We regularly saw cases where relevant and promising work was being undertaken with families who met the national and local TF criteria, and we thought it likely that this would lead to the families making progress on agreed outcomes in due course. For many of these families the work had been underway for too short a period of time for the results to have been realised.
  - 2.2. TF programmes involved working towards specific objectives and it was disappointing that we could not track progress against TF outcomes in the majority of YOT cases. The three national outcomes for the TF programme were specific and clear, but the local TF criteria were often poorly defined. This made it difficult for practitioners to track progress against all the TF outcomes being sought.
  - 2.3. A further level of difficulty stemmed from putting the outcomes relating to the core work of the various partner agencies into the mix. The ability to set local objectives was universally welcomed but it involved the need, in many cases, to integrate YOT, police and health outcomes. These did not often readily correspond to the specific TF outcomes.
  - 2.4. We looked at the tools available to practitioners, to set out the specific outcomes being sought in individual cases. In most areas, the tools did not help practitioners to clearly set out outcomes that met the TF programme requirements, and those of the various agencies involved in the work. Practitioners needed to be able to spell out the outcomes that would direct the work with each family. We found that, in too many cases, an outcome focus was not driving the work with the family or with the individual child or young person.
  - 2.5. As much of the work we considered had been underway for a short period of time, often a matter of three months or so, it was not surprising that TF outcomes had not yet been achieved. We did see some individual cases where impressive change had taken place, and this speaks to the potential of the TF approach. This was echoed by several of the service users we spoke with who were able to point to substantial and positive changes that had taken place, such as improved relationships within the family, greater attendance at school or gaining employment. Some children and young people told us that they were making better life choices and were no longer offending.
  - 2.6. Many of the families we looked at in this inspection were seen by practitioners as being 'hard to reach', and agencies reported ongoing historical difficulties with securing their engagement in purposeful work. The services users we spoke with were, on the whole, very happy with their experience of the TF programmes. It was important to note that most service users we talked

to were positive about their improved engagement with services. While the improvement in engagement engendered by the TF approach was significant and positive, it did not mean that clear evidence of achievement of TF outcomes was readily accessible. Our findings were that, at the time of the inspection, we could not see that TF work had made much difference to the majority of service users, other than in improving engagement with the families. Clearly effective engagement was an important aspect of the work, and laid the foundations of future success, but it was a means to an end and not an end in itself.

- 2.7. One consequence of the lack of clarity in tracking the TF outcomes being achieved was that, in most areas, it would have been difficult to address the move on issues for families. This ran the risk of cases becoming open-ended family support and that TF services would 'silt up', as it would be difficult to know when sufficient progress had been made in order that the service could be closed or 'stepped down' to a lower level of input.
- 2.8. We gathered information from the YOTs involved in this inspection and the table below gives the TF outcome results for the six areas up to the end of October 2013 (This data did not relate to the sample we considered as it encompassed the results from the TF programme overall, and not just YOT cases). In each of the areas we visited there was a process for tracking TF outcomes, in order that outcome returns could be made to the DCLG. We found that in most areas this process was largely disconnected from the everyday practice issues in the cases. This meant that many of the practitioners were not clear about the level of progress that had been made in individual cases or what was being reported to the DCLG on outcomes. The quality assurance processes linked to setting and tracking TF outcomes were underdeveloped and the system was not helping to ensure that an outcome focus was a key driver of the work with families.

**Table 2.1**

Area	Number of TF in the area	Number of TF identified as at 30.9.13	Number of TF worked with as at 30.9.13	Number of TF achieving crime, ASB and education outcomes as at 30.9.13	Number of TF achieving continuous employment result as at 31.10.13	Number of TF turned round as at 31.10.13	Number of families achieving progress to work outcome as at 31.10.13
Enfield	775	407	375	154	40	194	43
Gateshead	595	595	336	83	0	83	12
North Somerset	305	305	150	>10	11	18	10
Southampton	685	685	478	274	>10	283	>10
Southwark	1,085	480	480	104	>10	105	0
St Helens	520	170	170	62	0	62	0

- 2.9. In addition to reflecting on TF outcomes, we assessed the YOT outcomes achieved as a consequence of cases receiving a TF service. These measures of progress did not feature as specific TF outcomes and this illustrates the difficulties in trying to merge the outcomes for a range of organisations into local TF programmes. In general, we noted that YOT outcomes were higher for the TF cases, compared with the results seen in our routine Short Quality Screening (SQS) inspections (which has data from over 1,100 cases). For example, we noted that risk of harm had reduced in half of the TF cases. This compared favourably with the findings from our SQS inspection programme, where 37% of cases showed that risk of harm had reduced. In respect of reductions in safeguarding concerns, the results were 50% for the TF sample compared with 42% in the SQS inspections.

- 2.10. In 89% of TF cases sufficient attention had been given to ensuring the child or young person met the requirements of supervision. Again, this compares favourably with 74% of cases achieving this outcome in the SQS inspections.
- 2.11. It was heartening to note in the TF sample that, since the start of supervision/release from custody, there had appeared to be a reduction in the frequency of offending in 68% of cases and in the seriousness of offences in 71% of cases. We reviewed work that had not been in operation for long enough for these results to be claimed as TF outcomes, but the offending patterns we found were encouraging.
- 2.12. Table 2.2 outlines the progress being made by individual children or young people against factors linked to offending. Unsurprisingly, at this early stage in the work, we found that YOT input had centred on offending related issues. Relatively speaking, more progress was being made on attitudes to offending, perception of self and of others, motivation and thinking and behaviour issues. While making progress was not the same as achieving outcomes, it was encouraging that many cases had already seen positive movement on relevant issues.

**Table 2.2**

In the opinion of the inspector, has sufficient overall progress been made at this stage, where required, in relation to the individual key factors which made this individual more likely to reoffend?

<b>In the opinion of the inspector, has sufficient overall progress been made at this stage, where required, in relation to the individual key factors which made this individual more likely to reoffend?</b>			
<b>a) Living arrangements</b>		<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
	Yes	17	46%
	No	20	54%
	N/A (not relevant at this time in this case)	9	-
<b>b) Family &amp; Personal Arrangements</b>		<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
	Yes	15	33%
	No	30	67%
	N/A (not relevant at this time in this case)	2	-
<b>c) Education, Training or Employment</b>		<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
	Yes	25	57%
	No	19	43%
	N/A (not relevant at this time in this case)	3	-
<b>d) Neighbourhood</b>		<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
	Yes	6	38%
	No	10	63%
	N/A (not relevant at this time in this case)	31	-
<b>e) Lifestyle</b>		<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
	Yes	23	52%
	No	21	48%
	N/A (not relevant at this time in this case)	3	-
<b>f) Substance misuse</b>		<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
	Yes	16	47%
	No	18	53%
	N/A (not relevant at this time in this case)	13	-

g) Physical Health		#	%
	Yes	4	21%
	No	15	79%
	N/A (not relevant at this time in this case)	28	-
h) Emotional/ mental health		#	%
	Yes	11	38%
	No	18	62%
	N/A (not relevant at this time in this case)	18	-
i) Perception of self and others		#	%
	Yes	25	58%
	No	18	42%
	N/A (not relevant at this time in this case)	4	-
j) Thinking and behaviour		#	%
	Yes	25	56%
	No	20	44%
	N/A (not relevant at this time in this case)	2	-
k) Attitudes to offending		#	%
	Yes	27	60%
	No	18	40%
	N/A (not relevant at this time in this case)	2	-
l) Motivation to change		#	%
	Yes	25	56%
	No	20	44%
	N/A (not relevant at this time in this case)	2	-

## Quotes

*"You don't get a manual when you have a kid. The outside influence is far greater than my influence. YOT have had a huge influence on him. The more they have been involved, the better he has been. Without them he would not be here. Eric\* [offending behaviour worker] gives him a lot of confidence. Ellen\* works with him well. Sarah\* [case manager] makes it very black and white. He is in a great place today. Without them I would be in a mental institute. We're much calmer at home now. I used to shout at him [her son] and that just made it worse. It's really helped". (Gateshead parent)*

*"Our outcomes around employment are good as I make sure I am invited to the first Team Around the Family meeting. The lead practitioners are not employability experts". (Gateshead practitioner)*

(\* all names have been changed)

## Good practice examples

Two cases considered by an inspector were able to demonstrate good outcomes relating to health matters, better school attendance and a reduction in offending. In the first case strong links were seen between the YOT, Health and Social Care. This enabled the family to draw wide support from health professionals in relation to substance misuse, physical health problems, mental health issues and support with issues relating to sexuality. The second case involved addressing anger issues and a pregnancy. In this case the work resulted in no further offending by the young person. **(Southwark YOT)**

Alex\* was of secondary school age when convicted of Possession with Intent to Supply Class A Drugs. He received an 18-month Detention and Training Order and was placed in a secure children's home. Alex had stayed with his grandmother who did her best to care for him but she faced significant mental health issues. Alex was severely bullied at school when younger, for example, peers stubbed out cigarettes on him, urinated in his shoes and stole his property. School records showed that his reading and writing were assessed as equivalent to a seven or eight year old.

While in the secure children's home, Alex valued the structure and discipline he found there and he progressed through the conduct stages to 'Graduate Plus'. On release, Alex's grandparents will be supported with parenting strategies to help manage his behaviour. The local TF personal budget will fund a gym pass and Alex's uncle has committed to engage him in positive activities to help him to keep out of trouble. At the time of the inspection Alex presented as a confident young man, proud of his recent achievements and looking forward to his life on release from custody. He had achieved Level 1 Functional Skills in Literacy in twelve weeks rather than the usual twelve months. He was entered for GCSE Art and he was proud of the go-kart that he had repaired and the coffee table and DVD rack he had constructed. Through the persistence of his YOT case manager, Alex was to begin a two-day placement with the local council, learning ground maintenance. This was to be supplemented with three days at a local training provider, so he could cover literacy, numeracy and employability skills. Although he does not have the qualifications required for an apprenticeship, his recent hard work has persuaded the council to offer Alex an eight-week placement instead of an interview. If he does well in this, the placement will be extended.

(\* all names have been changed)

# Impact on Assessment and Planning

3

## 3. Impact on Assessment and Planning

### Summary

This chapter looks at the arrangements to enable YOT staff to contribute effectively to TF assessments and plans and to be clear about the priorities, objectives and outcomes being sought in individual cases. It considers the complexity of moving from assessments and plans centred on individual service users, to multi-agency assessments and plans focusing on the needs of a range of family members, while still meeting core YOT performance requirements.

### Key findings

- TF work was hindered by inadequate mechanisms to produce multi-agency assessments and plans.
- Practitioners were faced with the need to clarify the priorities, objectives and outcomes being sought for TF families in a multi-agency context. For example, YOT staff had to integrate YOT outcomes with wider TF outcomes.
- The role of the lead TF professional had not been adequately defined in many locations.
- YOT core assessments and plans were often of good quality and seemed to benefit from the multi-agency work.
- YOT staff and their partners were consistently attempting to form positive working relationships with TF families and staff saw this as being crucial in working towards meaningful change.

### Assessment and Planning

- 3.1. Assessment and planning is important to ensure that everyone concerned, including the child or young person and their parent/carer, understands the priorities and the work to be undertaken. Reviews of assessment and plans provide mechanisms to help judge if progress is being made. The outcomes being sought from the TF programme centred on specific issues but, in many instances, a rigid approach to tackling TF objectives would not have brought about the desired results. The families often presented with a range of additional problem areas that would have to be addressed if progress was to be made on the TF outcomes. For example, in order to achieve an educational outcome with a child or young person, substance misuse issues would have to be addressed.
- 3.2. Assessment and planning are often complex tasks within YOTs. They require workers to engage with the child or young person in their wider context, for example to include family, peer and neighbourhood issues. In YOT TF work, this had additional layers of complexity. YOT staff had to ensure that the normal YOT assessment and planning tasks were done and, if the YOT worker was also the TF lead professional, that an assessment and plan had been undertaken for the family as a whole. If the YOT staff member was not the lead professional, they needed to ensure that their work fed into the overall family assessment and that the plan of work with the child or young person complemented the wider TF plan. Too often we found that these strands of assessment and planning had not been adequately pulled together.
- 3.3. In most cases, we found that the various agencies involved had carried out separate assessments, often in parallel. We could not see from the YOT records that these were being systematically brought together. In too many cases single agency perspectives had not been integrated into a multi-agency plan. Sharing of assessments and plans was inconsistent, and even when they were shared they were often not used. Many YOT based TF workers reported that they felt they had had limited training about the TF programme and associated tasks. Several reported that they did

not feel they had the necessary skills to carry out the lead professional role and to ensure that an appropriate overall assessment and plan had been produced.

- 3.4. In terms of YOT core tasks, we were pleased to note that a clear majority of YOT initial assessments of the likelihood of reoffending were prepared within an acceptable timescale and were of sufficient quality. A sufficient assessment of the risk of harm posed by the child or young person had been undertaken at the start of the order in 85% of the cases inspected. Plans to address reoffending and risk of harm issues were being created and the work was being kept under review. In respect of vulnerability issues, three-quarters of cases had been assessed to a satisfactory standard but only two-thirds had adequate plans to address the issues.
- 3.5. We found that involvement with the TF programmes had brought some improvements to core YOT assessments and plans, mainly through having access to a broader pool of information from partner agencies. Surprisingly, these benefits had not extended to addressing family issues. In the context of the local TF programmes, we asked if a satisfactory assessment of family issues was evident from the YOT records. This was found in only one-third of the cases (ranging across the YOTS we visited from 13% - 86%). In many cases information from other agencies was on file but it had not been used in drawing up the YOT plan of work.

### **Involvement of service users**

- 3.6. Parents/carers can provide vital information relating to a child or young person's behaviour and attitudes. The involvement of the child or young person in the process can encourage greater commitment to the work. We were pleased to note the quality of the work undertaken by case managers and partners to involve children and young people and their parents/carers. As a result, in a clear majority of cases inspected, there was significant engagement with children and young people, parents/carers and/or significant others in undertaking assessments and plans. In almost three-quarters of all cases inspected, initial planning had included sufficient attention being paid to diversity issues and barriers to engagement.
- 3.7. We asked each YOT we inspected to arrange for us to interview families involved in their TF scheme. We spoke with 30 people, including children and young people and their parents/carers. The majority of those we met knew that they were on their local TF scheme and what that entailed. They considered their involvement to be voluntary and felt no pressure to comply with the expectations of agencies working with them. In many instances the TF worker's contact was mainly with the key carer in the family. Normally, this was the mother, who acted as the representative for the family. Most families welcomed the informal nature of the assessments and, while few could recall the detail of what was in their assessment, they confirmed these had been completed. A number of parents/carers felt their views were reflected in the planning process. They were enthusiastic about the fact that the objectives they were working towards had often been identified by family members. While this was welcome evidence of positive engagement with parents/carers, in several cases we felt that there had been too much emphasis on the parents/carers' perspectives and this meant that, in some of the families, individual children's needs had not been addressed appropriately.
- 3.8. Some families had neither received copies of their plans nor knew what objectives their TF worker was hoping to achieve with them. Others could list the key objectives for family members, for example finding a job, or improving attendance at school. One young person told us that the main objective for his family was to improve how they got on with each other. His mother, who was interviewed separately, identified the same priority and both felt this was the right plan for them and that they were making progress. A number of parents/carers advised us that they did not believe they had a written plan and questioned the merit of having one when their needs changed on a day-to-day basis.

- 3.9. While there was often an overlap between the parents/carers' and professionals' views of priorities, in several cases we found that this had blurred the need to prioritise statutory responsibilities. Lead professionals had varied levels of experience and status at the local level and at times statutory responsibilities, such as addressing safeguarding concerns, non-attendance at school or implementing statements of special educational needs were not being prioritised sufficiently. The 'blurring' of responsibility for statutory work, as a result of inconsistencies in the lead professional role, left some children and young people vulnerable and at risk of significant harm.
- 3.10. A factor that needed prompt attention concerned the clarity of the outcomes being sought for families, and for individual family members where relevant. We found few examples of plans containing a clear sense of priorities and outcomes. Unfortunately, regardless of which worker was the TF lead professional, we saw too many cases with plans that were simply lengthy 'to do' lists, often centring on the parents/carers' view of priorities. As a pragmatic response, it was often left to TF lead professional to decide the priorities in a case. The focus of this varied and often centred on the professional background of the lead practitioner. This highlighted a risk of TF programmes consuming considerable amounts of resources, without a clear framework for assessing the impact of those services.

## Partnership working

- 3.11. Where an agreed tool was in use at the local level, for example the Common Assessment Framework tool, or a Team Around the Family (TAF) tool, these helped YOT staff to contribute to the joint assessment and planning tasks. Plans to tackle the TF work were evident in half of the YOT cases (ranging across the YOTs we visited from 13% - 86%). When these plans had been done, they benefited from using an agreed area wide tool. Common processes were seen by practitioners as ways to bring information together and create a shared agenda between agencies. They helped promote creativity, for example in one area the TAF was held in school, rather than at the Youth Offending Service (YOS), so that the children and young people did not miss any of their education.
- 3.12. Several YOTs had attempted to use the YOT Asset tool to capture the family issues, as well as those for the individual child or young person. In general, this was an unsatisfactory arrangement and led to a lack of clarity about the complex issues being identified for the range of family members. When a separate case record had been opened for the family within Asset, this had helped staff to be clear about the issues for the child or young person, as distinct from other family members, but had a disadvantage of making those records difficult to share with partner agencies. The difficulties arising from the use of different assessment/planning tools, by practitioners working in the same case, included, in several cases, key information not being shared between the various workers involved.
- 3.13. As a matter of priority, YOTs and their partners have to address some key TF practice issues, in order that practitioners can be clear about what they should be doing, and with whom. These issues include; practitioners need to be clear about what counts as a family in the local TF context, for example an address based framework or a wider systemic framework. Guidance on this has been provided by the DCLG financial framework document<sup>8</sup>, but many practitioners were not aware of this guidance. The role of the lead professional also needs to be clear. As a minimum, staff should know about their responsibilities to the range of individuals within the family unit (for YOTs not just the child or young person subject to supervision) and their authority in respect of coordinating and holding to account other professionals. The challenge of agreeing outcomes pointed to the underdevelopment of the lead professional role. In several sites there was confusion about this role; were they to be a 'hands on' family worker or a coordinator and manager of multi-agency work? We were pleased to note, as the TF changes become embedded, some YOTs (for example Southwark) had recognised and responded to the specific practice challenges presented by TF work. They had

<sup>8</sup> Department for Communities and Local Government: *The Troubled Families Programme: Financial Framework for the Troubled Families Programme's Payment-by-Results Scheme for Local Authorities*, March 2012

created 'bottom up' processes to enable staff to identify and address the practice changes generated by the new ways of working.

- 3.14. We saw several examples of 'hubs', where staff from a range of agencies collated data on youth offending, antisocial behaviour, school attendance and exclusion and worklessness for families who met the national and local TF criteria. The cases were discussed at a multi-agency meeting, with attendance from a range of agencies, commonly; children's services, housing, the YOT and the voluntary sector. They agreed which partner was the most appropriate to engage with a family. However, we noted that too often there was no representation from health, adult services, police and probation at these meetings. In several areas health staff were not part of the process to review referrals and decide which service may be the most appropriate lead. At least one health commissioner said they were: "disappointed" not to be at this meeting, while another said that a health practitioner would not have the time to attend, particularly as health was not one of the three national TF criteria. However, many of the local criteria included health issues, such as drug and alcohol misuse and emotional and mental health.
- 3.15. Once cases had been allocated and the work had commenced, we noted that there was usually a broad range of partners involved in the work. We found that co-located partnerships within the YOTs helped to improve the quality of the joint work. Each of the areas had a different process for identifying and initiating TF work. They all produced a notification to practitioners which led to a range of agencies working together within a framework. Generally, this was well received by practitioners, and workers said it helped them to feel empowered in their partnership work.
- 3.16. There were many examples of the TF programmes enhancing joint work between agencies. However, there were several examples of the work of the TF programme not being communicated more widely within agencies. For example, many frontline police officers, including those in schools and on neighbourhood teams, did not know which households on their patch, or pupils in their schools, were part of the local TF programmes. In one area the schools officers received a list of the families under the TF scheme but had not received information on what had happened. These workers felt that knowledge of what other agencies were doing would help if they were called to an incident at the family address. Members of a police focus group said: "*The scheme is not sold well enough, it should be broadcast more widely and should make clear what it could achieve.*" In another area the police were not actively engaged at a tactical level and YOS police officers were not routinely involved in TAF meetings. Neighbourhood Police teams did not know if families were part of the TF programme. In general, most police officers were unaware of the benefits provided by the TF programmes, they had not been briefed on how to make referrals, and they rarely received feedback. So, for some agencies, we found a disjointed picture of partnership working at the operational level.

## Quotes

*"This provides a real basis for joined-up working, it provides more access to services and it gives you a common goal."* (Enfield practitioner)

One mother told us: *"I did not previously engage with services. I put things in the closet: this happened today, I'll deal with it in my own way. Agencies came to offer support in the past but they did not really care. It was just their job. I stopped engaging and my kids wouldn't bother with anyone. The YOS turned up and it took two months to rope me in. The case manager really genuinely cared."* (Enfield practitioner)

*"My friends warned me not to have anything to do with social services [who were the lead agency in this case] but I'm so glad I did. It's voluntary and I know it is. I can stop at any time."* (Southwark parent)

## Good practice examples

To help support effective multi-agency work, in Southwark, an operational manual had been produced to help staff to understand the workings of their Family Focus Plus (FFP) Scheme (Southwark's TF programme). The contents of the manual included an operational process overview, information on identifying and working with families, guidance on achieving 'turned around' families, a glossary of terms and abbreviations, a list of additional supporting documents, and the FFP eligibility criteria crib sheet. Practitioners told us they found this helped them to better understand their roles and the working practices associated with the FFP scheme. **(Southwark YOT)**

In Gateshead, we heard that: *"The aim is to ensure that one assessment is done rather than many. The assessment covers all of the family; some of whom may live at different addresses and may not necessarily be a blood relative. The assessment should be led by the lead practitioner but specifics, for example around mental health, should be carried out by specialists and added to the single assessment. One plan follows from this assessment. This embraces working towards achieving the three national outcomes and the family's own goals. Each task is specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound. From this plan, the family, the key worker and the partner agencies should all understand exactly what they have to do, by when and what success will look like. The action plan is reviewed regularly at meetings attended by the family, the lead agency and other partners. Where the family and/or the partner agencies do not carry out their actions, the key worker has the power to hold each to account".* **(Gateshead YOT)**

Jane\* (a mother) explained that her TF worker had made a conscious effort to meet with her husband outside the home to help complete the assessment of the family's needs. She felt that this had been the first time her husband had taken the opportunity to talk about the issues in the family, and his concerns. She saw this as a significant and positive outcome: *"She's [the TF worker] encouraged him [her husband] to start to talk about what's really going on for him – he's never done that before."* **(Southwark YOT)**

(\* all names have been changed)

# Delivering effective Interventions

4

## 4. Delivering effective Interventions

### Summary

This chapter outlines our observations on the services that were being delivered, the engagement of service users and the help provided to ensure that outcomes would be achieved.

### Key findings

- The TF lead practitioner/lead professional role was underdeveloped and this limited the ability of staff to deliver coordinated packages of services to address TF and, potentially, statutory priorities.
- YOT staff, and others, had a tendency to prioritise the core objectives of their host organisation and this sometimes diluted the specific TF focus of the work.
- Some areas had undertaken mapping exercises to help them to ensure that the required range of TF services were in place and to promote improved partnership working.
- Service users were generally positive about the ways in which TF services were being delivered.
- Even where strategies to address service user non-engagement had been developed, these were not evident in the day-to-day work with many service users.

- 4.1. We found a mixed picture in using the TF arrangements to map out service requirements and commissioning the range of services needed for TF work. In Gateshead, a Local Authority mapping exercise had been undertaken to obtain a full picture of what was available across the area and this was set against what families actually needed. Commissioning arrangements were used to purchase services to meet needs, for example a step-down service to maintain family stability for up to two years post TF work was brought on stream. Some of the areas had established a funding source to allow workers to access additional services not covered by single agency processes. In Gateshead this enabled spot purchasing by practitioners for bespoke services where required. In several of the areas we visited we found that fuller and better coordinated service packages were available as a result of the TF developments. In other areas we simply saw a rebranding of existing services. In these circumstances there was little evidence of new and innovative interventions evolving to address the family or children and young people's needs.
- 4.2. In general, service users benefited from having access to a broad range of services, but these did not always relate to the case priorities. The most important limiting factor for practice was that a majority of YOT staff, who took on the role of TF lead practitioner, were not clear about the remit of this role. One worker summed this up when they said: *"I am not clear if I am a leader or a coordinator. I need to know if I am to be a case doer or a case manager, with the authority to hold others to account for their input into the case"*. Some TF workers took sole responsibility for fulfilling the objectives with the family. For example, they would undertake to help the family find alternative accommodation or access training and employment, rather than refer to other agencies. We met lead professionals who said that when health, education or social care tasks had not been completed they did not have a mechanism to take action on this. We found many instances of a lack of clarity about accountability between agencies in the multi-disciplinary work. Mechanisms for escalating concerns and arriving at conflict resolution were similarly underdeveloped. We noted some examples of local TF approaches leading to statutory agencies stepping back and leaving the TF lead agency to address statutory concerns, for example in one area the education department had not initiated legal processes for a child's non-attendance at school as the family were accessing a TF service. In some of the areas we noted that the emphasis on voluntary engagement prompted interventions being offered at tier 2 level, when tier 3 may have been more appropriate. This led to a situation where there was a danger that safeguarding and educational concerns about children

and young people were not being adequately addressed under the TF approach. This was an aspect of TF work that needed to be kept under review by managers and practitioners alike.

- 4.3. Service users recognised that their TF worker would withdraw once the objectives set for them had been achieved, but most felt that the support would remain in place until they no longer needed it. Many children and young people and parents/carers understood the local processes and found the meetings to be helpful. We saw innovation in the way family liaison was being undertaken in some areas and some service users told us they liked the fact that TAF meetings were held where it was convenient for them; for example at their homes or at their schools. Overall, we judged that the majority of TF interventions that were on offer were of good quality and had been delivered as intended. However, in one third of the cases, we could not see that the benefits gained by the interventions had been reinforced and built upon.
- 4.4. For YOT practitioners it is important that interventions were delivered to help reduce reoffending and manage risk of harm. We were pleased to note that, in 43 of the 47 cases inspected, the interventions offered to individual children or young people to help avoid reoffending were consistent with the YOT assessments and plans. In 89% of the relevant cases we saw that risk of harm interventions followed the plans for the individual child or young person. For children or young people subject to supervision, interventions struck an appropriate balance between addressing reoffending and managing the risk of harm to others in over three-quarters of the cases (ranging across the YOTS we visited from 67% - 100%). However, in one-third of cases, we could not see that appropriate interventions had been delivered to address safeguarding and vulnerability needs (ranging across the YOTs we visited from 57% - 88%).
- 4.5. Table 4.1 below illustrates the range of activities being undertaken by the YOTs. Unsurprisingly, we can see that the concentration of effort related to aspects of need directly associated with offending, for example thinking and behaviour, attitudes to offending, lifestyle and substance misuse. Less obvious from the YOT files was work on living arrangements and family and personal relationships. Whilst it may have been the case that these areas of work were being undertaken by others, the problems identified in the assessment and planning chapter highlight the need for the full scope of TF work to be reflected in YOT plans. A thread running through this inspection, of agencies having a tendency to default to their core work, was demonstrated by our findings that YOT resources had been allocated to the cases in respect of work to address; likelihood of reoffending (94%); risk of harm (95%); safeguarding (91%) and TF issues (68%).

**Table 4.1 Provision of interventions**

<b>Based on the inspectors assessment of the needs in this case to reduce likelihood of reoffending; were sufficient interventions delivered, where required, to address the following:</b>			
<b>a) Living arrangements</b>		<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
	Yes	23	64%
	No	13	36%
	N/A (not relevant at this time in this case)	11	-
<b>b) Family &amp; Personal Arrangements</b>		<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
	Yes	23	53%
	No	20	47%
	N/A (not relevant at this time in this case)	4	-
<b>c) Education, Training or Employment</b>		<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
	Yes	36	82%
	No	8	18%
	N/A (not relevant at this time in this case)	3	-

d) Neighbourhood		#	%
	Yes	13	76%
	No	4	24%
	N/A (not relevant at this time in this case)	30	-
e) Lifestyle		#	%
	Yes	35	88%
	No	5	13%
	N/A (not relevant at this time in this case)	7	-
f) Substance misuse		#	%
	Yes	26	87%
	No	4	13%
	N/A (not relevant at this time in this case)	17	-
g) Physical Health		#	%
	Yes	9	56%
	No	7	44%
	N/A (not relevant at this time in this case)	31	-
h) Emotional/ mental health		#	%
	Yes	22	69%
	No	10	31%
	N/A (not relevant at this time in this case)	14	-
i) Perception of self and others		#	%
	Yes	39	83%
	No	8	17%
	N/A (not relevant at this time in this case)	0	-
j) Thinking and behaviour		#	%
	Yes	44	94%
	No	3	6%
	N/A (not relevant at this time in this case)	0	-
k) Attitudes to offending		#	%
	Yes	44	94%
	No	3	6%
	N/A (not relevant at this time in this case)	0	-
l) Motivation to change		#	%
	Yes	44	94%
	No	3	6%
	N/A (not relevant at this time in this case)	0	-

4.6. In 81% of the YOT cases inspected, children and young people and their parents/carers were meaningfully engaged throughout the delivery of the sentence. We saw many examples of creative ways of engaging with service users and this was an important benefit derived from the TF approaches. Service users were positive about the new ways in which services were being delivered. Families generally valued the TF approach and felt that the work was well coordinated. One parent said: *"I asked for help with getting back to work and she [the TF worker] got me a job"*. Another said: *"FamilyWise has provided me with far more helpful information than the dole"*.

- 4.7. Some areas had produced policies and practice guidelines to address service user non-engagement issues. Even where this had been done, we did not see them being implemented in practice. Many of the families involved in the TF programmes had long standing and complex sets of needs. Previous non-engagement and suspicion about the involvement of statutory agencies featured for some of these service users. There was no statutory authority to compel families to comply with TF work and the programmes put considerable effort into securing positive engagement with the families on a voluntary basis. However, for some of the families, the issues identified touched upon statutory matters, for example child safeguarding, school attendance and prevention of offending. Several practitioners felt some families only engaged with the things they wanted and consistently avoided attending to matters which would be priorities for statutory agencies. Several practitioners indicated that they thought that as the family were engaging voluntarily they would delay referring to statutory services, in case the engagement with the family stopped. In circumstances where statutory concerns remained, and the family had not engaged with the TF programme, clarity about the approach to be taken by practitioners was needed. We heard conflicting messages between (and even within) the YOTs visited, about how to respond to non-engagement. Some practitioners were of the view that the local TF programme was totally voluntary and that parents had a veto on participation. In others there was more of a focus on persistence and continuing with attempts to secure engagement. Some service users told us that they appreciated the persistence of their TF worker to encourage their initial engagement in the scheme and in helping them to fulfil their goals.
- 4.8. In another area there were clear protocols between YOT and children's social care services in relation to children and young people remanded to care and those looked after under Section 20 or care orders. These protocols encompassed circumstances where the TF lead practitioner was based in the YOT.
- 4.9. In all of the areas inspected we found a limited involvement of probation in TF activities, This was the case both in relation to intergenerational crime matters (where a parent and child or young person within a family had offended), or where there was an adult offender, subject to probation supervision, involved in a TF case.
- 4.10. In Gateshead we saw an example of integrating the TF programme with the DWP employment programme at the practice level. They had a DWP representative deployed as part of the TF programme. The practitioners involved were positive about this way of working. They saw it as an opportunity for all the workers to see the bigger context of their work and it helped them to change their way of thinking about how to work with families to achieve employment outcomes.

## Quotes

*"I attend counselling. I wouldn't have gone if it wasn't for this service. The eldest thinks about things more. He doesn't hang around with his past friends."* **(St Helens parent)**

*"It's the first time I have felt supported in my whole life. When I fell back they came in."* **(Enfield parent)**

*"When I have finally got myself right, I will come back as a volunteer."* **(North Somerset parent)**

*"Even the police here care. My son sees them in a totally different way."* **(North Somerset parent)**

*"The Anti Social Behaviour and Housing Teams worked together to ensure that the young person knew that if she continued to throw eggs at neighbouring properties, the family could lose their tenancy and become homeless. There have been no further complaints about anyone in the family."* **(Gateshead practitioner)**

## Good practice examples

We saw that good work had been carried out by YOT and Connexions workers to ensure Rob\* was placed in training and the placement was sustained. There were appropriate plans to step down this case using commissioned services. Voluntary activities completed by Rob meant that he had gained a number of qualifications e.g. First Aid and Health and Safety. The YOT gave ongoing support for example, bus fares so Rob could get to work. **(Gateshead YOT)**

The Families Gateshead programme allowed the YOT to deal with the presenting issues of Tim\* who had offended and the family's wider problems where worklessness was an issue. At least three family members were at risk of non-engagement with education or training. All were making progress as a consequence of the TF programme. There was good joint work between the agencies and they had established a good working relationship with the family. Workers were responding to the needs of different family members and were imaginative in their approach. A wide range of interventions were used. These included offering a range of courses, financial support, counselling and ongoing support. Monthly meetings were held to help to check progress. **(Gateshead YOT)**

Many agencies said the TF processes had included them more readily in the partnership work with families. In Southampton we saw impressive developments within the police. A constable had been appointed as a lead practitioner and led on eight cases. She cited one example of a family that had been categorised as a: "light" TF family. Her skills as a police officer led to her uncovering Child Protection concerns within a family, and protective measures were put in place to prevent harm being caused to a child. In addition, members of the wider neighbourhood policing teams in Southampton were also involved with TF work. The two Engagement Officers (beat officer equivalent) were frequently in attendance at TAF meetings where a police input was required. These officers were positive about the potential of this work to help reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. Two Police Community Service Officers (PCSOs) also worked with TF families to address antisocial behaviour issues. **(Southampton YOS)**

(\* all names have been changed)

# Leadership and management

5

# 5. Leadership and Management

## Summary

This chapter outlines the leadership and management aspects of devising and implementing local TF programmes.

## Key findings

- The scale and ambition of the TF schemes varied across the local authorities visited.
- Some practice issues arising from TF work needed more attention.
- Practitioners were positive about the potential of TF programmes, but they needed clarification of a number of key issues and training to undertake the work.
- More needed to be done to ensure that all relevant partners were contributing effectively to the TF programmes, at both the strategic and operational levels. Clearer inter-departmental guidance on partnership work to support TF work would assist with this.
- YOTs played a full and active part in the TF developments and they were enthusiastic participants in the work.
- TF work represented a sizeable and growing profile in YOT workloads.

## Local Leadership

- 5.1. There were clear variations in the scale and ambition of local TF developments and in the quality of the implementation arrangements. Some areas implemented TF as part of overall organisational change, for example to encompass the local 'Transforming Social Work' agenda. In others the TF developments were more of a rebranding of existing practices. None of the local schemes were called TF, they tended to adopt names to underpin their efforts to engage with families. The names used for the programmes in the areas were; FamiliesGateshead, Priority Families, Family Focus Plus, Change and Challenge, Families Matter and High Impact Families.
- 5.2. There was consistent agreement, at strategic and operational levels, that the TF concept offered opportunities to improve the effectiveness of service delivery. The change from ad hoc single agency involvement with families over many years, often achieving little in the way of sustainable change, to a coordinated multi-agency approach (that has secured the engagement of families) was seen by most managers and practitioners as having a real potential to bring about significant change with service users. To achieve this, local programmes needed to be supported by well designed implementation arrangements and we did not find this in all of the areas visited.
- 5.3. Every local authority had mechanisms for tracking cases and claiming additional monies from the DCLG, but we found that, in general, the processes for tracking outcomes were not often reflected in the case records. Thus, practitioners were not always clear about what had been claimed in the way of outcomes in individual cases. Concerns were expressed in some quarters about the sharing of the resources that accrued from the TF programmes and using that to secure the buy-in of all relevant partner agencies.

## YOT Leadership

- 5.4. We found that YOTs were fully engaged in the TF programmes and they were committed to making a success of the schemes. YOTs were consistently seen as playing an active and enthusiastic part in

local TF developments. We found that TF work occupied a significant and growing slice of total YOT caseloads. YOTs were also involved in a significant proportion of the overall TF cases. In addition, YOT staff took the TF lead professional role in many cases. The information in the four tables that follow illustrates, at the time of the inspection, the profile of TF work in YOT caseloads and the profile of YOT cases in the overall TF caseload.

5.5. The six YOTs inspected provided us with caseload information. This was broken down by statutory and non-statutory cases and we can see from tables 5.1 and 5.2 that there was some consistency about the proportion of YOT cases, both statutory and non-statutory (averaging 33% and 27% respectively) that were being worked as TF cases. Table 5.3 highlights the wide variations in the profile of TF work between the YOTs. This shows that TF work featured particularly highly for Gateshead, with more than half of their work involving TF cases. In table 5.4, the proportion of the local authority TF caseload that involved YOTs showed wide variations. Gateshead again topped the table with involvement in one-quarter of all TF cases. Staff from that area also took on the lead professional role in many cases. In discussing workloads trends, we found that the consensus was for TF work increasing for YOTs and the profile of YOT cases in the overall cohort of TF cases was also growing.

**Table 5.1 YOT Statutory cases and TF work**

	Number of statutory cases that are also TF	Of which the YOT provides the TF lead role	Total YOT statutory caseload	Proportion of YOT statutory caseload that involved TF work
Gateshead	36	22	72	50%
St Helens	22	11	61	36%
Southwark	55	36	164	34%
Enfield	57	not known	145	39%
Southampton	23	6	102	23%
N Somerset	8	5	56	14%
average	34	16	100	33%

**Table 5.2 YOT Non statutory cases and TF work**

	Number of non statutory cases that are also TF	Of which the YOT provides the TF lead role	Total YOT non statutory caseload	Proportion of YOT non statutory caseload that involved TF work
Gateshead	66	47	115	57%
St Helens	13	0	40	33%
Southwark	4	1	33	12%
Enfield	12	not known	66	18%
Southampton	4	1	24	17%
N Somerset	18	4	79	23%
average	20	11	60	27%

**Table 5.3 All YOT cases and TF work**

	Total YOT TF cases	Total YOT lead for TF cases	Total YOT caseload	Proportion of YOT caseload that involved TF work
Gateshead	102	69	187	55%
St Helens	35	11	101	35%
Southwark	59	37	197	30%
Enfield	69	not known	211	33%
Southampton	27	7	126	21%
N Somerset	26	9	135	19%
average	53	27	160	32%

**Table 5.4 YOT involvement in the total TF caseload**

	Total Local Authority TF cases	Proportion of total Local Authority TF cases with YOT involvement	Proportion of TF cases with a YOT lead professional
Gateshead	403	25%	17%
St Helens	148	24%	7%
Southwark	299	20%	12%
Enfield	430	16%	not known
Southampton	223	12%	3%
N Somerset	198	13%	5%
average	284	18%	9%

## National leadership

- 5.6. Varying levels of concern were raised about national leadership of the TF programme. While local leaders welcomed the lack of proscription on how to implement their TF schemes, in a number of areas it was suggested that more could be done at the Central Government Departmental level to help promote multi-agency involvement at the local level. It was suggested that integrated guidance on partnership participation in TF programmes, from the Departments for Education, Health, the Home Office (for policing) and the Ministry of Justice (for probation, prisons and youth justice issues) would have been helpful. Many at the local level felt that a lack of integrated cross departmental messages may have contributed to uneven buy-in by partner agencies.
- 5.7. The Youth Justice Board (YJB) had issued a guidance note to YOTs in 2012, at the commencement of the TF programme. This recognised the overlapping interests between the TF programme and the work of YOTs and encouraged participation where possible. At the time of the inspection the YJB had not been actively monitoring the TF developments within YOTs. It was not in a position to comment on the TF workload or practice implications for YOTs, nor were they able to identify and share best practice in this respect.

## Staff views and practice issues

- 5.8. The feedback from the practitioners we talked to led us to conclude that the local TF programmes offered promising developments in service delivery, but that these still had some way to go before they could be viewed as having been implemented fully. In general, staff were positive about the practice developments arising from TF work and this had a positive effect on staff morale and motivation. One said: *"it just makes sense."* Others commented upon the positive impact on partnership work and in helping them to think more widely about what they could do to help promote change for families. One practitioner said: *"it does make you think of different things that might be impacting on the family, for example, dealing with substance misuse in relation to a parent."*
- 5.9. However, many YOT staff reported they had not been adequately prepared for the transition to the new ways of working. When asked if they felt they sufficiently understood the priorities of their organisation, in engaging with TF work, just under half of the staff we interviewed said they understood this 'very well', the remainder said they had a 'mixed picture' or 'not well enough'. Just under half (49%) of the practitioners said they had received sufficient training to undertake TF work.
- 5.10. Almost all of the inspected areas had added health as an additional criteria and this speaks to the importance of health involvement in the TF agenda. We did see differing attempts to engage health workers in the local schemes but, in particular, physical health work was not well integrated and health information was not being well shared. A common theme of a lack training and guidance for health workers was also noted. Many of the health staff we spoke with had limited knowledge of the local TF service. We were told of one health worker who had to 'Google' it the night before meeting with inspectors as they had no awareness of the scheme. We did not see clear processes or assessment tools to enable health professionals to assess wider families health needs. In too many instances, we found that health professionals had relied on existing practices and interventions and these had not been adapted to help them integrate with the local TF services.
- 5.11. Several key practice issues needed attention, in varying degrees, across all of the areas inspected. These were:
- The definition of the family in use at the local level and how changes to family structures would impact on TF work, for example what should happen if the TF service commences with a child or young person living at home with his/her parents/carers and they subsequently move out to independent accommodation? Is the TF service offered to families based on an address or when thought of as a 'system'? What is being offered to each of the individual family members, and in particular, what were the accountability arrangements for statutory work when there were several children within the family structure?
  - YOTs and their partners had to clarify what practitioners should be doing (and with whom), when they held the position of lead professional. In particular, YOT practitioners required guidance about the remit of this task in relation to other family members and the authority of the role when working with other professionals.
  - Staff needed the appropriate tools to undertake family assessments, plans and reviews. They had to be able to record and share the agreed priorities and outcomes being sought for the families.
  - Staff had to be clear about, and to implement, strategies for dealing with service user non-engagement. In particular, they had to be consistent in deciding which families had a veto on the work and in what circumstances work would continue, but through a different route, such as statutory interventions in child safeguarding or educational non-attendance matters.

## Management issues

5.12. We found wide differences in the quality assurance and management oversight arrangements to support effective TF work. In one area (Southwark), lead practitioners received monthly supervision, group support in team meetings and they had a point of contact to ask for support from a manager. They also had access to a specialist systemic family worker who offered guidance and support in the new ways of working. Managers did monthly quality assurance checks of cases to monitor family engagement, assessments, planning, service delivery and outcome achievement. In other areas there were no quality assurance systems in place to monitor TF work. Inspectors could find evidence of effective management oversight of TF work in only half of the cases reviewed. Overall, 70% of YOT practitioners reported feeling that their local quality assurance arrangements had supported their work on the risk of harm and safeguarding issues that arose from TF work.

## Partnership issues

5.13. In general, there had been considerable partnership input into the cases we reviewed, but in each of the areas visited more work was required to ensure that all relevant partners were involved in individual cases. Education and social care services were routinely involved in the work but there were variations in the extent to which the police, health, Jobcentre Plus and probation had made their contributions. We saw many examples of voluntary sector engagement with the programmes, but this also varied between the areas.

5.14. In one area the health managers felt that the TF approach helped to introduce a more systematic approach to the work and led to better health outcomes. Education professionals, schools and other providers were generally positive about the TF initiatives and were optimistic about its future impact. Across the six areas we found only two police services engaged at both the strategic and operational levels.

## Good practice examples

Two of the North Somerset police practitioners attended a training session run by the national TF Team. This covered the rationale and underpinning theory of the programme. In addition, police TF case holders accessed a range of other multi-agency training including 'Signs of Safety' training. PCSOs felt confident in approaching the High Impact Families (HIF) team leaders for advice, and were shadowed by a family worker from HIF to ensure that they were on the right track when conducting family assessments. A small number of PCSOs acted as lead professionals and held seven HIF cases.

The Police Commander in that area could see the benefit of whole family working and its similarity with Integrated Offender Management (IOM) principles. Non or partial engagement regularly featured for the families involved in HIF work and the success of IOM in dealing with non-engagement could be used to inform TF work. In Weston-super-Mare this link had been made and it had the potential to help to reduce reoffending and cut crime. The YOT IOM officer worked with around 20 children and young people who were priority offenders; many of whom were also in the HIF programme. This had helped to create close ties between the YOT, the police and the HIF programme. **(North Somerset YOT)**

In London there was a pan-London TF group that met monthly. This was a group in which TF managers could discuss ideas, share good practice and trouble shoot common problems faced by local authorities embedding the TF programme. The agenda allowed space for key speakers to contribute. For example, at one meeting, public health professionals presented their proposals regarding joint TF and public health work. DCLG representatives were also invited to attend for part of the meeting and the group agreed the key themes to be raised with the DCLG. **(Enfield YOT)**

Enfield Partnership working and the wider whole family approach included work with the local probation team. Enfield YOT had good links with Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements and had a probation officer located within the YOT. The Probation Trust offered to place a probation officer within the Change and Challenge team two days per week in order to strengthen links on adult offending and TF. A probation officer attended the 'Single Point of Entry' weekly to look at wider adult offending issues and support systems for families. **(Enfield YOT)**

## Quotes from staff

*"We got a Troubled Families briefing just less than two months ago. This lasted an hour and comprised a few slides. We were then sent on our way."*

*"How do we enable our staff to chair a TAF (meeting) and challenge the family while also trying to support the family?"*

*"We heard about Troubled Families from the national media. We had no idea about the local offer."*

# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Methodology

We were looking to find examples of best practice from the range of approaches seen in the six authorities in England. We were interested in how the local arrangements facilitated effective, outcome-focused work across the agencies. At the operational level we wanted to find out how well the agencies worked together; from identification of relevant families, through to sharing assessments, joint planning and the delivery of interventions. We were particularly keen to identify what service users and families had achieved as a result of participating in the local TF programme.

The inspection team spent three days in each inspection site to gather evidence. Enfield, Gateshead, North Somerset, Southampton, Southwark and St Helens Youth Offending Services were visited (plus York as a pilot) by inspectors from HMI Probation, HMI Constabulary, Ofsted (Social Care and Education) and the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

### Scope of the inspection and methodology.

This inspection of the contribution of YOTS, working with partners, to the work of the TF Programme in England was agreed by the Criminal Justice Chief Inspectors' Group as part of the Joint Inspection Business Plan 2011-2013. The inspection was led by HM Inspectorate of Probation (HMI Probation) and supported by HM Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMI Constabulary), Ofsted (Social Care and Education) and the CQC in England.

The inspection criteria addressed the following areas; outcomes from the work, how assessments/ plans and the delivery of interventions contributed to the outcomes. The role of leadership and management was also considered and we reviewed how these arrangements facilitated effective multi-agency approaches to work with TF.

During the course of the inspection we visited six YOTs between January and March 2014 to help find representative examples of good multi-agency work at both operational and strategic levels. Areas were selected to include a range of both rural and urban locations and with different models of delivery.

To gather evidence, we undertook individual interviews with professionals, children and young people and with their parents/carers. We began the fieldwork with a presentation from local YOT and TF managers who outlined the approach taken to delivering TF services in their area. Key strategic managers across a range of agencies including, social care, health, police, probation and education were also interviewed.

We examined a total of 107 cases. The majority (95) were based on a detailed discussion with the YOT/ YOS case manager, to find out about the needs, risks and actions taken in each case. HMI Probation inspectors recorded their case observations on a structured tool for gathering quantitative data and 47 cases were reviewed using this tool. The remainder of the cases were assessed by the other inspectors who followed up on qualitative issues relating to their areas of expertise. We conducted 12 (2 in each area) case studies, where all of the inspectors met with the range of professional involved in the cases to find out about the quality of joint work taking place.

The HMI Probation sample was made up of 42 male and 5 female cases, aged between 13 and 18 years old. The following table gives a breakdown of basis of supervision in the cases reviewed by the Probation inspectors;

Type of case	#	%
Referral order	26	55%
Reparation order	1	2%
YRO with supervision only	5	11%
YRO with supervision and ISP	1	2%
YRO with supervision plus other conditions	7	15%
Detention and Training Order	5	11%
Section 91 custodial sentence	0	0%
Detention for Public	0	0%
Non-Statutory	2	4%

and the offences involved were;

Original index offence	#	%
Violence against the person (including affray, violent disorder, abusive/ threatening behaviour etc.)	10	21%
Fraud and forgery	2	4%
Sexual offences	1	2%
Criminal damage (excluding arson)	6	13%
Burglary	5	11%
Arson	0	0%
Robbery	5	11%
Drug offences	5	11%
Theft and handling stolen goods	6	13%
Motoring	3	6%
Other (please explain)	4	9%

Most of the young people within the sample had been sentenced to community based orders.

## Appendix 2: Glossary

ASSET	Structured assessment tool based on research and developed by the Youth Justice Board looking at the child or young person's offence, personal circumstances, attitudes and beliefs which have contributed to their offending behaviour
CQC	Care Quality Commission
DCLG	Department for Communities and Local Government
DTO	Detention and training order: a custodial sentence for the young
DWP	Department of Work and Pensions
HIF	High Impact Families. Families identified as requiring the input of many agencies at the local level
HMI Constabulary	HM Inspectorate of Constabulary
HMI Probation	HM Inspectorate of Probation
Interventions; constructive and restrictive interventions	<p>Work with an individual that is designed to change their offending behaviour and/or to support public protection.</p> <p>A constructive intervention is where the primary purpose is to reduce likelihood of reoffending.</p> <p>A restrictive intervention is where the primary purpose is to keep to a minimum the individual's risk of harm to others.</p> <p>NB. Both types of intervention are important</p>
IOM	Integrated Offender Management. Local schemes to target multi agency resources on locally defined priority offenders.
LoR	Likelihood of Reoffending
MAPPA	Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements: where probation, police, prison and other agencies work together locally to manage offenders who pose a higher risk of harm to others
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills: the Inspectorate for those services in England. In this inspection we had inspectors to focus on both the Social Care and Educational aspects of the provision of services to children and young people
PCSO	Police Community Service Officer
Risk of harm to others	This is the term generally used by HMI Probation to describe work to protect the public, primarily using restrictive interventions, to keep to a minimum the individual's opportunity to behave in a way that is a risk of harm to others

Safeguarding	The ability to demonstrate that all reasonable action has been taken to keep to a minimum the risk of a child or young person coming to harm
Team Around the Family	The Team around the Family will bring together young people, parents and practitioners, into an individualised team for each particular child who has been identified as having additional needs. The membership of the TAF may change as the needs of the child and family change over time.
Troubled Families	Those families eligible for including on local Troubled Families programmes. These families are characterised by there being no adult in the family working, children not being in school and family members being involved in crime and anti-social behaviour.
YJB	Youth Justice Board for England and Wales
YOT/YOS/YJS	Youth Offending Team/Youth Offending Service/Youth Justice Service

## Appendix 3: Role of the inspectorates and code of practice

### HMI Probation

Information on the Role of HMI Probation and Code of Practice can be found on our website:

[www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation)

The Inspectorate is a public body. Anyone wishing to comment on an inspection, a report or any other matter falling within its remit should write to:

HM Chief Inspector of Probation  
1st Floor, Manchester Civil Justice Centre  
1 Bridge Street West  
Manchester, M3 3FX

### Care Quality Commission

Information on the Role of the Care Quality Commission and Code of Practice can be found on their website:

<http://www.cqc.org.uk/>

The Commission is a public body. Anyone wishing to comment on an inspection, a report or any other matter falling within its remit should write to:

CQC National Customer Service Centre  
Citygate  
Gallowgate  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
NE1 4PA  
Cardiff CF24 5JW

### HMI Constabulary

Information on the Role of HMI Constabulary and Code of Practice can be found on their website:

[www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/about-us/](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/about-us/)

The Inspectorate is a public body. Anyone wishing to comment on an inspection, a report or any other matter falling within its remit should write to:

HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary  
6th Floor, Globe House, 89 Eccleston Square  
London, SW1V 1PN

### Ofsted

Information on the Role of Ofsted and Code of Practice can be found on their website:

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/>

The Inspectorate is a public body. Anyone wishing to comment on an inspection, a report or any other matter falling within its remit should write to:

HM Chief Inspector of Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills  
Aviation House, 125 Kingsway  
London, WC2B 6SE

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