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# Resettlement effective practice guide

Based on:

HM Inspectorate of Probation's findings from the youth core  
programme

**February 2023**

# Acknowledgements

This effective practice guide is based on information sourced from HM Inspectorate of Probation's core programme. In conjunction with Jon Gardner, inspector with the lead for youth resettlement, Tammie Burroughs, effective practice lead, has drawn out the learning in relation to resettlement, focusing on youth offending services that were rated 'Outstanding' for resettlement between January and October 2022. The guide includes contributions from Pauline Burke, Rebecca Howard, Maria Jerram, Yvonne McGuckian, Vivienne Raine and Michael Ryan, the inspectors who led the youth core inspections featured in this guide. Kieran Gildea, assistant inspector and Oliver Kenton, research officer also contributed. The manager responsible for the youth core programme is Andrea Brazier.

We would like to thank all those who participated in any way with this guide, notably the youth justice services featured, including Bolton, Buckinghamshire, Durham, Hammersmith and Fulham, Thurrock and York. Without their help and cooperation, the inspections and effective practice guide would not have been possible.

Please note that, throughout the pack, the names in the practice examples have been changed, and certain identifying details have been altered and/or merged with other cases to protect the individual's identity.

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# Introduction

## About this guide

HM Inspectorate of Probation has a duty to identify and disseminate effective practice.<sup>1</sup>

We assure the quality of youth justice and probation provision and test its effectiveness. Critically, we make recommendations designed to highlight and disseminate effective practice, challenge poor performance and encourage providers to improve.

This insights guide is designed to explore resettlement practice in relation to youth custody, and the evidence of good practice we have found during our inspections. We introduced a specific resettlement standard to our local youth offending service inspections in July 2021, following thematic inspections that indicated serious concerns about this area of practice. Thankfully, we have now started to see some examples of our standards delivered well, and we wanted to share the learning from this with case managers and service leaders working in the field to highlight the positive practice we have seen on the ground.

I am grateful to all the areas that participated in the core inspection programme, and for their additional help in producing this guide. We publish these guides to complement our reports and the standards against which we inspect youth offending and probation.

I hope this will be of interest to everyone working in youth services and seeking to develop their practice. We welcome feedback on this and our other guides, to ensure that they are as useful as possible to future readers.



**Justin Russell**

HM Chief Inspector of Probation



## Finding your way



Tools for practitioners, managers and senior leaders



Useful links

## Contact us



We would love to hear what you think of this guide. Please find current contact details via the [HM Inspectorate of Probation Effective Practice page](#).

<sup>1</sup> **For adult services** – Section 7 of the *Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000*, as amended by the *Offender Management Act 2007*, section 12(3)(a). **For youth services** – inspection and reporting on youth offending teams is established under section 39 of the *Crime and Disorder Act 1998*.

# Guide context: resettlement of children from youth custody

While the focus of the guide is on resettlement of children from youth custody in England and Wales, the principles are similar when a child is transitioning from any secure setting, including a secure hospital, and when a child is transitioning to an adult establishment after turning 18. By 'youth custody' we are referring to young offender institutions and justice placements:

- **Young offender institution (YOI):** there are currently four YOIs in England and one in Wales. Cookham Wood, Werrington and Wetherby are for boys under 18 years of age. Wetherby has a specialist unit, Keppel, for vulnerable children with complex needs. Feltham and Parc are for children and adults, although children are kept on separate units. In 2020/2021, 73 per cent of those in youth custody were in a YOI.<sup>2</sup>
- **Secure training centre (STC):** there is currently one STC operating nationally, Oakhill, which is in Milton Keynes. STCs are smaller, purpose-built establishments designed to accommodate between 60 and 80 boys and girls aged 12 to 17. In 2020/2021, 17 per cent of those in youth custody were in an STC.<sup>2</sup>
- **Secure children's home (SCH):** there are currently eight SCHs in England and Wales that detain children on justice grounds.<sup>2</sup> These are designed to accommodate children aged between 10 and 17 who are assessed as vulnerable. In 2020/2021, 10 per cent of those in youth custody were in an SCH.<sup>2</sup>



**Figure 1: YOI, STC and SCH locations in England and Wales**

<sup>2</sup> J Beard. (2020). *Youth Custody*, Research Briefing, Ministry of Justice. [CBP-8557.pdf \(parliament.uk\)](https://www.parliament.uk/publications/58577/1/cbp-8557.pdf) accessed on 04 November 2022.

In 2023, England's first secure school is set to open as an addition to the above. It is owned by Oasis Restore which is seeking to blend therapeutic, integrated education, health and care. Lucy Frazer, a previous Youth Justice Minister stated that:

*"health and education are key to unlocking the potential of [these] vulnerable children in custody and diverting them away from a life of crime".<sup>3</sup>*

40 per cent of children in the youth custody estate are remanded to youth detention accommodation.<sup>4</sup> While the principles in this guide remain the same for this cohort of children, we note some nuances in this practice and the different challenges faced. We will be undertaking a thematic inspection of children remanded in custody in 2023, and will aim to produce a further effective practice guide alongside this.

Although the principles highlighted in this guide refer to all children, the case illustrations are all based on boys, as these are the effective examples we have seen in the youth services inspected to date. This is to be expected, given the low number of girls in youth custody (according to the youth custody provisional data, there were 14 in July 2022). We acknowledge that work should be personalised according to the child's protected characteristics and, consequently, services and practitioners should be mindful of this in their work.

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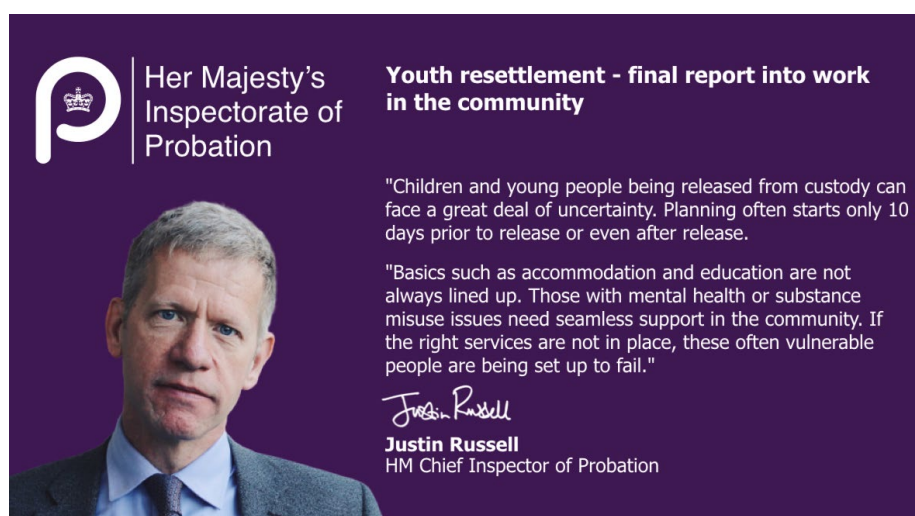
<sup>3</sup> [Home - Oasis Restore](#) accessed 05 October 2022

<sup>4</sup> [Youth Justice Board Annual Report and Accounts 2021/22 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#) accessed 05 October 2022



## Thematic inspection of resettlement, 2019

In 2019, we carried out a joint thematic inspection of youth resettlement work with HM Inspectorate of Prisons. The report concluded:



The thematic report illustrated the importance of effective resettlement in keeping children and others safe, as *"too many children in our sample had also become involved in offending again following release."*

Of the 50 cases inspected at that time, within three months of release:



**Figure 2: Outcomes for the children from the case sample, within three months of release**



At the time, we produced this [short animation](#) of the key findings. You can also read the full report [here](#).

Following on from this, in July 2021 we introduced specific standalone resettlement standard to inspect resettlement policy and provision.

Between January and October 2022, seven youth justice services (YJSs)<sup>5</sup> were rated 'Outstanding' in resettlement. This guide seeks to share the practice from these services to help improve practice in this area.

<sup>5</sup> Throughout this guide, we refer to youth justice services, rather than youth offending services, to reflect the changes we are seeing across England and Wales.



# Resettlement: What does it mean?



In this context, resettlement is the support a child receives to return to the community following a custodial sentence (youth detention and training order).

The purpose of resettlement services is to help the child shape a more pro-social identity, and to build on their individual strengths, social capital and resources to help them remain safe and live a crime-free life. This aims to reduce the likelihood of further offending.

Consequently, effective resettlement takes a strengths-based approach and acknowledges that the child may need a variety of support and interventions to keep them and other people safe, and to enable them to successfully integrate in their communities.

**Figure 3: Aspects of a child's identity**

This is referred to as 'constructive resettlement'.<sup>6</sup> There are three core elements to this:



**Constructive casework** – making support personal and structural to guide the child develop a pro-social identity.



**The 5Cs** – five characteristics of effective resettlement (constructive, co-created, customised, consistent, and coordinated).



**Identity awareness** – thinking about the messages a child gives you about their identity and what messages you give them.

Constructive resettlement will be discussed in more detail later in this document. The London Resettlement Partnership resource hub has provided comprehensive guidance on the theory, which can be accessed via the link:



[Constructive Resettlement \(constructive-resettlement.co.uk\)](https://constructive-resettlement.co.uk)

<sup>6</sup> [Constructive Resettlement for the Sector \(vjresourcehub.uk\)](https://constructive-resettlement.co.uk)

# Why is resettlement important?

**As a group or on your own:** Imagine you have successfully gained a promotion. While you are excited about the challenge and the associated pay rise, the position means you will be required to relocate.

Consider the following questions:

- What emotions might you experience:
  - On being offered/making the decision to take the job?
  - One month before you move?
  - One week before you move?
  - One day before you move?
  - The day you move?
  - One week after you have moved?
  - One month after you have moved?
- Make a list of all of the things you need to consider:
  - Three months before you move.
  - One month before you move.
  - One week before you move.
  - The day before you move.
  - On the day you move.



There is a lot to think about, from where to live, to what the area is like and what social opportunities will be available. Maybe you needed to consider schools for your family. This may be overwhelming, stressful and anxiety provoking, despite the excitement of the new role.

Now imagine what it would be like:



for a child moving with you to a new area, who may not know anyone, apart from you and others moving with you, or anything about the area



for a child being released from youth custody, who, by the nature of the fact that they are detained, will be vulnerable and undoubtedly have complex needs. For example, they may have experienced adverse childhood trauma, discrimination, poverty, or deprivation. They may experience a trust deficit.

They may not know where they will be living on release, who they will be living with, the extent of support available, or the services and support they will be able to access. They may be unfamiliar with the local community, culture, attitudes, accents and dialects and, potentially, differences in language.

Furthermore, while in custody, they will have lots of time to think and possibly ruminate on their concerns.

This exercise illustrates why it is important to plan resettlement before release and meaningfully involve the child and their parents/carers.

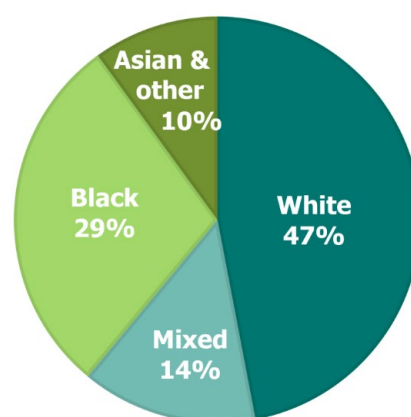
## Youth custody: the current picture

The number of children detained in custody under youth sentencing, in July 2022, is shown in figure 4 below:



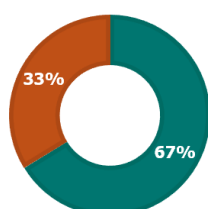
**Figure 4: The number of children in custody, July 2022<sup>7</sup>**

The Youth Justice Board (2022)<sup>8</sup> indicates that for: *“the second consecutive year, children from a White background accounted for just under half of the custodial population (47 per cent in 2020/21). The proportion of children from a Black ethnic background has increased the most, and now accounts for 29 per cent of the youth custody population, compared with 18 per cent ten years ago.”*



**Figure 5: Ethnicity of children in custody**

Over the last decade, large numbers of children and young people have been diverted away from statutory justice outcomes. This has removed many of the children without serious entrenched offending patterns from the justice system; however, the children with these issues who remain in the system now represent a larger share of the caseload. Despite this, for children who were released from custody or started a community sentence from April to June 2020:



*there was a 2.7 percentage point decrease in the juvenile reoffending rate compared to the same quarter in the previous year, which stands at 32.6 per cent.<sup>9</sup> However, for context, the number of offenders in the cohort has fallen by 93 per cent since the same financial quarter in 2009.*

**Figure 6: Juvenile reoffending rate April to June 2020**

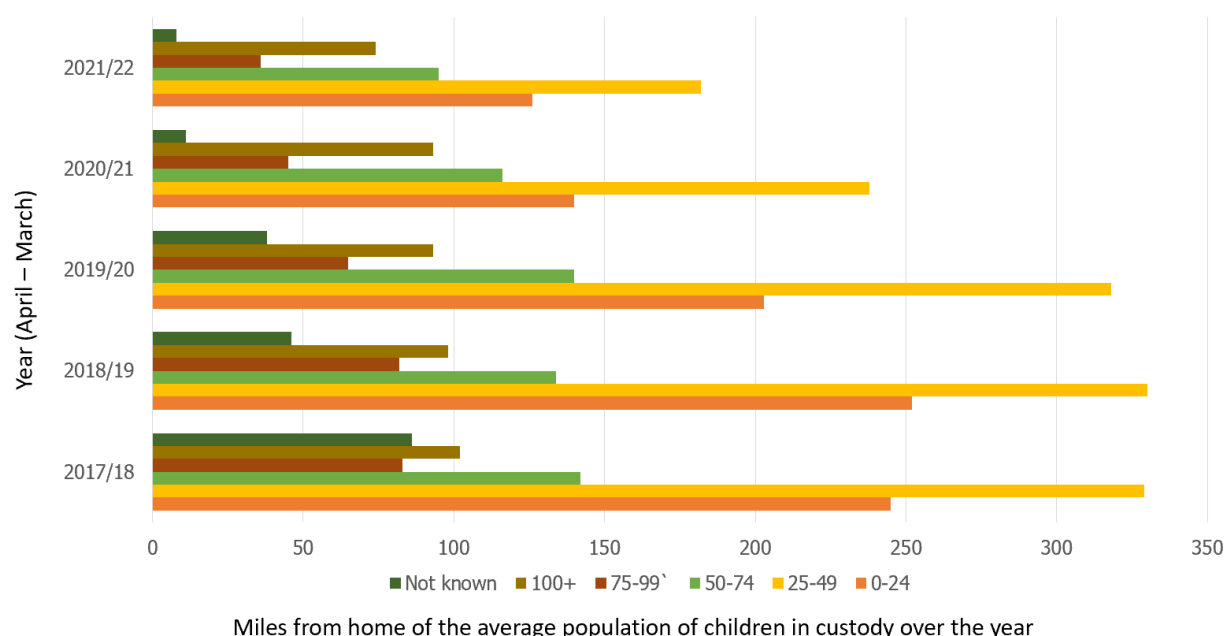
<sup>7</sup> Youth custody data - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)) accessed 05 October 2022.

<sup>8</sup> The Youth Justice Board for England and Wales. (2022). Annual report and accounts 2021/22. [Youth Justice Board Annual Report and Accounts 2021/22 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk) (accessed 14 October 2022).

<sup>9</sup> Proven reoffending statistics: April to June 2020 - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)) (accessed 05 October 2022).

This general decrease in the size of the youth custody cohort and increase in its complexity and seriousness has introduced some new challenges for the resettlement of children from custody. Notably, with a reduction in the size of the youth custody cohort, the size of the custodial estate has also fallen. Consequently, a high proportion of those in youth custody are detained further from home, making it harder to maintain links to the area to which they will be released. Figure 7 below illustrates how far, in miles, children were detained away from their home address, averaged across each year from July 2017/2018 to 2021/2022<sup>10</sup> (the data shows the breakdown each month dating back to 2015/2016). In the aggregated data from inspections conducted to date (accessed January 2023), 51 per cent of children were detained between 0 and 50 miles from home, 28 per cent were between 51 and 100 miles and 21 per cent were more than 100 miles from their home.

So, the disruption of custody potentially includes being far away from their loved ones. There may also be a loss of accommodation, interrupted education, emotional distress and fear of new surroundings and peers. It is not an easy process for children, their parents/carers, other family members and, sometimes, the community. For some, these changes are as traumatic as entering a secure setting, exacerbated by the practical problems posed and fear of what custody and the future will hold, together with a significant amount of free time, and limited distractions to prevent rumination.



**Figure 7: Miles from home of the average population of children in custody, between 2017/2018 and July 2021/2022**

These large distances between a child's home area and their custodial setting can be a significant barrier to resettlement. It makes it harder for staff from the child's home area to attend meetings or visit the child and discuss resettlement. It also makes it harder for custody-based staff to deal with community providers, since typically they will be dealing with a larger number of different communities, and it makes it harder for the child's family to visit them regularly (YJB, 2012).<sup>11</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Youth custody data - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)) accessed 05 October 2022.






<sup>11</sup> Youth Justice Board. (2012). *Resettlement in England and Wales: Key Policy and Practice Messages from Research*. London: Youth Justice Board. Available at <https://yjresourcehub.uk/yjb-effective-practice/youth-justice-kits/item/562-resettlement-in-england-and-wales-key-policy-and-practice-messages-from-research-2012.html> (accessed 05 October 2022).

While a face-to-face visit is preferable, the use of technology, such as video-conferencing and emails, should also be considered, to support relationship-building between visits and mitigate some of these barriers.

Girls make up only five per cent of the youth custodial estate, and so there are few institutions catering to them. This means that girls are often placed further from home than boys, when distance from home is already an issue.



Many of the pathways and criminogenic factors behind the offending of girls are different from those of boys. Girls detained in youth custody are:

-  more likely to have pathways into crime based on their **vulnerabilities**
-  3 times as likely to have been the **victim of sexual violence** than boys
-  **Identity awareness** – thinking about the messages a child gives you about their identity and what messages you give them.
-  1½ times as likely to have **been in care** before they were incarcerated.<sup>12</sup>
-  transferred to adult women's prisons at 18 years of age, as there are no YOIs that can detain them.

Given the higher safeguarding and welfare needs of girls in custody, resettlement work with them must prioritise these needs. The girls must have confidence that their needs are being addressed through their own early involvement in resettlement planning. For many girls, interpersonal relationships are important to their offending behaviour. Family dynamics and peer associations that can encourage offending need to be addressed with programmes that help girls to forge positive relationships and identify and understand how they are influenced by interactions with others. Since many girls in custody have had poor relationships where they experienced subordination, exploitation and abuse, interventions that are delivered with similar power dynamics could make girls fearful of further victimisation.

As with boys in custody, each girl needs an individualised approach to resettlement, and this approach must consider the way gender affects their needs.

Consequently, it is important to prepare children properly for effective resettlement, so that they can make a success of the transition, learn from their experiences and start to become law-abiding, useful members of society.



HM Inspectorate of Prison led [A thematic review of outcomes for girls in custody September 2022](#) with HM Inspectorate of Probation, Ofsted, the Care Quality Commission and Care Inspectorate Wales, which provided a comprehensive overview of the current provision for girls.

<sup>12</sup> Beyond Youth custody, (2014). *Resettlement of girls and young women: A practitioner's guide*. Available at <http://www.beyondyouthcustody.net/resources/publications/resettlement-girls-young-women-practitioners-guide/> (accessed 05 October 2022).

## Balancing keeping children and others safe, after release

As noted above, children in custody are more likely to be those with multiple, and often complex, needs and entrenched offending patterns. Thus, it stands to reason that the numbers represent not just those assessed to be the riskiest children, but also the most vulnerable.

Children in the youth justice system are likely to have experienced school exclusions, racial and/or age discrimination, to have been subject to social care involvement,

experienced significant trauma through adverse childhood experiences and deprivation, and many may well be care experienced. Analysis by the Youth Justice Board and Ministry of Justice found that more than half of children in custody are known to have had a child in need or child protection plan (Ministry of Justice and Youth Justice Board, 2020).<sup>13</sup>

Therefore, services' response to these children must be a careful balance of keeping them safe, keeping others safe and promoting desistance, thus also serving to protect the child's safety for their long-term future. If services do not focus on the underlying causes of the offending behaviour, they may fail to address all of the safety concerns. This could leave the child at risk of harm, further criminalisation, perhaps imprisonment, and moral injury (Williamson et al, 2021).<sup>14</sup>

Conversely, if services solely focus on safety planning or risk factors, such a focus on deficits alone, can fail to meaningfully engage the child and their parents/carers, and this can underestimate the practical changes required to help the child develop a pro-social identity. So, practitioners must strike a balance in the focus of their work to ensure they take a holistic and personalised approach.

This was reinforced in our joint statement with the Youth Justice Board:



*When working with children both HM Inspectorate of Probation and the Youth Justice Board (YJB) advocate actions to reduce a risk of harm – to that child or others, better worded as ensuring safety and wellbeing of all. We are in complete agreement that access to services for children is crucial in meeting their needs and preventing offending and reoffending. As set out in the HM Inspectorate of Probation standards framework for inspecting youth offending services, the focus is upon the delivery of high-quality, well-focused, personalised and coordinated services which engage and assist children.' (HM Inspectorate of Probation/Youth Justice Board, 2022)<sup>15</sup>*

Research illustrates the importance of supporting a child to move to a pro-social identity, and to do so we need to understand what the child sees as this new identity, how they will achieve it, what will propel them further on their journey, what will pull them back and what



**Figure 8: The balance of keeping the child and others safe**

<sup>13</sup> Youth Justice Board and Ministry of Justice (2020). Assessing the needs of sentenced children in the Youth Justice System 2019/19: England and Wales. Available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/887644/assessing-needs-of-sentenced-children-youth-justice-system.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/887644/assessing-needs-of-sentenced-children-youth-justice-system.pdf) (Accessed: 05 October 2022).

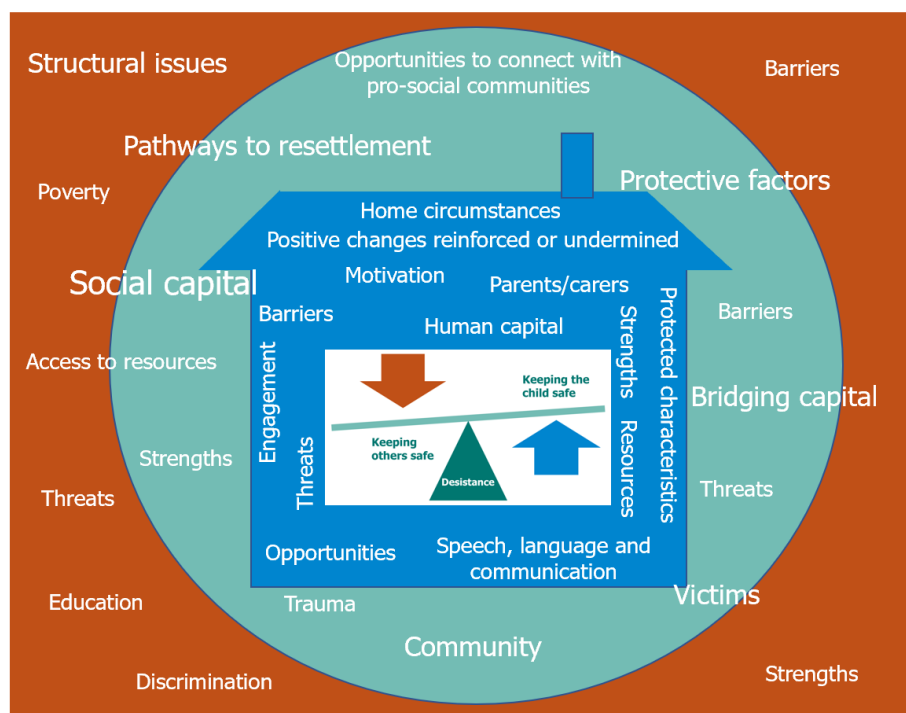
<sup>14</sup> Williamson, V., Murphy, D., Phelps, A., Forbes, D. and Greenberg, N. (2021). 'Moral injury: the effect on mental health and implications for treatment.' *The Lancet Psychiatry*, Vol. 8(6), pp. 453-455.

<sup>15</sup> HM Inspectorate of Probation/Youth Justice Board (2022). Joint statement from HM Inspectorate of Probation and the Youth Justice Board. Manchester.



has the potential to send them off track. Practitioners need to be curious with the child and their parents/carers to meaningfully involve them in their assessment and planning. This will enable practitioners to understand the situation from the child's and family/carers perspective, taking into account their protected characteristics, their resources, strengths, their concerns and their current situation.

Plus, it is important to recognise that many of these factors will be dynamic. This means practitioners must be prepared to respond to any changes as they occur and, in doing so, use the full extent of their local youth justice partnership.



**Figure 9: Factors which impact on the child and the systems which impact on them, which should be considered in a holistic assessment**

In summary, effective assessments to support successful resettlement view children through all three lenses of desistance, keeping the child safe and keeping others safe. The safety plans are most effective when they are able to bend and flex along with the individual child's current circumstances (considering all of the factors illustrated in figure 9), drawing on the resources of all partners who work with the child and their family/carers. This is summarised well in a quote taken from South and West Yorkshire Resettlement Consortium's Constructive Resettlement Document (2021):<sup>16</sup>



***A good practitioner is one who accepts a child's past, supports their present and encourages their future.***

<sup>16</sup> South and West Yorkshire Resettlement Consortium Pathfinder Project (2021) Supporting children on their journey: Constructive Resettlement Guidance document





HM Inspectorate of Probation's research team has commissioned a number of Academic Insights papers which explain the necessity of the balance of keeping the child and others safe. These include:

[Academic Insights 2022/04: Systemic Resilience](#)



This report was kindly produced by Dr Alex Chard. It summarises the concept of systemic resilience, which brings together systemic thinking and resilience theory.

[Academic Insights 2022/06: Adultification bias within child protection and safeguarding](#)



This report was kindly produced by Jahnine Davis. It highlights adultification bias, its links to racialised discrimination, and how it can impact on child protection and safeguarding practices.

[Academic Insights 2022/08: Child to Parent Abuse](#)



This report was kindly produced by Dr Amanda Holt. It examines the research findings on child to parent abuse, covering its prevalence, contexts and impacts. Dr Holt reiterates the importance of our focus on high-quality, well-focused, personalised and coordinated services that support both the safety of the child and the safety of other people.

[Academic Insights 2021/13: Serious youth violence and its relationship with adverse childhood experiences](#)



This report was kindly produced by Dr Paul Gray, Professor Hannah Smithson and Dr Deborah Jump. It focuses on findings from recent research in Manchester that explored adverse childhood experiences, serious youth violence, trauma-informed practice, and youth participation.

[Academic Insights 2020/11: Contextual Safeguarding](#)



This report was kindly produced by Dr Carlene Firmin. It sets out how contextual safeguarding has changed the response of child protection systems to children at risk of significant harm in extra-familial settings and relationships.

# HM Inspectorate of Probation's: Resettlement standard



In relation to resettlement, we expect that:

*there is a high-quality, evidence-based resettlement service for children leaving custody.*

The resettlement standard focuses on policy, provision and the evaluation of policy and provision, with expectations identified under each section.



You can access an overview of each key question via the links in figure 10 below.



**Figure 10: HM Inspectorate of Probation's resettlement standard and hyperlinks to the expectations for each key question**

In this section, we share examples from services that were rated 'Outstanding'<sup>17</sup> for resettlement between January and October 2022, and that demonstrated some of the key expectations from our resettlement standard.

It should be noted that not every YJS we inspected during this time frame had a resettlement case inspected as part of the core inspection programme.

### **Example of effectiveness: Clarity of policy and processes, Durham**

This YJS has a policy in place that addresses all aspects of 'constructive resettlement'. This involves three core elements: constructive casework, the '5Cs' (constructive, co-created, customised, consistent and coordinated) and identity awareness.

The policy clearly sets out the expectations of service delivery, which include:



clear standards for contact with the child in custody and for contact with parents or carers, and clear expectations about the involvement of the child and their parents or carers in the process



a monthly case review at a multi-agency reoffending panel



consideration of the child's diverse needs, and processes to address these through the pathways to services



inclusion of the child's views



the development of contingency planning should circumstances, or arrangements alter.

The inspected sample of three cases in Durham found that the policy was implemented effectively:

- in every case the work had been completed in accordance with, or beyond, the requirements of the policy
- actions were set to address the core needs of each child and these were reviewed at subsequent panel meetings
- in every case there was good evidence of the child and their parent or carer being involved in the processes and receiving appropriate support
- excellent links were developed to help the child to access appropriate accommodation, health and education/employment services on release from custody
- all expected work with identified victims was undertaken
- the child's protected characteristics were identified and planned for and delivery was adjusted in the light of these needs
- there were clear arrangements to address the child's vulnerabilities, where necessary, to deal with safeguarding concerns
- there were equally clear arrangements to protect victims from further harm when necessary.



Durham YJS has kindly allowed us to share a copy of its policy, which you can access [here](#).

<sup>17</sup> The rating for resettlement does not influence the overall YJS rating.

### **Example of effectiveness:** tenacious staff who provide an individualised and personalised service, Hammersmith and Fulham Youth Justice Service

Reducing the numbers of children in custody and on remand is a priority for Hammersmith and Fulham YJS, as is resettlement for those who do receive a custodial sentence. As a result, there are bail packages and clearly identified alternatives to custody in place. The former benefited from a review of the bail and remand provision completed by the deputy service manager. The recommendations from this were implemented, which led to improved communication between the service, secure estate and partners, and more cohesive partnership working. The alternatives to custody, bail packages and the resettlement policy and provision are regularly reviewed to ensure they are meeting the needs of the children in the local authority area.

Hammersmith and Fulham YJS's resettlement policy sets out the required arrangements for suitable provision for resettlement and advocates for a personalised, co-produced approach to resettlement in which the child and family are central. The document provides clarity on timeframes, expectations and the responsibilities of the practitioners and managers. It also provides information on escalation, if these are not met.

Robust multi-agency risk management arrangements are in place, which provide a forum for the partnership to collaborate effectively. Any children at risk of remand or custody receive multi-agency oversight through the forum. Members of the partnership have a shared responsibility to explore appropriate alternatives and, if required, prepare for a custodial sentence. Children are discussed at a risk panel immediately after sentencing. This panel is attended by multiple agencies, including any allocated social workers, clinical consultants and mentors, and specific individuals, as appropriate. This includes the edge of care team if the child is returning home, or a probation officer if the child is due to transition to adult services during the sentence. Therefore, all have input into the resettlement plan. This ensures that no agency is acting in isolation, and improves communication.

The Hammersmith and Fulham community safety team funds a 0.5 resettlement worker to the YJS, through the London Crime Prevention Fund. The resettlement worker focuses on the seven pathways to constructive resettlement. The worker has weekly contact with the case manager and provides a well-coordinated focus on the pathways for all agencies involved. Given the focus, the worker can be agile in responding to any changes, such as to the child's mental health or vulnerabilities, or any incidents of discrimination.

The team accesses accommodation through the edge of care team, via Centrepont (a charity that provides homeless children and young people with accommodation, health support and life skills). The YJS also has access to a resource panel for accommodation. It has used this to spot-purchase beds for specific needs, as required by the child's assessment, and to secure funds to place a retainer on accommodation in the community for any short periods when the child is in custody/on remand. If children are placed with them, the accommodation providers proactively engage in developing and implementing risk management plans.

In a recent core inspection, all of the resettlement cases featured the following:



Resettlement planning began swiftly, and was tailored to the children's needs.



Staff recognised diversity and understood the complex needs and nuances required for children who receive custodial sentences.



Children were matched to placements that met their needs.



Children knew where they were going to be living before they were released.



Children were engaging in education before release, and placements were organised so that they could continue their work after release.



Practitioners were proactive in communicating with the child, their family, the secure estate and the professional network. This was effective, and the children were safe and risks to others well managed.

The YJS continues to evaluate remands, custody and resettlement activity through ongoing data analysis to allow them to continue to refine the service.



We are grateful that the YJS shared this [PowerPoint overview of their resettlement practice](#) and an example [initial intervention plan](#), which illustrates how they take a 5C approach.

### **Example of effectiveness:** embedding resettlement expectations into practice, Buckinghamshire Youth Justice Service

Buckinghamshire YJS's resettlement policy (March 2022) is designed to promote a high-quality, constructive and personalised resettlement service for all children. It is grounded in a strengths-based approach that considers identity shift and children's safety and wellbeing, and provides a personalised resettlement service for all children. These principles run through all of the YJS's practice.

The resettlement policy focuses on the seven pathways of resettlement. It focuses on the child, but acknowledges the importance of engaging parents/carers as well. This is evidenced by the actions taken in the case inspected, where exceptional efforts were made to strengthen family relationships.

The policy specifies what should be covered at the initial planning meeting, including release on temporary licence; special educational needs and disabilities; and education, health and care plans. It refers to the need to consider diversity and provides direction and guidance to staff on effective resettlement practice in line with relevant research recommendations. It makes clear that practitioners should explore and address any barriers at the earliest stages, with a focus on accommodation from the outset. Expectations in terms of escalating issues to managers are also covered. In addition, the policy sets out caretaking requirements for any child released to live in another borough.

The resettlement policy references several documents and reports for further reading. These include our thematic report on resettlement, as well as guidance on the effective resettlement of girls and a report on ethnicity, faith and culture in resettlement.

There is no specific feedback from children, parents and carers in relation to resettlement work, but this would be captured as part of the YJS's life path work.

The policy was rolled out to staff at a team meeting to ensure they understood its purpose and the expectations of them in delivering on it. Furthermore, all staff who work with children being resettled from custody have received training to assess, identify, plan for, and respond to each child's resettlement needs.

There was evidence of the policy being implemented in the resettlement case we inspected, with the inspector commenting that the quality of work:

*"was excellent. The child was fully engaged, kept up to date on plans and multi-agency work was noted as a strength. Effective work was undertaken to manage risk of harm and support the safety and wellbeing of the child with a consistent focus on diversity."*

Resettlement cases are discussed at the YJS risk management panel, where panel members pay attention to risk of harm to others as well as the child's safety and wellbeing. These issues are also discussed among partners at resettlement meetings, including the YJS restorative justice/victim worker, police and health. In addition, while practitioners facilitate the child's compliance through a collaborative and strengths-based approach, they are also able to develop comprehensive contingency plans. In the case inspected, it was noted that there was a:

*trigger plan following release from custody and an expectation of him abiding by licence conditions. It details actions that need to be taken if he does not comply with any of the licence conditions or placement rules. It's comprehensive, informative and assisted transitions to the community.*

Resettlement work at Buckinghamshire YJS has been the subject of a specific quality assurance exercise to assess the quality of provision and how well children's individual needs are met.



With thanks to Buckinghamshire YJS, which has allowed us to share its resettlement policy (they reported they drew on learning from examples shared on the YJB resource hub, notably the Derbyshire policy). You can access the Buckinghamshire policy [here](#).






### **Example of effectiveness:** the shared prioritising of children who are at risk of custody and those who go to custody, Bolton Youth Justice Service

Bolton YJS's resettlement policy was implemented in the summer of 2021. It formalises the practice that has developed in the area, drawing on the evidence base from the Greater Manchester resettlement forum and consortium. At the time of our inspection, the policy was due to be updated and formally signed off, based on further practice developments.

The improvements are based on learning from the custody cases, which are subject to oversight from an operational manager. This manager chairs community multi-agency meetings and, consequently, has built up skills and knowledge and credibility among partners. Progress is monitored at board level, as the director of children's services has a working knowledge of each custody case, and holds board members to account for their service's contribution and again feeds the learning back in.

The resettlement policy covers all key areas, but practice goes beyond the policy. Each child benefits from bespoke arrangements in preparation for release and during their detention. Discussions about and planning for accommodation on release start early, sometimes at pre-sentence report (PSR) stage. The child and their parents/carers are proactively and meaningfully involved, and their needs are clearly heard, and where appropriate acted on, in a timely fashion. In addition, children's services are fully involved in identifying children's needs.

The influence of case managers across other agencies is a key strength in resettlement practice. Examples include work with the custodial estate, influence on accommodation providers, health, probation, Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) and social care. It is clear that developing and maintaining meaningful relationships remain at the core of work, and partners are held to account by the YJS to contribute to planning and service delivery for the benefit of each individual child. This is evidenced in the following examples:

<b>Custody</b> 	<p>Bolton has excellent relationships with both local youth custodial establishments, which allow for specialised assessments to continue even while a child is in custody.</p> <p>Greater Manchester Youth Justice Team (YJS) part-funds a social worker post at Wetherby. This gives it ready access to a member of staff who advocates for the children and ensures that the suitability of provision is assessed on a routine, case-by-case basis. This was seen in action during the inspection, when the YJS advocated for one child to move from the main estate to the specialist Keppel Unit (for those with multiple needs). There are also good operational links with Barton Moss SCH. The YJS advocates for the child's education and training while in custody and, where possible, encourages and motivates children to undertake purposeful activity.</p>
<b>MAPPA</b> 	<p>The MAPPA chair stated that this forum was used for cases that had additional complexities, not just high risks. This had been instrumental in securing multi-agency funding for specialist residential placements, which were identified in sufficient time before release.</p>
<b>Emotional and mental health needs</b> 	<p>Arising as a direct result of a review of mental health provision across the Greater Manchester YJS, in order to meet individual emotional and mental health needs, Greater Manchester Mental Health Trust has developed a Positive Health Pathway, designed specifically for children in custody.</p> <p>The pathway employs two peer navigators who have lived experience of youth custody and visit children in custody.</p> <p>They identify health needs and produce health action plans.</p>
<b>Probation</b> 	<p>If a child is due to transition to probation, the YJS probation worker becomes involved at an early stage to develop a relationship with the child. Where needed, adult services are invited to attend planning meetings in custody and in the community. Lead agency arrangements are clear.</p>
<b>Victim liaison</b> 	<p>Remedi is an organisation contracted to provide services to victims. It is part of planning and advocate for the victim where contact had been taken up. With or without contact with the victim, safety planning in terms of licence conditions were in place.</p>

All of the above allows the YJS to balance safeguarding of the children with the risks presented. For example, inspectors saw some good use of stringent licence conditions and the use of approved premises, where appropriate. This results in the suitability of provision to promote desistance being assessed and reviewed on a routine and case-by-case basis.



With thanks to Bolton YJS for sharing its resettlement policy, which you can access [here](#).

### **Example of effectiveness:** partnership work translating from policy to provision, York Youth Justice Service

The inspection of York Youth Justice Service found a recently reviewed resettlement policy, which was based on evidence and knowledge of effective resettlement. This included a review of work undertaken at a regional level and from the work of the South Yorkshire resettlement consortium (the YJS is not part of a consortium region itself).

The policy focuses on the individual needs of the children, so the YJS and partners can bend and flex with these needs, to provide personalised support. It is based on the YJB's



resettlement pathways and promotes embedding desistance principles into practice. These principles include the development and maintenance of motivation and hope regarding movement towards a pro-social identity, a strengths-based approach, identifying and strengthening the capital and resources available, and understanding that custody does not define the child.

The application of this policy was evident in the practice we saw in the core inspection conducted in September 2022. This appears to be, in part, linked to the fact that the YJS management board does not just provide oversight of the resettlement policy but also of each resettlement case, as it arises (recognising that data is not the most useful evaluation measure, given the low numbers). This oversight ensures that the provision of resettlement services is highly effective, proactive and targeted to meet the needs of the individual child. In addition, practice is consistently reviewed in professional meetings and any learning is fed back in.

A particular strength of the policy was the partnership work, which harnesses the experience of partners, providers, commissioners, children and family/carers to influence the work. As a result, there is practical and strategic support to overcome barriers to successful resettlement. All agencies understand their respective roles and offer timely and ongoing support to children in custody and on release. In practice, this means that a core group of professionals work together to understand the resettlement needs of individual children at the earliest opportunity.

There were numerous examples of partnerships supporting this work, which are set out below:



**Victim liaison officer role** – the protection of victims is a critical strand of the resettlement policy, which has resulted in a victim liaison officer role within the YJS. The YJS victim liaison officer represents the views of the actual victims and is specifically tasked with undertaking work with children in custody, feeding into the resettlement plan and exploring opportunities for restorative approaches.



**Probation** – where children are eligible for transition to adult services, there are clearly defined pathways and associated timescales to ensure that vulnerability and risk are managed effectively. There is also evidence that children and family/carers are meaningfully involved in this process and their views are taken into account. For example, in a case we inspected, the child was given the option to transfer to adult services or remain with the YJS. His view that a fresh start with probation would be preferable was respected. To support this transition, there were detailed discussions, and joint visits to the child from the YJS and probation. The YJS worker kept the case open to provide support as a contingency plan for a two-month period after release.



**Custody** – the YJS has named contacts at HM YOI Wetherby and Adel Beck SCH as they recognise the importance of contact with custodial providers. This is particularly beneficial, as coherent case management depends on effective information-sharing to support assessment, planning and implementation to maximise the effectiveness of resettlement.



**Accommodation** – the service has a partnership with housing services in York. A senior member of the housing service has sat on the YJS for five years. The YJS makes a financial contribution to two youth homeless workers, who

speak directly to the child in custody, and their parents or carers, and identify the child's wishes and potential accommodation options.

These workers look at supporting children and families to prevent family breakdown and, where appropriate, champion a return to the family home. Where this is not appropriate, because of safeguarding, vulnerability and/or risk issues, these workers also have effective links with accommodation providers. Therefore, they are able to use information from children and their families/carers, and from the YJS and all partners, to identify and secure effective placements that allow other partners to make effective release plans and keep the child and their parents or carers informed at each step of the process. The inspection identified a good example of this in practice, where a child had refused an accommodation placement. The workers helped him to explore the benefits of the place, especially in accessing support for his mental health. When he changed his mind at the last minute, he was able to go where recommended, as the placement had been held open for him.

York has a range of accommodation services for children, including a hostel called Howe Hill. This is run by the local authority, and provides 24-hour wrap-around support to children. There is a crash pad for short-term emergency use, and a further supported hostel for 16- to 25-year-olds, located in a women's accommodation service. Financial payments can also be made to retain placements for children who are in settled residential homes.

The housing department of the local authority is currently trying to recruit foster carers to provide placements for children on release from custody. This will be an extension of the foster care PACE and remand placement, a valued service for the YJS.



**Other youth offending services** – while staff are not specifically trained in resettlement, they are well supported by managers who are effectively linked into regional consortiums. As a result, staff were able to identify needs, work in collaboration to produce effective resettlement plans and respond to need.



With thanks to York YJS for sharing its resettlement policy, which you can access [here](#).

### **Example of effectiveness:** constructive use of well-established multi-agency resettlement support panels, embedded in practice, Wolverhampton Youth Justice Service

At the time of the inspection the YJS had a resettlement policy in place, dated 2019, which introduced resettlement panels. This is updated as new evidence and insights emerge, and the policy and guidance were reviewed and updated for 2021/2022.<sup>18</sup>

The policy centres on the constructive use of resettlement support panels; these are well established and considered effective by staff and managers.

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<sup>18</sup> The policy has been further updated since the inspection, illustrating their commitment to continuous improvement.



**Victim liaison officer role** – the protection of victims is a critical strand of the resettlement policy, which has resulted in a victim liaison officer role within the YJS. The YJS victim liaison officer represents the views of the actual victims and is specifically tasked with undertaking work with children in custody, feeding into the resettlement plan and exploring opportunities for restorative approaches.



There is also a commitment to resettlement panels from all partners to support effective joint working. The child and parents/carers/family are central to the panel and there are representatives from a range of agencies, including the secure estate, YJS, police, accommodation providers, social care, mental health, special educational needs coordinator, Catch 22, education providers and community representatives. The policy, shared below, includes an embedded link to an overview of the resettlement support panels, inclusive of core membership. We were particularly impressed by these aspects of the policy:

**the secure estate** – each child is allocated a resettlement worker and there are weekly conversations between the YJS and the establishment. Information exchange with the secure establishment is timely. This YJS was inspected during the Covid-19 restrictions, and while time out of cells and direct work were limited, YJS workers attended establishments to deliver interventions. Where possible, and when restrictions were lifted, YJS workers attended establishments with partner agencies.

The management board has a designated member with oversight of the secure estate. They are routinely invited to the YJS resettlement panels. The HM YOI Werrington resettlement manager also attends the panels.

**Accommodation providers** – a priority of the panel is to address the accommodation needs of the child at the early stages of their sentence. In the case inspected, this resulted in accommodation being secured before the child's release.

**Social care** – The YJS has a local arrangement with children's social care to ensure that all children are released to suitable accommodation. If a child is a child in care or has leaving care status when in custody, then a member of the Children and Young People in Care Team is invited to the resettlement support panels to keep them up to date with the circumstances of the child in custody and their needs on release.



The panels recognise the importance of support from families/carers. This was evidenced in practice, for example YJS staff have taken parents, carers and siblings to visit children detained in the secure estate and facilitated video and telephone calls so that families can stay in touch.

In addition to resettlement support panels, the review developed a risk review process. The risk review indicates the primary risk factors for the child in custody and in the community, and also collates the views of the child, their carers, community and custody case managers and other professionals working with the child. This ensures that careful consideration is given to managing the child's safety and keeping other people safe.

The policy is also clear about routes of escalation, where case managers raise concerns, within the secure estate and social care. These are used proactively. For example, in the case inspected, the case manager raised concerns about the child's safeguarding and the

lack of access to meaningful interventions. These concerns were raised with the YOI's head of safeguarding and the Wolverhampton safeguarding lead. Key senior managers sent them formally to the YOI and the relevant safeguarding partnership in the area. The response highlighted the safeguarding measures in place and the interventions that would be provided. This was recorded by the resettlement support panels chaired by the service manager.



With thanks to Wolverhampton YJS for sharing its revised 2023- 2024 resettlement policy, which can be accessed [here](#).

### **Example of effectiveness:** well-established, effective processes to help children transition successfully from custody to the community, Thurrock Youth Justice Service

A resettlement group, led by the YJS, was set up in 2021 to formalise processes and structures, and to evidence the partnership's resettlement work. The resettlement policy was introduced in January 2022. It provides practical, evidence-based guidance, drawn from the YJB's advice, HM Inspectorate of Probation's recommendations and relevant YJS policies and procedures.



The YJS considers resettlement processes early in the custodial sentence. Provision is based on the child's needs rather than funding constraints. The policy and processes in place recognise the importance of the seven key resettlement pathways. There is an appropriate emphasis on accommodation and addressing barriers to securing a suitable release address for the child. The policy highlights the role of temporary release in effective resettlement.

Accommodation is rightly seen as the foundation stone for resettlement, and placements, once identified, can be held until release. Children who turn 18 years old during their sentence continue to be supported by YJS specialist practitioners until they can be seen by adult services. The YJS partnership also continues to work with children after the period covered by their licence.



Effective relationships between practitioners in the community and the secure estate have strengthened the quality of resettlement work. Examples include liaison between specialists in custody and those in the community, which has helped to identify both the work the child has completed and their future needs; the YJS careers adviser met with children before release to devise a training and employment action plan; and the gangs and exploitation worker met children when they were released to ensure that they arrived safely at their next address.



The YJS maintained effective contact with parents/carers, took account of their views in resettlement planning, and helped them to maintain or rebuild their relationship with their child. Additionally, Think Family supported families during the resettlement period. Some children were relocated to other boroughs on release, to keep them safe and maintain their wellbeing. In these instances, the YJS worked effectively with the police, the receiving YJS and children's social care to facilitate this move



For care leavers who stayed in the borough, Thurrock was involved in a pilot that provided them with 'wrap-around' support in living skills, such as budgeting, housekeeping, training and employment.

Given that the policy had only recently been signed off at the time of the inspection, the effectiveness of resettlement processes reflects the YJS's dedication, knowledge, skills, and relationships rather than the guidance in the documented resettlement strategy. However, the board provides effective governance for resettlement to implement the policy. The YJS and the board use data reviews and case and practice audits to assess the quality of resettlement provision. As a result of this, resettlement objectives have been included in the YJS's youth justice plan and a board resettlement sub-group has been created. Performance reports that provide a breakdown of diversity factors relating to children in custody prompted the board to request a deep dive investigation of these cases to understand the over-representation in custody of children who identify as black, Asian or minority ethnic. Children and their parents or carers are asked about the quality of their resettlement experience as part of the YJS's general feedback process.



There were multiple strengths within the policy, which, with thanks to Thurrock, can be accessed [here](#).



## Reflection questions

Reflecting on this section:

### From a strategic perspective:

- How far does resettlement work in your YJS align with the standards and expectations outlined?
  - If there are any areas where these are not aligned, what actions could you/your team take to address this?
  - Where they are aligned, how can you/your team ensure this practice is sustained?
- How do your policy and provision consider the demographics of children who are at risk of, or in, custody, and who is involved in designing and developing this?
- To what extent does your policy comprehensively consider children's protected characteristics?
- What structural barriers has your service identified in relation to the resettlement of children in your area, and how are these considered and mitigated for in the provision offered?
- On a scale from 1 to 10, how would you rate the quality of your partnership arrangements? (consider whether you have the right people involved, and whether services match the demographics and needs in your area)
  - Why did you give it this number?
  - Where appropriate, what actions can you and the team do to increase the score?
- What measures do you take to ensure the child's voice, alongside the views of parents/carers, are evident in resettlement policy, provision and individual plans?

- How do your strategic reviews of your resettlement policy, and practice, meaningfully involve children and families?
- How does the policy address the victim(s) needs on release?
- To what extent does your policy provide comprehensive guidance on the use of enforcement, alternatives to recall and recall?
- How are you assured that your team and partners have a consistent and shared understanding of resettlement practice?
- How do you ensure that policy and provision are informed by the latest theory about what is most effective with this cohort of children?
- How do you use your management information constructively to evaluate the service you provide and use comparator analysis with outcomes for community interventions and/or youth detention accommodation?
  - And do you segment the analysis across different demographics?

**From an operational perspective:**

- How do you understand the term 'resettlement'? What, if anything, would you do differently with a child in custody?
- Reflecting on resettlement practice in general:
  - what is effective about this work in your YJS and how can it be sustained?
  - what is ineffective in your area, and how can this be improved?
- At what point do you think about the resettlement of children you are working with who are in custody and why?
- What do you think impacts on the way a child in custody views their resettlement plan?
  - And how does this influence how you engage with them?
- How do you coordinate planning across the different agencies working with a child you are supporting through custody and back into the community?
- Thinking about the children you are working with who are in custody:
  - what barriers do they face in working towards a pro-social identity?
  - how do you discuss these with the child and their parents/carers?
  - how do you work with the child, their parents/carers and partners to mitigate these barriers?
- What theories, concepts and skills will help you to blend keeping the child safe with keeping others safe and approaches to desistance? How will/do you apply the blend in your practice?

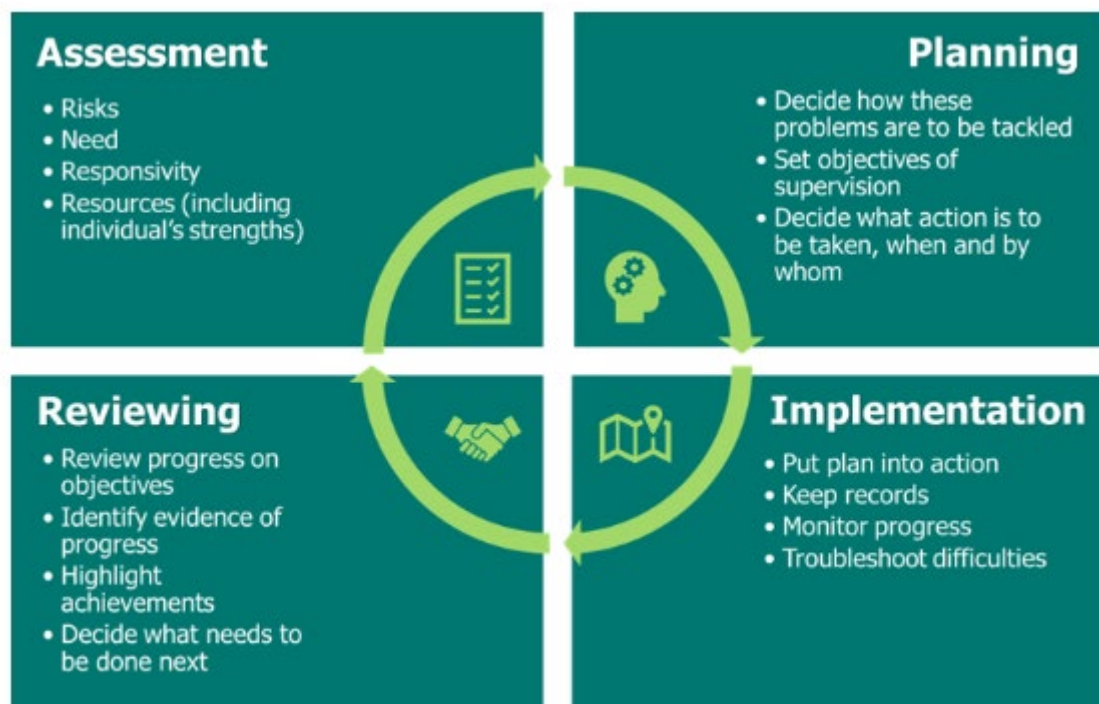


# HM Inspectorate of Probation's: case management standards

In our core inspections, we judge the quality of delivery in individual cases against the stages of the ASPIRE process:

- **A**ssessment
- **S**entence **P**lanning
- **I**mplementation
- **R**eview
- **E**valuate

As set out in figure 11, the process is cyclical, reflecting the research evidence that desistance is typically a gradual, non-linear and multi-dimensional process, and practitioners need to consider how relapses should be dealt with.



**Figure 11: ASPIRE model**



Children and families/carers and those who work in the sector highlight the importance of real collaboration and co-production for each stage of the ASPIRE process. Our standards cover each element of the model, with some useful prompts relating to how you can maximise effectiveness.

To be effective, ASPIRE should focus on keeping the child safe, supporting desistance and keeping other people safe.

Our standards include prompts under each theme to help practitioners consider what needs to be included to maximise effectiveness.



You can access posters of each set of prompts under each element of the ASPIRE model [here](#).



The YJB has produced case management guidance, with a section specifically for [custody and resettlement](#), although this is due to be updated. The guidance also includes the [pathways to resettlement](#).



In addition, the South West Yorkshire Resettlement Consortium Pathfinder Project has produced a [Constructive Resettlement Guidance](#) document (2021), which provides an overview of a child's resettlement journey and provides practitioners with advice and examples from each stage of the journey.

## In practice: case supervision

In this section, we share examples from the cases we inspected in our core inspection programme that demonstrated some of the key expectations from the standards shared, across case supervision.

### **Example of effectiveness:** providing an individualised plan for a child, with high aspirations for a positive outcome

Inspectors commented:

*"the practitioner's knowledge of the child was evident throughout the assessment, planning, implementation and review. The partners worked together with clearly defined roles and responsibilities and appeared invested in achieving positive outcomes for the child."*



#### Case illustration

Jaden had a lengthy history of previous convictions, including violence, possession of weapons, drugs and acquisitive offences. He received a Detention and Training Order for current offences of violence and possession of drugs, and he was subject to a criminal behaviour order (CBO) that excluded him from the area where his offending had been the most prolific. The CBO was based on a discussion at the youth risk and wellbeing panel, which clearly considered the presence or absence, and various combinations, of protective and risk factors for Jaden, the resources available to him, and what resources he could be helped to access.

A comprehensive assessment was completed, which drew on multiple sources, including social services, health care and adult probation (as Jaden turned 18). This assessment identified that Jaden had been excluded from mainstream and alternative education provision. This, alongside other concerns, led to a specialist assessment, and on entering custody, he was diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). There is also evidence that a functional behaviour assessment was undertaken before his release.

Jaden reached 18 years of age before his release on licence; however, the YJS decided to transfer him to probation gradually, given this diagnosis. This transition was supported throughout a period of two months. For example, a timetable of appointments for the first week after release was drawn up and agreed with Jaden before he was released. A face-to-face meeting with the named probation officer during the first week was included on the timetable, although the case was going to remain with the YJS for the first two months after custody.

There is regular communication between the YJS and the custodial facility and evidence of the YJS case manager attending review meetings and welfare meetings with Jaden throughout the custody period. The case manager proactively shares information with his mother and aunt and incorporates their views into the plan.

Plans to support Jaden's health and wellbeing were discussed at the resettlement planning meeting, which actively involved Jaden himself. During the meeting, Jaden requested therapy sessions, and the advocacy worker was tasked with exploring the options available to Jaden.

A single occupancy residential placement with 24-hour staff support was identified before Jaden was released. He was shown pictures of the placement prior to his release, and was able to choose his bedroom from four within the property. Arrangements were made for

him to be collected from custody by his aunt, who would also support his first appointment at the YJS. The YJS case manager then attended his initial appointment with probation with him the following day.

The assessment informed an education, health and care needs assessment, and, after consultation with an educational psychologist, arrangements were made for one-to-one tuition of 15 hours per week for Jaden on his release from custody. The tuition was arranged to be provided at his residential placement.

**Outcomes:** Jaden was released to the proposed address and there is evidence that the staff supported him to register with a GP.

He did not engage with the tuition arranged for him; however, he did secure employment, which was sustained for a short period of time after he was released.

A mentor was also arranged for him from a local football club, specifically to support education, training and employment (ETE) opportunities and additional constructive activities to occupy his time and help build a pro-social identity.

### **Example of effectiveness:** a strong partnership approach that supported an effective transition to adult services

Inspectors commented:

*"Extensive planning took place prior to sentence, whilst Harry was on remand, but also during the sentence. A substantial partnership approach was taken with an escalation from level 2 to level 3 MAPPA arrangements in order to identify appropriate accommodation provision, funding and resources to meet Harry's needs.*

*Contingency planning was clear at PSR stage and throughout the sentence, and although YJS remained the lead agency until Harry's release, he had an allocated probation practitioner to support transition."*



#### **Case illustration**

Harry received a lengthy custodial sentence for a violent offence, but, because he had already spent time in youth detention custody, he was released a few months into his sentence.

During his time on remand, Harry experienced a psychotic episode and was sectioned. A further psychiatric assessment was undertaken at the point of sentencing, which determined that inpatient treatment was not required. The YJS worker responded well to concerns about keeping him safe and the implication of keeping others safe, and referred him to MAPPA level 2, as a category 3 referral. At the point of sentence, mindful of his release date, the YJS worker escalated this referral to a level 3 panel to support decisions on funding for additional resources and decisions on resettlement needs.

The remand and sentence periods were used effectively; given Harry's age, a probation officer was allocated to his case, who informed the pre-sentence report recommendations. There was a high level of contact between Harry, the YOI, YJS, probation and his grandmother. Despite Covid-19, the YJS worker and probation officer visited Harry monthly in custody. During the joint visits, the practitioners explained the different options that they had sourced for accommodation after release, and that had been approved in a MAPPA meeting. They did this using flip chart to go through the range of options, which

were written in a simplified manner. This had been identified as the most effective communication method from a speech and language communication assessment, which identified concerns about speech and language and a lower cognitive functioning than would be expected at his age. Once they had clarified his understanding of the options, he was actively involved in discussions about the type of accommodation he would like to be released to. Upon agreeing to the right option to meet his current circumstances and needs, funding was obtained for a community placement with access to mental health treatment and keywork staff. Both possible accommodation providers visited Harry before his release to help him to select the best option for him.

The assessment clearly identified factors linked to keeping Harry and others safe, and this was followed through in the planning and delivery. For example, a clinical commissioning group was involved in discussions about transitional care from youth to adult services and custody back into the community, and the treatment plan developed was incorporated into the accommodation placement, illustrating good multi-agency work. Furthermore, an appropriate ETE option was identified. During discussions with Harry and all of the partners, it was agreed that he would begin this on his release, once he had opportunity to stabilise on his community treatment plan and in his accommodation and could be supported to attend the college.

External controls and licence conditions were also responsive to the identified risks. For example, concerns were raised about contact with Harry's ex-partner and son, who had moved out of the area. The practitioner sought additional information about the location, and appropriate liaison, joint assessment and planning took place with the local authority. This also explored supervised child contact arrangements.

**Outcomes:** Harry was released to the proposed address, and, while the Probation Service took the lead for the case at the point of release, there was a period of transition that included the YJS worker picking Harry up from prison and taking him to his placement.

A range of external controls, in the form of licence conditions, were imposed. These included a curfew, GPS tracker, appropriate accommodation and mental health treatment (engagement with a community psychiatric nurse and psychiatrist), with a view to stabilising the risk.

Sufficient contingencies were in place and included in the MAPPA minutes should the level of risk increase or decrease.

### **Example of effectiveness:** collaboration across multiple partners who shared a commitment to positive outcomes

Inspectors commented:

*"this case evidences good partnership working across the youth offending service, custodial services, probation, local authority and mental health services.*

*There were a number of strengths evidenced, including effective communication and a good level of professional curiosity around the suitability of the proposed release address, to ensure they would keep him safe, and good resettlement provision and transition."*



## Case illustration

Theo was sentenced to a Detention and Training Order for offences of violence and public order, which was part of an extensive history of violent offending.

At the point Theo entered custody information was shared with healthcare about his neurodiversity in a timely manner to ensure continuity of the prescribed medication that he was taking in the community. Due to a deterioration in Theo's mental health and concerns about the risk he posed to himself, he was placed on a specialist unit designed to support particularly vulnerable children. Theo was placed on an ACCT (Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork) and received weekly child and adolescent mental health service (CAMHS) sessions. The YJS CAMHS worker agreed to stay involved with Theo's case, on a voluntary basis, after release, until Theo could register with a GP and get support through a referral to adult mental health services, as he had turned 18.

Before entering custody, Theo was in a semi-independent placement out of the area, but he lost this when he was sentenced, as he said that he wanted to return to his home area. When discussing alternative accommodation options, Theo said he wanted to live with his mother or partner. These options were investigated regarding suitability, to safeguard him and others, and both addresses were deemed unsuitable.

Planning meetings were held in custody, which included the leaving care team, to explore alternative options. Theo's leaving care worker offered him an alternative accommodation package, with support. Once Theo was able to demonstrate his ability to sustain independent accommodation, he would be supported to secure his own independent tenancy. Theo declined this initially. Consequently, he was referred to MAPPA level 2 because of the concerns about risk and his lack of accommodation, although this was rejected.

The case illustrated evidence of joined-up working between the prison, YJS and integrated offender management (IOM), and there was evidence of contact with Theo's mum, who was also able to attend and contribute to some of the planning meetings in custody. The meetings focused on information-sharing, case progression, strengths, areas for development and planning for release.

Theo transitioned to the Probation Service on release. He had met his probation officer before release, who was from the IOM scheme, which Theo had agreed to engage with.

**Outcomes:** The probation practitioner arranged for a member of the IOM police to collect Theo from custody on the day of his release and support him with his accommodation needs. Theo initially contacted the local housing officer and said he was homeless, but at this point he changed his mind and the original resettlement accommodation package (as detailed above) offered was reinstated with the support of all of the partners.

## Example of effectiveness: balancing keeping the child and other people safe

Inspectors commented:

*"the case is well managed; I felt it had achieved a really good balance between managing safety and wellbeing and risk of harm to others. It was a complex case and there were significant risk concerns, but it was clear that the case manager was still trying to focus on the needs of the child alongside managing the risks."*

*The case manager engaged effectively with Mario and his mother throughout, and with wider family members, in considering suitable addresses for release. There is a good level of inter-agency working, with the case manager making referrals promptly and pursuing requested actions assertively."*



### Case illustration

Mario received a custodial sentence for serious violent offences, possession of weapons and possession of drugs. These offences occurred when he absconded from a local authority placement to visit a family member.

The assessment was comprehensive. There was evidence that it had drawn on multiple sources of information, including assessments in relation to cognitive functioning, in trying to analyse the risks and consider the most effective way of working with Mario. While Mario did not have any formal diagnoses, there had been an ongoing pursuit of formal assessments, because of his presentation and offending behaviour. A neuropsychological assessment had been completed, funded by social care. The assessment identified that trauma and associated developmental issues had impacted on Mario's cognitive functioning, resulting in behaviour that was uninhibited and unpredictable. The assessment had given practitioners a better understanding of Mario's behaviour. It made recommendations on the most effective approach to take with him.

The case manager advocated for these recommendations to be followed in custody, although one of the two custodial establishments he was detained in struggled to balance this with the risk Mario presented to staff and other children. Mario's behaviour in custody was particularly problematic, with numerous serious assaults against staff. There were also assaults against other young people in custody. Mario was also a victim of assaults.

The assessment concluded that Mario presented a high level of safety and wellbeing concern and posed a very high risk of harm and being harmed. There was a prompt referral to MAPPA and he was accepted at level 2.

The case manager maintained monthly contact with Mario's mother, and made appropriate contact with, and home visits to, extended family members, where appropriate, to support suitability assessments for Mario's resettlement plan. There was also clear evidence of his mum's involvement in the planning process and in discussions around licence conditions and concerns relating to safety and wellbeing and risk of harm. The strength of this relationship was evident when Mario's uncle contacted the case manager after visiting Mario in custody, to raise concerns about Mario's vulnerability, as he presented with bruises.

There was evidence of effective sharing of intelligence about Mario's ongoing contact with another young person in the community and regarding threats, as well as information on his use of violence in the custodial setting.

It was evident that post-release accommodation had been considered from the outset, which aligns with our standards. Initially, the intention was for Mario to return to live with his mother; however, the need for an exclusion requirement on the licence, to protect the victims, meant that this was no longer a suitable option. The case manager assessed another family member's address and appropriately considered this unsuitable. Attempts were made to refer Mario to homeless services; however, the multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) was not willing to accept the referral until closer to his release date. The risks associated with this were identified and flagged, especially of its negative effect on planning for other parts of Mario's resettlement. Other options were explored, and another family member came forward. Enquiries were made into their address, including



home visits and regular contact with family members, to ensure they were alert to possible risks and concerns and plans to support Mario; as a result, this address was assessed as suitable. The resettlement plan was for Mario to be released out of area; however, the YJS practitioner remained proactively involved, to ensure continuity of work and an effective handover. Early contact was made with the YJS in the area where Mario would live upon release, to share information. The case manager intended to retain ownership of the case, at least initially, to ensure consistent oversight of the concerns.

Throughout the custodial sentence, Mario engaged in education and completed GCSEs in maths and English. He expressed an interest in attending college; however, this was complicated by the risk he presented. The case manager explored appropriate 'stepping stone' alternatives with Mario, although, at the time of the inspection, he had not been willing to consider these. Despite this, she continued to pursue potential alternatives, as she felt that this was a gap in his resettlement plan. To support this, the case manager pursued the completion of an education, health and care needs assessment.

**Outcomes:** At the time of the inspection, Mario remained in custody, although there was evidence of a clear resettlement plan that covered his accommodation, education and wellbeing. Mario and his family had clearly been meaningfully involved in developing this.

**Example of effectiveness:** strong engagement with evidence of the child's voice in the resettlement plan.

Inspectors commented:

*"the casework was led by a case manager who evidently understood the child's needs, background and current circumstances really well. They responded to the child's specific needs, voicing and acting on child's and parents' worries at the point of custody, being proactive in contacting the child and family during custody, and engaging with other professionals, arranging for joint visits with these professionals to support the child's engagement with them. There was also evidence of responding effectively to secure alternative accommodation to support safety and setting up meaningful education, thus supporting an identity shift."*





## Case illustration

George was sentenced to a short DTO after he breached a youth rehabilitation order, which he received for violent offences, breach of a restraining order and driving matters.

The case manager attended court with George and shared information related to self-harm, to both the court staff and custody staff. This was conveyed verbally and through the written assessment documents. Consequently, the information was picked up by staff at custody reception, who prepared a healthcare response and arranged for George to be monitored as he entered custody. The case manager communicated this to George's parents, which gave them some level of assurance that their concerns had been taken seriously and acted on.

During George's custodial sentence, there was a proactive approach to preparing for his release, from the point of sentence, with a specific focus on keeping him safe, managing risk, and providing support with accommodation, education and health.

As part of the assessment, the case manager engaged with the exploitation team, social worker and police through exploitation forums and mapping exercises to understand George's exploitation further, so they could support safeguarding more effectively. This enabled the case manager and social worker to provide the custody placement with information on individuals of concern, due to George's vulnerability. This supported effective monitoring of communications and thus promoted effective safeguarding.

There was proactive communication with George, his family and partners. This was evidenced through monthly face-to-face visits to George in custody and calls between sessions, and telephone calls and face-to-face visits to his parents to support them during the custodial phase of his sentence and prepare each party for release. These meetings covered wellbeing, vulnerability and risk; for example, the case manager confirmed that a restraining order remained in place to protect the victim, and explained this in conversations with George and his family, so that they understood the controls in place as well as the support available.

The case manager accompanied the social worker and exploitation worker on visits to George to facilitate his engagement. This enabled George to feel more comfortable with sharing additional details about child sexual exploitation.

While George and his family were keen for him to return to the family home, there was a transparent discussion with all involved in his care about the risks he posed. The home environment was described as *challenging*, and a neighbour was known to exploit George. Consequently, an alternative offer was identified by the case manager and the social worker. This was declined by George and his family, although it did allow for discussion about how they could support George and his family to manage the concerns. This was undertaken through a series of visits to the family home to discuss safety planning and contingency.

George's education, health and care plan was forwarded to the custodial unit and integrated into his sentence plan. While George was in custody, he engaged with construction-related education, as he identified this as his long-term career plan. He successfully completed a CSCS qualification, and the case manager explored options to continue this type of course on his release. They proactively engaged with a provider, and a placement on a construction course was secured for his release. George attended the induction and continued to engage with the course.

In custody, George received substance misuse provision, which he was able to continue through the YJS on his release. This identified that some additional work was needed, and George was referred to CAMHS; however, he declined this support.

**Noted outcomes:** George was released with additional conditions of intensive supervision and surveillance programme and curfew and participated in established education provision. He went missing at one stage; however, appropriate enforcement measures were applied to manage his safety and the risk presented. To his credit, he then re-engaged with the remainder of his licence period. He recognised his ongoing needs, so he continued to engage with support on a voluntary basis once his licence was complete, when the support was offered.

## Key takeaways from the case illustrations

Effective resettlement case supervision requires:



The meaningful involvement of children and their families/carers.



A blended focus on desistance and on keeping the child and other people safe. Understanding and responding to the safety concerns that a child faces, and that they themselves may pose, does not in any way undermine the constructive and nurturing work that should be undertaken with children to foster their positive development.



A holistic response tailored to the specific needs of the individual young person. This needs to include a tailored approach for girls, who often have different needs.



Work to transition children from any secure setting, including an SCH, STC or YOI, youth detention accommodation or hospital order, to begin at the point of sentence.



Work undertaken in custody to be linked to the needs of individual children.



Joint working between organisations with strong communication and mutually understood goals.



Provision to be available in the community at the point of release from custody, particularly accommodation, but also ETE and healthcare, to promote continuity of care.



### Reflection questions

Reflecting on this section:

#### From an operational perspective:

- How do you feel when you read the case illustrations? Interested? Enthusiastic to apply to your own cases? Curious? Indifferent? And why do you feel this way?
- In what ways do you consider and implement some of the themes seen in the case illustrations in your own practice?

- What theories, concepts and skills are you aware of that help you to understand an individual's identity?
  - How do you apply these theories in your practice?
- How do you ensure you understand what can strengthen a child's pro-social identity and what can draw them back to their old identity, from their current perspective?
- How has your practice developed to improve outcomes for children in custody as a result of your understanding of their diversity needs?
  - How do you know?
  - What evidence of impact do you have?
  - What does this tell you about your practice?
  - And what implications does this have?
- What challenges have you faced in your resettlement practice?
  - How would you tackle these challenges with the knowledge you have gained from your experience and reflections?
- Think of an example of a child you worked with who was able to smoothly transition into the community:
  - What factors made this successful?
  - How did you and the partnership contribute to this?
  - What lessons can/did you take from this for your future practice?

# What does the evidence say? The building blocks of effective resettlement

## Summary of the evidence base around resettlement

- Constructive resettlement focuses on three core elements:
  - **constructive casework** to balance personal and structural support
  - implementing a **5Cs** approach, so that support is constructive, co-created, customised, consistent, and coordinated
  - **identity awareness** to ensure practitioners remain consistently aware of messages from the child about their identity and the messages they give the child.
- Resettlement involves a multi-agency response, requiring strong communication and mutually understood goals across agencies, most importantly the YJS and the custodial establishment, and adult probation services for those experiencing transition.
- Resettlement works best when it is a holistic response tailored to the needs of the individual child, and accounts for their protected characteristics.
- Release on temporary licence (ROTL) or mobility is a key tool to help children participate in their own resettlement before release, through viewing accommodation and education provision, and seeing family.
- The physical make-up of the custodial estate has become a barrier to better resettlement, as children are often detained in fewer, larger facilities far from home, making communication, attendance at meetings, ROTL, and family visits that much harder. This is even more pronounced for girls.
- Provision for children must be available in the community at the point of release from custody, particularly accommodation, ETE and health services.
- Resettlement must be an active consideration from the start of the custodial sentence or point of youth detention accommodation, based on the child's circumstances. This is most effective when it continues for the entirety of the sentence, taking account of any and all changes.



## Constructive resettlement

Constructive resettlement draws on the research from '*Now all I care about is my future: supporting the shift*' (Beyond Youth Custody, 2017)<sup>19</sup> and *How to make resettlement constructive* (Youth Justice Board, 2018),<sup>20</sup> and seeks to operationalise the approach.

Constructive resettlement has three core elements: constructive casework, the 5Cs and identity awareness.



**Constructive casework** recognises the importance of practitioners providing individualised and personal support to enable the child to develop a pro-social identity. It looks at personal and structural support.

The personal support element focuses on four key questions:

- What is the child's identity, and what elements of it allow offending?
- What are the child's strengths, interests and goals that can inform a pro-social identity?
- What vision does a child have for their future self and what are the possibilities?
- What are the routes to that pro-social self?

Structural support is:

*Linked to the seven pathways to reducing reoffending, underpinned by personal support and led by the answers to the four key questions (above).*



**The 5Cs** – five characteristics of effective support: constructive, co-created, customised, consistent and coordinated, as illustrated in the section related to engagement.



**Constructive:** builds on the child's strengths by being future-orientated and empowering.

**Co-created:** enables the intervention to be meaningful and productive for the child.

**Customised:** recognises barriers to change and responds to individual needs and diversity.

**Consistent:** is an essential element if a positive working relationship is to be developed and sustained.

**Coordinated:** connects learning across all aspects of supervision and community integration.

**Figure 12: The 5Cs of constructive resettlement**

<sup>19</sup> Beyond Youth Custody, (2017) '*Now all I care about is my future: supporting the shift*'. Available at [beyonduyouthcustody.net](https://beyonduyouthcustody.net). (Accessed 05 October 2022)

<sup>20</sup> Youth Justice Board, (2018). *How to make resettlement constructive*. London: Youth Justice Board. Available at <https://yjresourcehub.uk/yjb-effective-practice/youth-justice-kits/item/610-how-to-make-resettlement-constructive-yjb-document.html?platform=hootsuite> (Accessed 28 January 2019).

Offering support in this manner will serve to empower the child to make positive choices about their future identity.



The London Resettlement Partnership has created this 3:28 minute YouTube video explaining the 5Cs: [The 5Cs of constructive resettlement](#)



**Identity awareness** – thinking about the messages a child gives you about their identity and what messages you give them in every interaction.

Be curious about how the child sees themselves as an individual and within the context of their world (for example, their friends, family, and local community).

Consider how your interactions as a practitioner underline or undermine the development of their pro-social identity.

The approach also explores three main identity building blocks to be considered in practice (Hazel et al, 2020)<sup>21</sup>:

**A – Activities** that allow children to explore a more positive identity

**I – Interactions** that foster and affirm positive identity

**R – Roles**, either activity-related or personal, that can reinforce a positive identity



The London Resettlement Partnership has created a web resource about constructive resettlement for people working with children in the youth justice system, which can be accessed here: [Homepage - Constructive Resettlement](#)

This resource includes videos from Professor Neal Hazel, summarising the theory; videos of the core concepts; practical resources and toolkits; real stories; and frequently asked questions – all of which will be added to as the theory is practically applied.

The YJB has published revised guidance on case management, although the 'custody and resettlement' section is currently under review. Once published, it is likely to draw from constructive resettlement, which the YJS has adopted, because:

***It's theory of change, championing it as a new, actionable approach for the sector, with a clear, united focus.***



<sup>21</sup> Hazel N, Drummond C, Welsh M and Joseph K (2020). Using an identity lens: Constructive working with children in the criminal justice system. London: Nacro

## Engagement

Meaningfully involve children and their parents or carers in assessments, resettlement planning, implementation and reviewing their progress, to ensure their views are listened to and proactively addressed.

Constructive resettlement promotes the use of the five Cs approach to support. It stands to reason that, when children are actively involved and can see their views and aspirations taken into account, their motivation to engage will be strengthened. This is because they are able to recognise the benefits to themselves, and they trust the staff helping them, as they can see the personalised approach (Beyond Youth Custody, 2013).<sup>22</sup>

Flexibility is also important to children. A flexible approach works with their interests and personality, reinforcing the co-created element of constructive resettlement, rather than attempting to make the child fit into a standardised service. This strengthens the child's engagement and commitment to their own resettlement.

Since many children leaving custody have had very chaotic lives, it is important to provide a stable and reliable service, with trusting relationships between individuals.



This is emphasised in a 1:14 minute YouTube video produced by HM Prison and Probation Service in 2018, entitled [Youth Custody Service – Building relationships](#)

Procedural justice is a useful framework to help practitioners build effective working relationships with children. According to procedural justice theory, if children feel they are treated in a procedurally fair and just way, starting from the very first contact, they will view those in authority as more legitimate and respect them more. They are then more likely to comply and engage, even when the outcomes of the decisions or processes are unfavourable or inconvenient. This avoids feelings of resentment.



You can read more about the four key principles of procedural justice in our Academic Insights article: [Exploring procedural justice and problem-solving practice in the Youth Court](#).

## Education

The Taylor Review<sup>23</sup> of the youth justice system, in 2016, noted that the route to a better life for children who offend lies in education and training. It concluded that closer relationships were needed between schools, colleges and YJSs, and that youth custody needed to be transformed into secure schools.

The Ministry of Justice (2014)<sup>24</sup> emphasised ETE in the resettlement context in its aims for YOIs and YJSs:

*'Preparing a young person to continue in education, training or employment in advance of a child's release from custody, it is vital that a place in education, training or employment is secured and begins on their first day back in the community ... We*

<sup>22</sup> Beyond Youth custody, (2013). *Resettlement of young people leaving custody: Lessons from the literature*. Available at <http://www.beyondyouthcustody.net/resources/publications/lessons-from-the-literature/>

<sup>23</sup> Taylor, C. (2016). Review of the Youth Justice System in England and Wales. London: Ministry of Justice. Available at: [Review of the Youth Justice System \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

<sup>24</sup> Ministry of Justice. (2014). Transforming Youth Custody: Government Response to the Consultation. Available at: [Transforming youth custody: Government response to the consultation CM 8792 \(ioe.ac.uk\)](#)



*will also work closely with YOTs to form the partnerships with education providers, local authorities and employers in the community to facilitate appropriate post-release placements and support. This latter role is especially important in relation to children with an EHC Plan’.*

*‘The YJB promotes a constructive, strengths-led, child-first approach in its standards for children in the youth justice system, which were first published in 2019. Promoting ETE opportunities to children supervised by YOTs is consistent with this child-first approach.*

Furthermore, chapter 10 of the 2015 special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years, which relates to children and young people in specific circumstances, provides a clear summary of statutory requirements.



Accessible via [SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25-years)

YJSs and those in charge of the relevant youth accommodation must cooperate with the local authority to ensure that these duties can be fulfilled, and must have regard to this Code of Practice.

In summary:



Education should be represented in YJS management boards to give this area the priority it needs.



Educational planning needs to start at the earliest point possible



Practitioners must be tenacious in advocating for the child, especially where different local authorities are involved between sentence and release, pursuing appropriate escalation routes, where appropriate.



Being in a secure setting should not preclude any child from accessing education.



Practitioners should advocate to prevent children from being off-rolled while they are in custody. Ofsted defines this as:

*‘...the practice of removing a pupil from the school roll without a formal, permanent exclusion or by encouraging a parent to remove their child from the school roll, when the removal is primarily in the interests of the school rather than in the best interests of the pupil’ (Ofsted, 2019).*



Ofsted covers this in its [school inspection handbook](https://www.ofsted.gov.uk/school-inspection-handbook).



Educational provision should be available so that children do not have to wait for a new term to recommence their studies, or have to stop their studies at the end of a term.



Custodial staff should be trained in special educational needs, disabilities and neurodiversity.

### For example:

Theo was remanded into youth detention accommodation and was then sentenced to custody.

The assessment indicated that he had a lengthy history of not being in education or employment, and the reasons for this were explored with Theo and his family. This led to a speech and language assessment through the YJS, which clearly identified speech, language and communication needs. The outcome of this was shared among all of those working with Theo, so that the strategies identified could be used to maximise his engagement. This enabled Theo to access some of the education available in custody.

It was established that Theo was subject to an education, health and care plan; however, his plan was not current, which resulted in some challenges in accessing opportunities for his release. Theo's keyworkers were tenacious in advocating on his behalf to promote equity of access, so he had the same opportunities as other children. As a result, the YJS ETE worker was able to support those working with Theo to access additional funding for a tutor to support him in his education when he was released.

### For example:

Plans for Yasir's resettlement began at the point of sentence to the Detention and Training Order. Alongside work to address his offending behaviour, Yasir's practitioner helped him to develop a vocational plan for his future. The plans were reviewed at specific milestones throughout his sentence and with a greater focus in the months before he was released.

Arrangements were made for him to complete a barista qualification. Yasir was motivated to comply, as he was fully engaged in the plan, which his family supported. In addition, the strength of the partnership work, evidenced throughout his sentence, indicated that he knew he would be supported in the face of any concerns. For example, when he had raised concerns about issues previously, they had been swiftly communicated across all the agencies working to support him and addressed.

### Interventions in custody

All activities in a secure setting should have a view to the child's release and resettlement. Relationships between the child and the YJS worker need to be fostered during the child's detention so that there is an element of trust at the point of release. This will also encourage the child to comply with the appropriate interventions.

Planning and intervention, particularly the identification of accommodation, should be prioritised early in the custodial portion of the child's sentence (YJB, 2018).<sup>25</sup> Planning should, from the point of entry or even earlier, be conducted with a focus on resettlement (YJB, 2012)<sup>26</sup> and on what needs to

<sup>25</sup> Youth Justice Board, (2018). *Youth Justice Resettlement Consortia: A process evaluation - Final Report*. London: Youth Justice Board. Available at [www.gov.uk/government/publications/youth-justice-resettlement-consortia-a-process-evaluation](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/youth-justice-resettlement-consortia-a-process-evaluation)

<sup>26</sup> Youth Justice Board, (2012). *Resettlement in England and Wales: Key Policy and Practice Messages from Research*. London: Youth Justice Board. Available at [https://yjresourcehub.uk/yjb-effective-practice/youth-](https://yjresourcehub.uk/yjb-effective-practice/youth-justice-resettlement)

change to reduce the risk of reoffending when they are released (Beyond Youth Custody, 2013).<sup>27</sup>

Planning should take a long-term approach rather than simply laying out what programmes the child will undertake in custody and how their behaviour should be managed (Beyond Youth Custody, 2013).<sup>27</sup> As was stated in the 2012 evaluation of resettlement schemes (YJB, 2012):<sup>28</sup>

*"...management of custody is less about detention and more about working towards what happens on release."*

Establishments also need to facilitate maximum access to children in custody for community agencies, providing both time and facilities for resettlement work.

### Partnership working

Resettlement is a multi-disciplinary activity and requires multiple agencies to work together to address the needs of the child being resettled.

While the most important partnership is between the YJS and the custodial establishment, and good communication between these two partners is critical to successful resettlement (YJB, 2012),<sup>29</sup> all partners are significant. Children who sustain the shift to a more pro-social identity are frequently those who have been supported by multiple agencies, working in close partnership, with effective information-sharing agreements.

**As a group or on your own:** Think about a problem you are currently facing, or maybe one you have addressed in the past. This could be anything from work, such as how to complete a referral form or interpret some data, or something personal, such as suffering from the flu or how to get somewhere during the train strikes.



As you think through that problem, consider:

- How did you identify the problem?
- Who would/did you speak to?
- How did they help/could they help?
- How might you approach things differently in the future as a result?

[justice-kits/item/562-resettlement-in-england-and-wales-key-policy-and-practice-messages-from-research-2012.html](https://www.beyondyouthcustody.net/resources/publications/lessons-from-the-literature/justice-kits/item/562-resettlement-in-england-and-wales-key-policy-and-practice-messages-from-research-2012.html)

<sup>27</sup> Beyond Youth custody, (2013). *Resettlement of young people leaving custody: Lessons from the literature*. Available at <http://www.beyondyouthcustody.net/resources/publications/lessons-from-the-literature/>

<sup>28</sup> Youth Justice Board, (2012). *Resettlement in England and Wales: Key Policy and Practice Messages from Research*. London: Youth Justice Board. Available at <https://yjresourcehub.uk/yjb-effective-practice/youth-justice-kits/item/562-resettlement-in-england-and-wales-key-policy-and-practice-messages-from-research-2012.html>

<sup>29</sup> Youth Justice Board. (2012). *Resettlement in England and Wales: Key Policy and Practice Messages from Research*. London: Youth Justice Board. Available at <https://yjresourcehub.uk/yjb-effective-practice/youth-justice-kits/item/562-resettlement-in-england-and-wales-key-policy-and-practice-messages-from-research-2012.html> (Accessed 28 January 2019).

Now imagine having to deal with that same issue, but having to solve it on your own, without the support of any friends/family, colleagues or experts in the area.

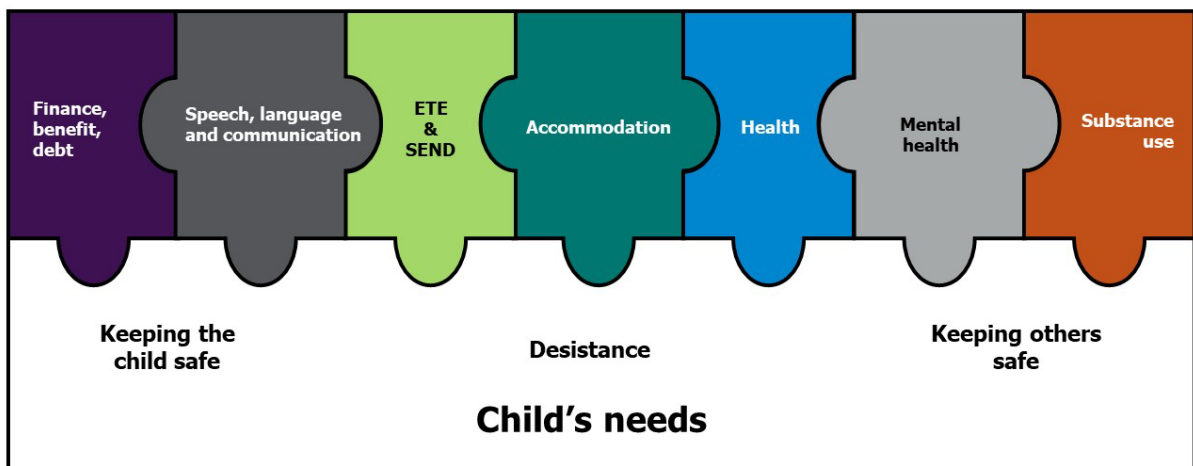
Consider:

- How different might the outcome be?
- How might you feel as a result?
- What are the benefits that others can bring in overcoming issues?

This exercise illustrates the benefits of collaborating to support positive progress towards your goals.

In our standards, case management requires practitioners to take a holistic and personalised approach. Partnership work will undoubtedly support a holistic approach, and the use of a range of services enables work to be more individually tailored. Multi-agency work provides a more comprehensive understanding of an individual and their circumstances, as multiple perspectives are feeding into the supervision process. Building this understanding also means that interventions and strategies to keep the child and others safe will be more tailored to the individual.

Collaborating with partners is crucial in focusing on securing services to meet the child's needs, as shown below. This will allow you to address a wide range of complex needs, and bolster positive and protective factors for long-term change.



**Figure 13: Areas of needs**

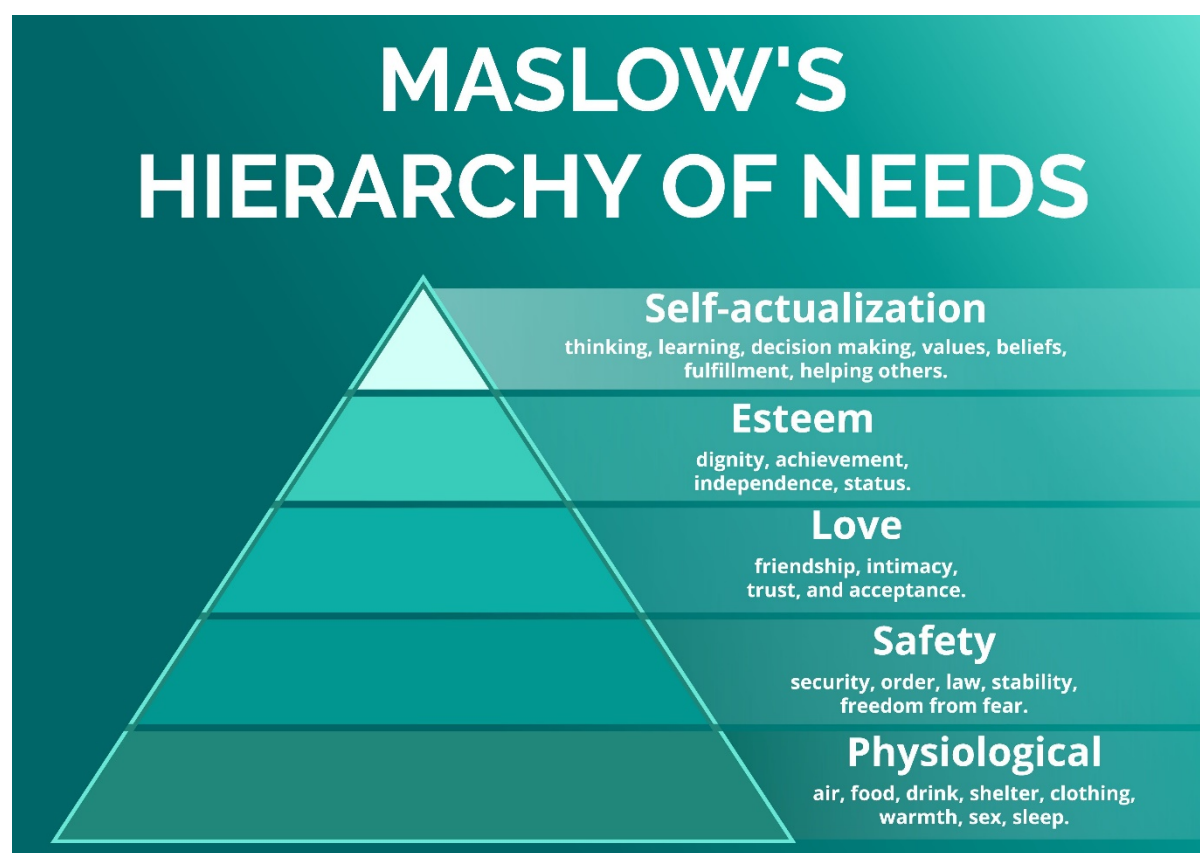


Effective multi-agency work benefits from pursuing these [key principles](#).



Appropriate, suitable accommodation is integral to successful resettlement. As illustrated in Maslow's hierarchy of needs below, shelter is one of the basic human needs; consequently, it is critical to successful resettlement.

Conversely, it is also one of the areas that can be the most problematic, as evidenced in the evaluation of the resettlement consortia, which found that gaps in accommodation provision were an issue (YJB, 2018).<sup>30</sup>



**Figure 14: Maslow's hierarchy of needs**

It is positive that the aggregated data from the core inspection programme indicated that no child has been released homeless; however, it remains of concern that, in 19 per cent of cases inspected, there was no evidence of sufficient planning for release, especially when considering the multiple needs of children in custody.

If children do not know where they are going to live when they are released, this can, understandably, cause stress and anxiety and make it hard to plan access to other services.

Conversely, we have seen some evidence of innovative and creative practice to ensure that children's accommodation needs are settled. The section on organisational delivery provides some detail about these examples across the YJS, which were rated 'Outstanding' for resettlement.

<sup>30</sup> Youth Justice Board, (2018b). *Youth Justice Resettlement Consortia: A process evaluation - Final Report*. London: Youth Justice Board. Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/youth-justice-resettlement-consortia-a-process-evaluation>

## Below we offer some summary examples:

**Hammersmith and Fulham** – The team accesses accommodation through the edge of care team, via Centrepont. The YJS also has access to a resource panel for accommodation. This has been used to spot-purchase beds for specific needs, as required by the child's assessment, and to secure funds to place a retainer on accommodation during any short periods in custody/on remand.

**Bolton** – Discussions on, and planning for, accommodation on release start early, sometimes at the pre-sentence report stage.

**York** - The YJS has a service-level agreement in place with the main young people's accommodation hostel in the city (Howe Hill Hostel for Young People, which operates in line with the 'child and youth care joint protocol for the assessment of housing and support needs of homeless or likely to become homeless 16- and 17- year-olds'.

The YJS makes a financial contribution to two youth homeless workers, who speak directly to the child in custody, their parents or carers, and identify the child's wishes and potential accommodation options.

Financial payments can also be made to retain placements for children who are in settled residential homes.

The housing department of the local authority is currently trying to recruit foster care placements for children on release from custody. This will be an extension of the foster care PACE and remand placement, a valued service for the YJS.

### Release on temporary licence/mobility

ROTL)/mobility<sup>31</sup> are integral to preparation for release into the community (HM Inspectorate of Probation, 2015)<sup>32</sup> and greater use of them is encouraged (YJB, 2012).<sup>33</sup> These can be used successfully in the community when deployed purposely and imaginatively towards resettlement, such as allowing the child to view accommodation before they are released, attend ETE providers, and see family and maintain connections in the community (YJB, 2018).<sup>34</sup> The YJB found that, to improve the

use of ROTL, establishments needed to be less risk-averse and recognise the potential benefits. They should also speed up the processing of ROTL requests to benefit those on shorter sentences.

Linking back to the importance of strengthening a child's pro-social identity, where assessed as appropriate, ROTL/mobility could be used to cover a range of things, including:

<sup>31</sup> Release on temporary licence refers to the temporary release from the YOI estate and mobility from SCHs and STCs.

<sup>32</sup> HM Inspectorate of Probation, Care Quality Commission and Ofsted, (2015). *Joint thematic inspection of resettlement services to children by Youth Offending Teams and partner agencies*. Manchester: HM Inspectorate of Probation. Available at <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation/inspections/youthresettlementthematic/>

<sup>33</sup> Youth Justice Board, (2012). *Resettlement in England and Wales: Key Policy and Practice Messages from Research*. London: Youth Justice Board. Available at <https://yjresourcehub.uk/yjb-effective-practice/youth-justice-kits/item/562-resettlement-in-england-and-wales-key-policy-and-practice-messages-from-research-2012.html>

<sup>34</sup> Youth Justice Board, (2018b). *Youth Justice Resettlement Consortia: A process evaluation - Final Report*. London: Youth Justice Board. Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/youth-justice-resettlement-consortia-a-process-evaluation>





Maintaining family ties, family occasions, marriages, christening, bereavement, funerals and for urgent domestic or family need.



To explore ETE opportunities, including visits to education provision and job interviews.



To address their accommodation needs, potentially for an interview for accommodation or overnight resettlement at a unit, or to explore a new area the child will be going to.



In relation to health for medical or dental appointments, or as a patient in hospital.



To promote links to new roles/increased social capital, for example by attending a religious service, adventure training, or external team sports.



Educational provision should be available so that children do not have to wait for a new term to recommence their studies, or have to stop their studies at the end of a term.



Pre-parole release to make links within the community. To make links to the Probation Service, for those transitioning.

Given that we implemented the resettlement standard in July 2021, and much of the secure estate has been in Covid-19 recovery, we have not seen the use of ROTL or mobility in the cases we have inspected to date.

### Transition to adult services

Young adults<sup>35</sup> often face multiple other harms, such as poverty and socio-economic disadvantage, and racial discrimination in the criminal justice system, such as racial stereotyping, increased punitiveness and adultification. Young women are often under-assessed as being subject to criminal and/or sexual exploitation. Many of these harms are intersectional in nature and can be a result of age, gender, ethnic background, disability and other factors that require a personalised approach.

Therefore, transitions between youth and adult services present a particular series of risks:

- transitions occur at a period of peak offending (at age 18)
- transitions can risk breaking up supportive and trusting relationships with case managers from YJSs, which have sometimes been built up over years, to be replaced with relationships with more distant and stricter case managers from probation
- transitions between youth and adult probation services can coincide with other transitions away from youth services that might also be supporting the young person, such as movement out of children's homes, out from children's social services and, at around the same time, out of college education
- transition to adult services may see service provision withdrawn, as the young adult may not reach the threshold for intervention required for adults

<sup>35</sup> The term young adult is used in this section to recognise that we are referring to children who have turned 18 years of age.

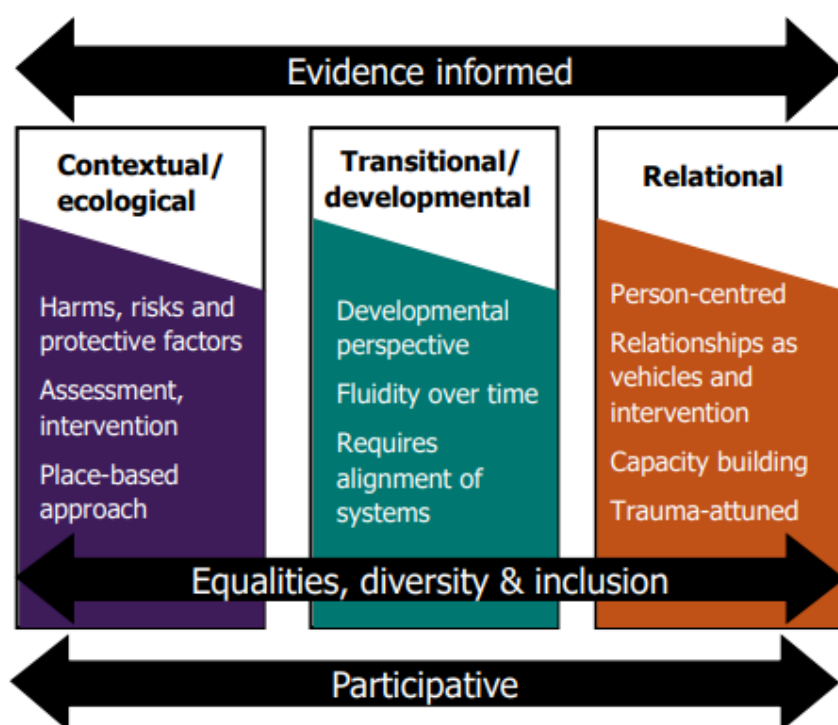


- Price<sup>36</sup> (2020) found that the young adult estate was only really set up to work with probation and often required a probation-created OASys assessment before it could assign a young adult to programmes. If the young adult was retained by the YJS but transitioned by custody, or if probation services were slow to pick up the case, then the young adult could end up in a kind of limbo, unable to start work on necessary programmes or to progress through their sentence
- there are pressures of being considered an adult, rather than a child, with an insistence that the young adult seize the initiative and provide for themselves, potentially adding to the stresses.

As Holmes and Smith (2022)<sup>37</sup> say:

*'Put simply, the current approach of ceasing children's safeguarding support at 18, only for many young people to go on to develop needs which may eventually qualify them for a safeguarding response as an adult, is remarkably poor value for money.'*

They argue that the factors that affect the safety of young people can be addressed by adopting a transitional safeguarding approach. This is a holistic framework with six core principles – being evidence-informed, ecological, developmentally-attuned, relational, equalities-orientated and participative, as illustrated in figure 15. It is designed to be flexible and to allow providers to work with these principles in the context of their local circumstances.



**Figure 15: Six core principles of the transitional safeguarding holistic framework**

<sup>36</sup> Price, J. (2020). 'The experience of young people transitioning between youth offending services to probation services'. *Probation Journal*. 67(3). pp. 246-263.

<sup>37</sup> Holmes, D and Smith, L. (2022). Transitional safeguarding, HM Inspectorate of Probation Academic Insights 2022/03. Available at: [Transitional safeguarding \(justiceinspectorates.gov.uk\)](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/transitional-safeguarding/) (Accessed: 07 October 2022).

To protect young people as they transition from adolescence to adulthood, and from youth justice services to adult justice services, commissioners should be encouraging agencies to provide more fluid services across the transitional age range or, at the very least, encouraging closer collaboration between adult and youth services (Holmes and Smith, 2022).<sup>37</sup>



You can read more about [Transitional safeguarding](#) in this Academic Insights paper written by Dez Holmes and Lisa Smith (2022) for HM Inspectorate of Probation.

While transition, both bureaucratically and developmentally, can be fraught with risks and the potential for failure, it is also the period when most young people desist from criminal activity. With appropriate support, young people who are already in the process of redefining themselves can be helped to forge a new, non-criminal identity and to move towards emotional and psychosocial maturation (Emerging Adult Justice Learning Community, 2021).<sup>38</sup>

Consequently, according to Brewer (2020),<sup>39</sup> a well-conducted transition can be beneficial to a young person by:

- helping them to desist by changing their identity
- disavowing their behaviour as a child
- accepting a new, more mature attitude as an adult.

Therefore, it is positive that the case examples in the previous section highlight effective practice in this area, and we have seen positive strategies to support transitions.

#### For example:

- A probation practitioner spent time in the YJS and probation office, bridging any gaps between the services. There was evidence in the inspected cases of the effectiveness of this role. Joint visits built on and used information known to the YJS, for example using strategies from the speech and language therapy (SaLT) assessment to inform engagement with the young person.
- Planning provisions and interventions, such as mentoring, can remain in place after transition to the community and adult services. These mentors can then effectively act as a bridge to these new services.
- Ongoing three-way meetings and a clear step down process to support the transition to adult services, agreed by all, can be offered to the young person when they transfer.
- The 5Cs approach can be used with the young person to make an informed decision about the requirement to transition, or not, where appropriate.

<sup>38</sup> Emerging Adult Justice Learning Community (2021). *A Roadmap to Reform: Key Elements of Specialized Probation for Emerging Adults*. New York: Justice Lab at Columbia University. Available at: <https://t2a.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Key-Elements-of-Specialized-Probation-for-Emerging-Adults.pdf> (Accessed on 25 August 2022).

<sup>39</sup> Brewster, D. (2020). 'Not Wired Up? The Neuroscientific Turn in Youth to Adult Transitions Policy', *Youth Justice*. 20(3), pp. 215-234.

## Transition from custody to community

Continuous service delivery between custody and community is important, both because this is the intent of the detention and training order that most children have received, and also because it provides the best chance for successful resettlement (Beyond Youth Custody, 2015).<sup>40</sup> Interventions and programmes that begin in custody should continue in the community.

**As a group or on your own:** Consider your general morning routine. Think about what you do from the moment you open your eyes.

Do you wake up to an alarm you have set the evening before? Do you plan in multiple alarms, knowing you like the snooze button? Do you awake immediately?



Now think about how you may get ready for the day ahead. What things are part of your routine? What products do you use? Are these unique to you (maybe a specific shampoo or moisturiser) or do you just use what is there? Do you have a specific brand of toothpaste or toilet roll? A special brush – and if you cannot find it, you just don't feel like you?

Are you a morning scroller on your phone? Do you reach out to send a morning text to someone?

Do you eat breakfast? Is there something specific to you that starts your day right – maybe a food, maybe a brand of coffee?

Think through all of these little details, which are unique to you and your household.

Now imagine what it would be like if all of your choices were removed, and your routine was dictated to you, and you cannot choose the products and brands you normally use:

- How would you feel if these were removed?
- How might this alter your day?
- How might this make you feel about your identity?

Now consider how it might be to get into that new routine over a significant period of time, say three months or a year. This becomes your routine, and you get familiar with this new imposed structure to your day.

Then you are suddenly given back all of the choices and you have the freedom again in how you shape your day, what products you use. Only maybe these things may have changed, even if only slightly – instead of talking about Facebook or Instagram to connect to people, people are talking about TikTok and BeReal, or maybe they have stopped making your favourite conditioner.

- How might you feel to suddenly get the choice and freedom back?
- How might this impact on your day?
- How might this make you feel about your identity?

This exercise illustrates that the transition to custody and from custody can be experienced in the same way, and for some will create feelings of stress and anxiety and may be experienced as traumatic. This may well be exacerbated by the multiple needs of children in custody, especially if they do not have clarity about where they will be going and whether it will feel safe for them.

<sup>40</sup> Beyond Youth custody, (2015). *Effective Resettlement of young people: Lessons from Beyond Youth Custody*. Available at <http://www.beyondyouthcustody.net/resources/publications/lessons-from-the-literature/>

Children can be disorientated by the move away from a very structured routine and will have to re-establish relationships with those in the community. Reoffending and breach are most common in the critical period just after release, and it is important to increase the amount of contact with family and other significant adults in the weeks leading up to release, to provide additional support.

It is important that the child has a clear schedule of community supervision at the point of release. The child should be met at the gate by someone they know and trust, and this person should know the resettlement plans and also any obligations placed on the child.

The child should be released at a time and date that allows them to access a wide range of services on the day of release (e.g. not Friday afternoon).

### Resettlement consortia

The YJB piloted resettlement consortia in 2019.<sup>41</sup> The consortiums are a group of cross-sector organisations across different local authority areas that work collaboratively to improve outcomes for children leaving custody. They are intended to develop and sustain positive links across a range of partners.

The evaluations of the YJS consortia in 2012 and 2018 both show that consortia work best where they are closely packed, typically in urban environments such as London and Greater Manchester. Here, local authorities can share resources and will be dealing with fewer custodial establishments.

The interim report on the South and West Yorkshire Resettlement Consortium (Keele University, 2021),<sup>42</sup> which is based on perspectives from practice concluded:

*Implementing a new approach to working with children on release from custody is always going to be a significant challenge. Once the additional complication of Covid-19 has been added to the mix, the barriers facing consortium staff and partners have been huge. However, despite this some important progress has been made. The majority of YOT staff have received Phase 1 of the training. Some strategic leads, operational managers and partners have also attended the training. This has been reflected in some important strategic changes. A number of recommendations have been made for the South and West Yorkshire Consortium to consider for the remainder of the pathfinder. Some are also of relevance for national partners and other local areas seeking to implement a CR approach.*



A summary of the recommendations, specific to this consortium, is contained in the report. These have been extracted from the report and can be accessed [here](#).

Notably, the main benefit of this approach is consolidating the multi-agency approach.

<sup>41</sup> Hazel N, Wright S, Liddle M, Renshaw J and Gray P (2012). Evaluation of North West Resettlement Consortium: Final Report. London: Youth Justice Board.

<sup>42</sup> Day, A. (2021). Constructive resettlement pathfinder evaluation: perspectives from practice. Interim project report. Keele University: South and West Yorkshire Resettlement Consortium Pathfinder Project.



## Reflection questions

Reflecting on this section:

**From a strategic perspective:**

- Are the building blocks in this section considered in your resettlement policy?
- Are you confident that you have the strategic networks in place to achieve effective resettlement for the children in your area? What are the barriers? How might you remove these?

**From an operational perspective:**

- What seemed to be the most important themes in this section to consider when thinking about resettlement policy and provision? Write down three to five things in bullet-point format.
- What development needs do you have to improve your knowledge and expertise around resettlement? How will you plan your professional learning to enable you to develop in these areas? What support do you require to meet those needs?
- Partnership work is important for resettlement:
  - In multi-agency work, what tasks/responsibilities do you feel confident about? How can you build on this?
  - What tasks/responsibilities do you feel less confident or worried about? How can you address this?
- How do you draw on resources and the latest research on resettlement to inform your practice? How do you share these among your colleagues?
- What measures do you take to ensure the child's voice, and the views of parents/carers, are evident in individual plans?
- In what ways do you engage with custodial providers to ensure that work undertaken in custody allows the child to flourish in the community? (consider all of the resettlement pathways)
- How do you routinely consider the use of release on temporary licence/mobility as an integral tool to support a child to prepare for their release?