Children's COMMISSIONER

The characteristics of gang-associated children and young people

Technical report

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Introduction and aims

This analysis aims to provide information on the scale of gang associated children and young people (CYP) identified by statutory services and their characteristics, with a particular focus on overlaps with other vulnerable groups. To do this we present analysis of two groups of CYP:

> CYP assessed by children's services during the year to March 2018. This is taken from the Children in Need Census (CIN) collected by the Department for Education and is matched where possible to the National Pupil Database (NPD).
> CYP receiving an Asset Plus assessment in the 12 months to September 2018. This is a bespoke collection from Youth Offending Teams (YOT) in England and received responses from 130 out of 137 areas.

Both of these data sources have extensive information on the characteristics of the CYP assessed, including practitioner assessed markers of whether a child is gang associated or not. This allows us to examine the scale of children marked as being gang associated in both data sources and to examine differences between these gang associated CYP and other CYP assessed on other characteristics recorded in the datasets.

Data sources and cleaning

Children in Need census data

The basis for this cohort is children with a children's services assessment that started during the 12 months to March 2018. As it is possible for children to be reassessed during the year, for example where they have had multiple episodes of need within the period or as part of ongoing assessment, information was taken from the child's latest completed assessment. This is to provide the most amount of time for disclosures around gang involvement (and other vulnerabilities) to be identified by a practitioner.

This assessment data was then linked to information about the CIN episode, based on local authority child identifiers and date of referral. Children were excluded from this analysis where:

> Children had no factors identified at assessment
> Children were recorded as unborn
> Children were aged over 18 at the start of their assessment
> Children had assessment start dates recorded before their referral date and/or date of birth
> Children had assessment start dates recorded after the date of assessment completion
> Details of either assessment or referral dates were missing

This cleaned CIN sample was then linked to information held in the NPD, via the child's unique pupil number (UPN). This includes information on exclusions, absence, school moves and SEN provision. During this matching, a small number of duplicate records were also excluded where UPNs matched multiple children with either different dates of birth or genders. The final match rate between this de-duplicated sample and the main pupil database for children aged 5-15 with any UPN recorded in the CIN census was 97%[1].

Overall, this cleaning process resulted in a final sample size of 374,580 children with any factors recorded at their latest assessment in 2017/18. Note: this is not comparable to published DfE statistics on factors at assessment as

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[1] Note: this is based on any match being found in the 12 months previous to their latest assessment

the published statistics count open episodes (rather than children) within a year and can include episodes with assessments carried out in a previous year.

Youth offending team data

Youth offending team data was sourced from Asset Plus assessments in the 12 months to September 2018. Asset Plus is a standardised assessment tool that YOTs administer to children receiving a caution or conviction. It should be noted that this data is primarily a tool for practitioner casework rather than a statistical collection and as such there is likely to be more variation in its use between practitioners and areas.

As with the CIN data, children can be reassessed during the year and so information was taken from the child's latest assessment (where they were aged under 18) during the 12 months to September 2018 in order to give the most time for disclosures around gang involvement (and other vulnerabilities) to be identified by a practitioner. Cases were excluded where:

> No information was recorded about gang associations
> Children were recorded as aged over 18 at their earliest assessment in the year
> Information on the child's age at an assessment was missing
> The date of the child's latest assessment was missing

This resulted in a final sample size of 19,750 CYP. While not directly comparable, as a sense of scale the total YOT caseload in the year to March 17/18 was 26,681.[2] The data quality varied by item returned and levels of missing data are reported with each table presented below.

Overall sample demographic profile

Age

CIN data:

Table 1: Age profile of CIN sample.

Age at latest assessment	Gang Associated % (n)	Not % (n)
Under 5	10 (650)	28 (102,480)
5-9	14 (960)	30 (109,370)
10-15	49 (3,360)	34 (123,240)
16-17	27 (1,870)	9 (32,650)

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[2] Source: Youth Justice Statistics 2017/18
(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/774866/youth_justice_statistics_bulletin_2017_2018.pdf)

YOT data: *Table 2: Age profile of YOT sample.*

Age at latest assessment	Gang associated % (n)	Not % (n)	Yet to clarify % (n)
10-12	1 (20)	4 (400)	4 (250)
13-15	32 (770)	37 (3,860)	38 (2,650)
16-17	67 (1,620)	59 (6,050)	59 (4,130)

Gender

CIN data:

Table 3: Gender profile of CIN sample.

Gender	Gang Associated % (n)	Not % (n)
Female	34 (2,290)	49 (178,700)
Male	66 (4,540)	51 (188,310)

YOT data:

Table 4: Gender profile of YOT sample.

Gender	Gang associated % (n)	Not % (n)	Yet to clarify % (n)
Female	8 (200)	16 (1620)	16 (1100)
Male	92 (2,220)	84 (8,680)	84 (5,930)

Ethnicity

CIN data:

Table 5: Ethnicity profile of CIN sample.

Ethnicity	Gang Associated % (n)	Not % (n)
Asian or Asian British	7 (480)	8 (29,660)
Black or black British	24 (1,620)	8 (27,100)
Mixed	13 (870)	8 (27,160)
Other ethnic groups	3 (180)	3 (9,630)
White	53 (3,500)	73 (258,790)

YOT data:

Table 6: Ethnicity profile of YOT sample.

Ethnicity	Gang associated % (n)	Not % (n)	Yet to clarify % (n)
Asian	5 (130)	4 (410)	6 (440)
Black	31 (740)	7 (710)	11 (740)
Missing	1 (30)	1 (140)	3 (190)
Mixed	13 (320)	6 (620)	8 (560)
Other	2 (40)	1 (110)	2 (120)
White	48 (1,150)	81 (8,260)	71 (4,940)

Limitations of these datasets

As with any analysis there are a number of limitations to these cohorts. Key limitations for both data sets are:

1. Children are recorded as gang associated based on practitioner judgement in both samples. We have not specified a particular definition of 'gang associated' and as such a variety of children and young people may be included.
2. Furthermore, the guidance for practitioners as to when to record gangs as a factor at assessment is vague. The factors at assessment guidance provides the following guidance:

> **Being part of a friendship group is a normal part of growing up and it can be common for groups of children and young people to gather together in public places to socialise. Belonging to such a group can form a positive and normal part of young people's growth and development. These groups should be distinguished from 'street gangs' for whom crime and violence are a core part of their identity, although 'delinquent peer groups' can also lead to increased antisocial behaviour and youth offending. Although some group gatherings can lead to increased antisocial behaviour and youth offending, these activities should not be confused with the serious violence of a gang.**

3. As a result, it is not clear whether children flagged in the CIN data are involved in gang activity or at risk. It is likely a combination of the two given the age profile of the children included (for example there are a small number of under 5s). They are termed gang associated here for brevity, but it is likely that they are a wider cohort than the YOT sample.

4. Children receiving an assessment (in either sample) may be determined by local authority recording practices.

5. Data quality issues and missing data are common to both data sets. This is unavoidable in case management data and is reported where missing data is an issue or answers are based on free text responses. However, triangulating the two data sources helps with this.

Analysis methods

Results are presented below in two forms:

1. Simple cross tabulations are presented to provide overall percentages and overlaps between gang associations and other characteristics. Counts are rounded to the nearest 10 and any values less than 10 are suppressed.
2. Risk ratios after controlling for age, gender and ethnicity. These are calculated via a Poisson regression with cluster robust standard errors (see Zhou 2004). The use of these adjusted standard errors reduces the likelihood of correlations just being due to correlations within an LA/Youth Offending Team as well as allowing accurate standard errors for these risk ratios to be calculated.

These adjusted risk ratios are important to analyse as they allow the differences in demographic profile of gang members (older, more likely to be male and from black and minority ethnic backgrounds - see tables above) to be taken into account. For example, family factors are more likely to be identified among younger children:

Table 7: Differences in parental drug misuse by child age. Missing = 0%

Parental drug misuse	Under 5 % (n)	5-9 % (n)	10-15 % (n)	16-17 % (n)
No	85 (87,530)	88 (96,600)	91 (114,670)	94 (32,290)
Yes	15 (15,600)	12 (13,720)	9 (11,930)	6 (2,230)

As a result differences in rates of parental drug misuse among gang associated CYP may seem small compared to other CYP, simply because these children are on average older. However this rate may still be higher than we would expect for a group of children with this older age profile. To account for this, results are only presented below where they are statistically significant after taking differences in age, gender and ethnicity into account.

Furthermore, both samples are reasonably large and there are a large number of comparisons being performed. As a result the traditional p value threshold of less than 0.05 risks highlighting differences that are small in magnitude and increases the risk of a difference simply being the result of chance. To avoid this, differences are only highlighted as significant when p values are less than 0.0001. This is a slightly arbitrary adjustment but it ensures that only reliable differences are commented on.

Findings: Numbers of children identified

Key point:

> **Regardless of the cohort examined, these groups encompass a small proportion of the 27,000 children estimated to be involved with gangs by the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW)**

The two data sets provide indications of the current scale of children being worked with by children's services and YOTs.

CIN census:

> 6,850 CYP aged under 18 had gangs identified as a factor at their latest assessment in 17/18 (5,230 aged 10-17). This is 2% of children with any factors identified.

YOT data:

> 2,420 CYP aged under 18 were identified as gang associated at their latest Asset Plus assessment in the 12 months to September 2018. This is 12% of children assessed.

Overlap between YOT and CIN samples

Currently CIN

> 19% of children identified as gang associated at their latest Asset Plus assessment were currently identified as a child in need. This is significantly higher than the rate for other young offenders, though still only represents 1 in 5 gang associated CYP.

Table 8: Children currently identified as a child in need in the YOT sample. Missing = 2%

Currently identified as a child in need	Gang associated % (n)	Not % (n)	Yet to clarify % (n)
Currently	19 (460)	13 (1,330)	14 (900)
Not	79 (1,900)	85 (8,790)	82 (5,420)
Yet to clarify	2 (40)	2 (180)	4 (270)

Currently on CPP

> 11% of children identified as gang associated at their latest Asset Plus assessment were currently on a child protection plan. This is significantly higher than the rate for other young offenders, though still only represents 1 in 9 gang associated CYP.

Table 9: Children currently on a child protection plan in the YOT sample. Missing = 4%

Currently on a child protection plan	Gang associated % (n)	Not % (n)	Yet to clarify % (n)
Currently	11 (260)	6 (620)	7 (440)
Not	86 (2,030)	91 (9,210)	88 (5,730)
Yet to clarify	3 (70)	3 (290)	6 (380)

Currently in care

> 13% of children identified as gang associated at their latest Asset Plus assessment were currently subject to a care order. This is significantly higher than the rate for other young offenders, though still only represents 1 in 8 gang associated CYP.

Table 10: Children currently subject to a care order in the YOT sample. Missing = 3%

Currently subject to a care order	Gang associated % (n)	Not % (n)	Yet to clarify % (n)
Currently	13 (310)	10 (1030)	10 (640)
Not	86 (2,060)	89 (9,100)	88 (5,800)
Yet to clarify	1 (20)	1 (100)	2 (150)

Accommodated by local authority under section 20

Table 11: Children currently accommodated by voluntary agreement with parents (section 20). Missing = 3%

Currently accommodated under s20	Gang associated % (n)	Not % (n)	Yet to clarify % (n)
Currently	13 (300)	10 (1000)	9 (610)
Not	86 (2,050)	89 (9,080)	88 (5,770)
Yet to clarify	2 (40)	1 (140)	3 (210)

Total number of CYP identified by children's services and youth offending teams

The tables above demonstrate a degree of overlap in children known to youth offending teams as well as children's services. Overall, 48% of gang associated CYP assessed by YOTs are recorded as currently being in contact with children's services in any of the above forms.

Gap between survey estimated prevalence and identified gang associated CYP

Key point: Regardless of which estimate of identified gang associated CYP is used, this suggests a notable gap between the number of children who self-identify as gang members and those identified by children's services or youth offending teams.

Adding together gang associated children (aged 10-17) amongst both the YOT and CIN cohorts and removing the overlap estimated above suggests that, overall, 6,480 children were in contact with either youth offending teams or children services. After upscaling this number to account for the 7 missing YOTs[3] this gives a combined total of 6,560 gang associated CYP identified by either YOTs or children's services.

It could be argued that this is a lower bound estimate of the children identified by these services. Potential issues with this estimate are:

> Current gang associated CYP may have an open episode with children's services/YOTs but have not been assessed during the year

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[3] Calculated as 5230 + 2420*(137/130)*(1-0.48)

> The time periods of the 2 data sources differ slightly
> YOT data is missing 7 youth offending teams and rates may not be similar in these missing YOTs

To examine how much this is likely to matter we can look at broader estimates of the stock of gang associated children. This requires some assumptions given available data, however one estimate of this is:

> Number of children (aged 10-17) with a CIN episode open at any point in the year to March 2018 where gangs has ever been identified as a factor at assessment. This is calculated based on:

  – 0.96 (the ratio of children with gangs as a factor at assessment to their episodes in 2016/17) multiplied by
  – the proportion of children with gangs as a factor at assessment aged 10-17 (76% - Table 1) multiplied by
  – 8,650 open CIN episodes during 2017/18 where gangs was a factor at assessment.[4]

PLUS

> 12% of the total YOT caseload for the year to March 2018[5] minus the 48% overlap between children services and youth offending teams estimated above.

This results in a slightly higher estimate of 7,980[6] children identified, though this is likely an over-estimate given that CIN assessments can have been several years previously.

The most recent available estimate from the Crime Survey for England and Wales suggests that 27,000 children aged 10-17 self-identified as members of a gang in the year to March 2017.[7] However, this excludes those that may not self-identify as gang members but may still be at risk either through sibling relationships or through knowing a gang member and being involved in violence. Recent figures from ONS[8] put the scale of these populations at:

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[4] Source: DfE, Characteristics of children in Need (https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/characteristics-of-children-in-need-2017-to-2018)

[5] Source: Youth Justice Statistics (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/774866/youth_justice_statistics_bulletin_2017_2018.pdf)

[6] Full calculation = (0.96*0.76*8650) + (0.12*26681*0.52)

[7] Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales (https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/adhocs/008451childrenaged10to15andadultsaged16to24involvedwithgangsyearendingmarch2017crimesurveyforenglandandwalescsew) & CCO (https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Summary-Table-Annex-1-to-Vulnerability-2018-Overview-Report.pdf)

[8] Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales (https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/adhocs/009653crimesurveyforenglandandwalescsewestimatesofgangmembershipandknifecarryingamong10to15yearoldchildrenenglandandwalesyearsendingmarch2016andmarch2018)

> 34,000 know a gang member and have been a victim of violence in the last 12 months[9]

> 60,000 either self-identify as a gang member or know a gang member who is a sibling

What is clear is that whichever estimates of prevalence and identified children are used, there remains a large gap between prevalence and those being identified by services (Table 12).

Table 12: Gaps between prevalence estimates and estimates of gang associated children identified by services

		Prevalence estimates		
		Self-identify as gang members	Know a gang member and have been a victim of violence in the last 12 months	Self-identify as a gang member or know a gang member who is a sibling
Children identified by services	Low estimate of identified children	Gap = 20,440	Gap = 27,440	Gap = 53,440
	High estimate of identified children	Gap =19,020	Gap = 26,020	Gap = 52,020

However, it may also be that children are self-identifying as gang associated without being involved in illegal activity. The last available dataset to allow this to be tested was the Offending Crime and Justice Survey 2006 (OCJS). This survey asked much more extensive questions about the nature of groups children aged 10-17 identified as part of.

From this survey, we can estimate the prevalence of children aged 10-17 who report that they:

> Are in a group of 3+ people
> Commit violence or threats in order to rob, carrying knives/guns or selling drugs
> Realise the activities are illegal
> And think of the group as a gang

The lower bound estimate of this was 0.7%, which in 2006 equated to 36,000 children aged 10-17. As a result this prevalence figure would have had to have decreased by approximately a factor of 5 over the past 10 years for there to be no gap between this number and the number of identified gang associated CYP. The existing indicators of gang/youth violence do not suggest this is the case – see, for example, Figures 1 and 2 below.

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[9] Note: we have assumed that all those self-identifying as a gang member also know a gang member. The effect of this assumption is likely to be minor but means this is likely an under-estimate of the true size of this group. This is calculated as 0.109*percentages that knew a gang member in March 2017 estimates

Figure 1: Numbers of children aged 10-17 proceeded against for gang related offences since 2007. Source: MOJ Outcomes by offence data tool
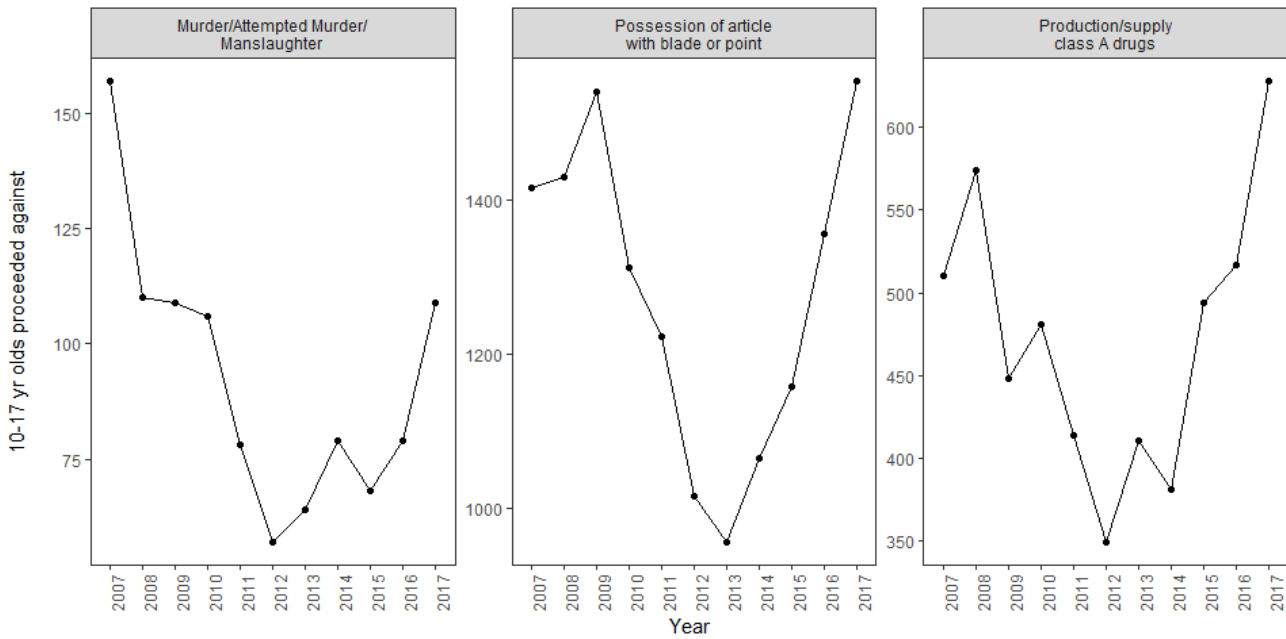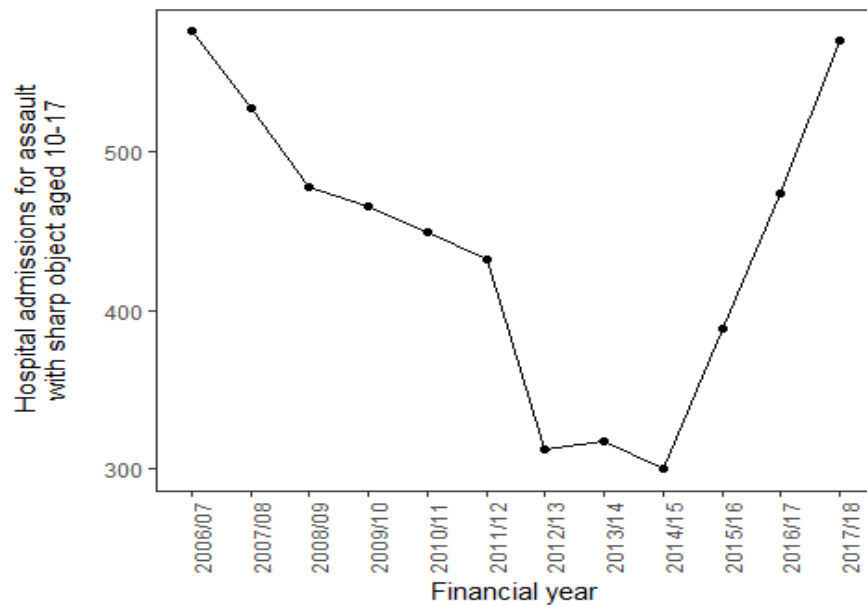

Figure 2: Numbers of children aged 10-17 admitted to hospital for assault with a sharp object 2006/07 - 2017/18. Source Hospital Episodes Statistics. Note: rates pre 2012/13 have been calculated through pro-rating numbers of 0-14 and 15-59 yr olds using average proportions over the period 2012/13 to 2017/18

Findings: Characteristics of gang associated CYP

Family factors

Key points:

> **Consistently across the family factors examined, these vulnerabilities are at least as prevalent for gang associated CYP as for other young offenders/children referred to social services. This is particularly true when differences in demographics are accounted for**
> **For both the CIN and YOT cohorts, parental substance use, neglect and violence towards the young person stand out as being of greater prevalence amongst gang associated CYP than those not gang-associated**
> **YOT data provides information on additional family factors not covered in the CIN census. This suggests that offending in the family is much more common amongst gang associated CYP than other young offenders**

Parental substance use

> **In both the CIN and YOT data parental substance misuse is significantly more likely to be identified as a concern by practitioners amongst gang associated children, particularly once demographics are accounted for.**
> Gang associated CYP have similar rates of parental substance use concerns as other young offenders. However, this hides stark differences due to differences in demographic profile:

Table 13: Children with parental substance misuse concerns recorded at their latest assessment. Missing = 6%

Parent/carer substance use	Gang associated % (n)	Not % (n)	Yet to clarify % (n)
No	91 (2,150)	93 (9,370)	94 (5,830)
Yes	9 (210)	7 (690)	6 (390)

> Once differences in age, gender and ethnicity are controlled for, this suggests gang associated children are 68% more likely to have this identified by practitioners as a concern, than would be expected in young offenders with similar demographics.
> The story is similar in the CIN data. Initially, there is no difference in rates of parental substance misuse concerns between gang associated CYP and other children in need until demographics are taken into account.

Table 14: Children with parental substance misuse recorded as a factor at their latest assessment. Missing = 0%

Parent/carer drug misuse	Gang Associated % (n)	Not % (n)
No	88 (6,030)	88 (325,070)
Yes	12 (820)	12 (42,660)

> After controlling for age, gender and ethnicity gang associated CYP are 41% more likely to also have parental/carer substance misuse identified as a factor at assessment than would be expected in a similar cohort of non-gang associated CYP.

> Across both samples overall, 11% of gang associated CYP had parental substance misuse identified as a concern or a factor at assessment by practitioners.

Parental alcohol misuse

> **The evidence for links with parental alcohol misuse are less clear though gang associated children are at least as likely to have this identified at assessment as other children in need/young offenders**

> Regarding parental alcohol misuse, rates are similar amongst gang associated and non-gang associated young offenders. However, once differences in demographic profiles are accounted for, this suggests gang associated CYP are 43% more likely to have this flagged as a concern.

> Gang associated CYP are slightly less likely to have parent/carer alcohol misuse identified as a factor at assessment, though again this difference becomes non-significant when differences in demographics are taken into account.

Table 15: Children with parental alcohol misuse recorded as a factor at their latest assessment. Missing = 0%

Parent/carer alcohol misuse	Gang Associated % (n)	Not % (n)
No	91 (6,240)	87 (320,380)
Yes	9 (610)	13 (47,360)

> Across both samples overall, 9% of gang associated CYP had parental alcohol misuse identified as a concern or a factor at assessment by practitioners.

Parental mental health issues

The two samples differ on the relationship between gang membership and parental mental health issues, though together they suggest that once demographics are accounted for gang associated children are at least as likely to have parental mental health concerns identified by practitioners.

> Once demographics are accounted for, gang associated CYP are 48% more likely to have parental mental health identified as a concern compared to non-gang associated young offenders.

Table 16: Children with parental mental health concerns recorded at their latest assessment. Missing = 6%

Parent/carer health mental health concerns	Gang associated % (n)	Not % (n)	Yet to clarify % (n)
No	81 (1,900)	85 (8,600)	87 (5,400)
Yes	19 (450)	15 (1,460)	13 (810)

> Amongst children assessed by children's services, gang associated CYP are slightly less likely to have parental mental health identified as a factor at assessment. However, this difference becomes non-significant when age, gender and ethnicity are accounted for.

Table 17: Children with parental mental health recorded as a factor at their latest assessment. Missing = 0%

Parent/carer mental health concerns	Gang Associated % (n)	Not % (n)
No	78 (5,360)	75 (274,300)
Yes	22 (1,490)	25 (93,430)

> Across both samples overall, 21% of gang associated CYP had parental mental health identified as a concern or a factor at assessment by practitioners.

Domestic violence/abuse towards parent/carer

Similarly, together these two samples suggest that once demographics are accounted for gang associated children are at least as likely to have domestic abuse towards a parent/carer identified as a concern by practitioners.

> 24% of young offenders flagged as gang associated were known to have witnessed domestic abuse. Once differences in demographics are accounted for this is 37% more common in gang associated CYP than other young offenders.

Table 18: Children known to have witnessed domestic abuse recorded at their latest assessment. Missing = 6%

Known to have witnessed domestic abuse	Gang associated % (n)	Not % (n)	Yet to clarify % (n)
No	76 (1,800)	80 (8,080)	83 (5,120)
Yes	24 (550)	20 (1980)	17 (1080)

> In contrast, gang associated children referred to children's services are less likely to have domestic violence against a parent/carer identified at assessment. However, while initial rates are lower, this becomes small and borderline non-significant given the number of tests performed (p = 0.002) when demographics are accounted for.

Table 19: Children with domestic abuse where the parent/carer was the subject recorded as a factor at their latest assessment. Missing = 0%

Parent/carer subject to domestic violence	Gang Associated % (n)	Not % (n)
No	79 (5,420)	69 (254,040)
Yes	21 (1420)	31 (113690)

> Across both samples overall, 21% of gang associated CYP were known to have witnessed domestic abuse or had domestic abuse against a parent identified as a factor at assessment by practitioners.

Neglect

In both the CIN and YOT samples, neglect and the young person's basic care needs not being met are significantly more prevalent amongst children that are gang associated than among those not gang associated

Table 20: Children with concerns about their basic care needs not being met recorded at their latest assessment. Missing = 6%

Young person basic care needs not being met	Gang associated % (n)	Not % (n)	Yet to clarify % (n)
No	89 (2,090)	93 (9,330)	93 (5,790)
Yes	11 (260)	7 (720)	7 (400)

> Once differences in demographics are accounted for, gang associated CYP are 76% more likely to have their basic care needs not being met flagged as a concern than other young offenders.

Table 21: Children with neglect recorded as a factor at their latest assessment. Missing = 0%

Neglect identified at assessment	Gang Associated % (n)	Not % (n)
No	78 (5,340)	83 (304,870)
Yes	22 (1,500)	17 (62,860)

> Similarly, CYP recorded as gang associated in the CIN census are 48% more likely to have neglect identified at assessment than other children of a similar demographic profile referred to children's services.
> Across both samples overall, 20% of gang associated CYP had their basic care needs not being met as a concern or neglect as a factor identified at assessment by practitioners.

Offending in the family

Gang associated CYP are notably more likely to have family members who have offended and to be living with known offenders, compared to those who are not gang associated.

Table 22: Children with offending in the family recorded as a concern at their latest assessment. Missing = 6%

Offending by family members	Gang associated % (n)	Not % (n)	Yet to clarify % (n)
No	69 (1,620)	80 (8,060)	81 (5,000)
Yes	31 (740)	20 (2040)	19 (1200)

> Once differences in demographics are accounted for, gang associated CYP are 60% more likely to have this flagged as a concern in their latest Asset Plus assessment.
> There is also evidence that these CYP are also more likely to be living with known offenders. Once differences in demographics are taken into account, gang associated CYP are 2x more likely to have concerns about them living with known offenders recorded by practitioners.

Table 23: Children where living with known offenders is recorded as a concern at their latest assessment. Missing = 6%

Living with known offenders	Gang associated % (n)	Not % (n)	Yet to clarify % (n)
No	83 (1,910)	91 (9,160)	93 (5,840)
Yes	17 (390)	9 (850)	7 (440)

Violence towards the young person

In both the CIN and YOT samples violence towards the young person from family members is more prevalent amongst children that are gang associated than those not

> Gang associated CYP are more likely to have parental violence or abuse towards them flagged as a concern by practitioners. After differences in demographics are taken into account, they are 41% more likely to have this recorded as a concern than other young offenders.

Table 24: Children where parental/carer violence towards the young person is recorded as a concern at their latest assessment. Missing = 6%

Parental/carer violence or abuse towards young person	Gang associated % (n)	Not % (n)	Yet to clarify % (n)
No	85 (1,990)	88 (8,870)	90 (5,560)
Yes	15 (360)	12 (1190)	10 (630)

> There is a similar difference highlighted in the CIN data. After differences in demographics are taken into account, gang associated CYP are 39% more likely to have this recorded as a concern than other CYP referred to children's services.

Table 25: Children where domestic violence where the child is the subject is recorded as a factor at their latest assessment. Missing = 0%

Domestic violence: child subject	Gang Associated % (n)	Not % (n)
No	85 (5,830)	88 (323,180)
Yes	15 (1,020)	12 (44,560)

> Across both samples overall, 15% of gang associated CYP had violence towards them from a parent or carer identified as a concern, or domestic abuse where the child was the subject identified as a factor at assessment by practitioners.

Any family factors

> 58% of gang associated young offenders have any of the above family factors recorded at their latest assessment. After differences in age, gender and ethnicity are accounted for, this is 42% more likely than other young offenders.
> Gang associated children are as likely to have any family factors identified at their latest children's services assessment. 47% of gang associated CYP have any of the above family factors recorded at their latest children's services assessment. This is slightly lower than the rate for non-gang associated CYP though this difference becomes small and borderline non-significant (p = 0.02) once age, gender and ethnicity are taken into account, suggesting this difference is explained by demographic differences.

Any of the 'toxic trio' factors

> Recently, the 'toxic trio' issues (combinations of parental mental health, parental drugs/alcohol misuse and domestic violence in the home) have been cited as a major driver of the increases on children's services caseloads and the numbers of children being taken into care (ADCS, 2016), and have also been frequently cited as a factor in serious case reviews (Sidebotham et al., 2016).
> 36% of gang associated CYP included in returns from YOTs have any of the toxic trio factors recorded at their latest assessment. After differences in age, gender and ethnicity are accounted for, this is 39% more likely than other young offenders.

> Similarly to any family factors, gang associated children are as likely to have any of the toxic trio factors identified at their latest children's services assessment. 36% of gang associated CYP have any of the above family factors recorded at their latest children's services assessment. This is lower than the rate for non-gang associated CYP though this difference becomes notably smaller once age, gender and ethnicity are taken into account, suggesting this difference is largely explained by demographic differences.

Young person's current housing

Key point:

> **YOT data suggests that gang associated CYP are at greater risk of housing related vulnerabilities than would be expected in other young offenders with the same demographic profile**
>   – Note: the CIN census holds nothing on young people's housing situation, so the analysis below is only possible for the YOT data.

Instability in CYP's current housing

> 22% of gang associated CYP have housing instability identified as a concern by practitioners. When differences in demographics are taken into account, this is 62% more common than for other young offenders

Table 26: Children where housing instability is recorded as a concern at their latest assessment. Missing = 6%

Housing instability	Gang associated % (n)	Not % (n)	Yet to clarify % (n)
No	78 (1,790)	85 (8,560)	86 (5,400)
Yes	22 (510)	15 (1460)	14 (880)

Safety of housing

> 10% of gang associated CYP have unsafe or unhealthy housing identified as a concern by practitioners. When differences in demographics are taken into account, this is 87% more common than for other young offenders.

Table 27: Children where unsafe or unhealthy housing is recorded as a concern at their latest assessment. Missing = 6%

Unsafe or unhealthy housing	Gang associated % (n)	Not % (n)	Yet to clarify % (n)
No	90 (2,070)	94 (9,450)	94 (5,930)
Yes	10 (230)	6 (560)	6 (350)

Living in short term or temporary housing

> 14% of gang associated CYP have concerns about short-term/temporary housing identified as a concern by practitioners. When differences in demographics are taken into account, this is twice as common as for other young offenders.

Table 28: Children where short term/temporary housing is recorded as a concern at their latest assessment. Missing = 6%

Short term/temporary housing	Gang associated % (n)	Not % (n)	Yet to clarify % (n)
No	86 (1,990)	93 (9,340)	93 (5,840)
Yes	14 (320)	7 (680)	7 (440)

Any housing factors

> 32% of gang associated CYP have any of the above family factors recorded at their latest assessment. After differences in age, gender and ethnicity are accounted for, this is 68% more likely than for other young offenders.

Personal risks

Key point:

> **As might be expected gang associated CYP are more likely to have risks to their personal safety identified by practitioners. There are particularly strong associations with going missing, drug/alcohol misuse, CSE and trafficking.**

Going missing/staying away

> 26% of gang associated CYP have absconding or staying away listed as a concern by practitioners in their YOT assessments. After differences in demographics are taken into account, they are 2.2 times more likely than other young offenders to have this identified.

Table 29: Children where absconding/staying away is recorded as a concern at their latest assessment. Missing = 6%

Absconding /staying away	Gang associated % (n)	Not % (n)	Yet to clarify % (n)
No	74 (1,700)	88 (8,800)	89 (5,560)
Yes	26 (600)	12 (1,220)	11 (720)

> The difference is even more stark in the CIN data. After differences in demographics are taken into account, gang associated CYP are more than 9 times more likely to have going missing identified as a factor at assessment than other CYP referred to children's services.

Table 30: Children where going missing is recorded as a factor at their latest assessment. Missing = 0%

Going missing	Gang Associated % (n)	Not % (n)
No	64 (4,390)	97 (357,800)
Yes	36 (2,460)	3 (9,930)

> Across both samples overall, 35% of gang associated CYP had absconding/staying away identified as a concern or going missing identified as a factor at assessment by practitioners.

Drug/alcohol use

> 81% of gang associated CYP have substance misuse concerns identified by practitioners at their latest YOT assessment. After differences in demographics are taken into account, this 34% more likely than amongst other young offenders.

Table 31: Children where substance misuse concerns are recorded at their latest assessment. Missing = 0%

CYP substance misuse concerns	Gang associated % (n)	Not % (n)	Yet to clarify % (n)
No	17 (420)	37 (3,860)	34 (2,410)
Yes	81 (1,950)	61 (6,320)	56 (3,920)
Yet to clarify	2 (50)	1 (130)	10 (690)

> Again, this difference is even more stark in the CIN data. 46% of gang associated CYP have drug misuse identified as a factor at assessment. After differences in demographics are taken into account, this 8 times more likely than for other CYP referred to children's services.

Table 32: Children where the child's drug misuse is recorded as a factor at their latest assessment. Missing = 0%

CYP drug misuse	Gang Associated % (n)	Not % (n)
No	54 (3,670)	96 (353,150)
Yes	46 (3,180)	4 (14,580)

> There is a similar association with alcohol misuse. After differences in demographics are taken into account, this nearly 6 times more likely to be identified among gang associated children than among other CYP referred to children's services.
> Across both samples overall, 53% of gang associated CYP had any substance misuse concerns identified as a factor at their latest assessment by practitioners.

CSE and sexual abuse
> 22% of gang associated CYP also have risk of sexual exploitation identified at their latest YOT assessment. This is 67% more likely than for other young offenders, once differences in demographics (particularly the over-representation of males) are taken into account.
> These differences are larger in the CIN data. Gang associated CYP are 5 times more likely to have CSE identified at assessment than other children referred to social services, once demographic differences have been accounted for.

Table 32: Children where the child's drug misuse is recorded as a factor at their latest assessment. Missing = 0%

Child sexual exploitation	Gang Associated % (n)	Not % (n)
No	77 (5,280)	96 (353,600)
Yes	23 (1,560)	4 (14,130)

> Across both samples overall, 23% of gang associated CYP had were either judged to be at risk of sexual exploitation or had sexual exploitation recorded as a factor at their latest assessment. This rate is notably higher amongst girls than boys, with 40% of gang associated girls across the 2 samples having CSE recorded as a risk or factor at assessment compared to 15% of boys.

> There is also an additional risk of sexual abuse for female CYP associated with gangs, compared to female CYP not associated with gangs amongst those assessed by children's services. For two girls of the same age and ethnicity, one associated with gangs is 2.4 times more likely to have sexual abuse identified as a factor at assessment than a girl not associated with gangs.

> Younger children are also at particular risk of CSE. After accounting for gender and ethnicity, a child under 13 years old that has gangs identified as a factor at assessment is 3.1 times more likely to also have CSE identified at their latest children's services assessment compared to a non-gang associated child under 13.

Trafficking

> Interestingly trafficking is not directly addressed on the Asset Plus assessment. However, the CIN data suggests that gang associated CYP are nearly 11 times more likely to have this identified at assessment than other children referred to children's services, though the prevalence is small.

Table 33: Children where trafficking is recorded as a factor at their latest assessment. Missing = 0%

Trafficking	Gang Associated % (n)	Not % (n)
No	94 (6,440)	100 (366,570)
Yes	6 (410)	<1% (1,160)

Violence towards the young person from others

> **The YOT data provides information on violence/abuse directed towards the young person from non-parents. Once demographics are accounted for, gang associated CYP are 65% more likely to have these concerns identified by practitioners at their latest assessment.**

Schooling

Key point:

> **Gang associated CYP are more likely to be in alternative provision, are more likely to have suffered school instability (either through exclusion or mid-year school moves) and are more likely to be absent from school**
>   – Note: schooling measures are quite different between the two samples, so they cannot be combined reliably.

Alternative provision/PRU attendance

> Gang associated CYP over-represent amongst children with any time in a PRU in the previous 12 months compared to other children assessed by children's services (note: this excludes children under 5 and those over 15 as coverage in the NPD becomes more limited).

> 9% of gang associated CYP have any contact with a PRU in the 12 months before their latest assessment. Once differences in demographics are accounted for, this is nearly 6 times more likely than for other children assessed by children's services.

Table 34: Children with any time in a PRU in the 12 months prior to their assessment. Missing = 3%

Any PRU contact in 12 months prior to assessment 5-15	Gang Associated % (n)	Not % (n)
No	91 (3,190)	99 (190,030)
Yes	9 (300)	1 (1,760)

> Gang associated CYP also over-represent when compared to other young offenders assessed by YOTs in terms of proportions currently in alternative provision.
> Amongst those where any information on employment training or education was recorded under the age of 16 (n=7,700), 67% of gang associated CYP were in alternative provision at their latest assessment. This is 33% more likely than for other young offenders after differences in demographics are accounted for.

Table 35: Children where alternative provision is recorded as their current education, training or employment status. Missing = 8%

Currently in alternative provision 10-15	Gang associated % (n)	Not % (n)	Yet to clarify % (n)
No	33 (260)	50 (2,060)	50 (1,230)
Yes	67 (510)	50 (2,040)	50 (1,220)

Mid-year school moves + Exclusions

> **Gang associated CYP are more likely to have experienced school disruption either through school moves or exclusion.**
> 45% of gang associated CYP (aged under 16) have concerns related to previous school disruptions recorded at their latest assessment. Once demographics are accounted for, this is 59% more likely than for other young offenders.
> The CIN data allows us to separate out disruptions that are due to moving school mid-year and those due to exclusions. Both are more common amongst gang associated CYP (aged 5-15) than among other children assessed by children's services. 13% of gang associated CYP experienced a mid-year school move in the 12 months prior to their latest assessment. Once demographics are accounted for, they are 55% more likely to experience a mid-year move than other CYP assessed.

> *Table 36: Children experiencing a mid-year school move in the 12 months prior to their assessment. Missing = 3%*

Any mid-year school moves in the previous 12 months 5-15	Gang Associated % (n)	Not % (n)
No	87 (3,040)	92 (175,870)
Yes	13 (450)	8 (15,920)

> They are also more likely to have been permanently excluded in the previous 12 months. 5% of gang associated CYP had a permanent exclusion in the 12 months prior to their latest assessment. Once demographics are accounted for, this is 5 times more likely than for other children assessed by children's services.

Absence/participation

> Gang associated CYP are more likely to have attendance/participation issues than non-gang associated CYP.
> Linking the CIN data to the NPD allows us to look at rates of unauthorised absence.[10] Gang associated CYP have notably higher rates of unauthorised absence than non-gang associated CYP in the year prior to their assessment. Gang associated CYP on average missed 25 sessions due to unauthorised absence, compared to 11 amongst non-gang associated children assessed by children's services. This difference remains significant once differences in demographics are controlled for.

Table 37: Average numbers of unauthorised school sessions missed amongst those with any absence during 2016/17. Base = 177550

Gangs	Mean number of unauthorised sessions missed
Gang Associated	25
Not	11

> A similar pattern is also seen in the YOT data, though the measure is more limited. 67% of gang associated CYP had attendance/participation issues recorded at their latest assessment. Once demographics are accounted for, they are 37% more likely to have these issues recorded than other young offenders.

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[10] This is a more pertinent measure than persistent absence, which will include authorised sessions missed.

Table 38: Children aged 10-15 where attendance/participation issues are recorded as a concern at their latest assessment Missing = 15%

Attendance /participati on issues 10-15	Gang associated % (n)	Not % (n)	Yet to clarify % (n)
No	33 (240)	48 (1,730)	48 (1,170)
Yes	67 (480)	52 (1,860)	52 (1,250)

Health and disability

> **Key point: mental health concerns recurrently over-represent amongst gang associated CYP. They also over-represent amongst those with SEN but without a statement.**

Child's mental health

> **In both the YOT and CIN data sets, mental health concerns are more frequently recorded amongst gang associated CYP than would be expected for a cohort with that demographic profile.**

– **Some evidence from the YOT data that these gang associated CYP are more likely to have mental health concerns identified but this is not reflected in those with contact with MH services or formal diagnoses than other young offenders.**

> 67% of gang associated CYP had any mental health concerns identified at their latest YOT assessment. Once demographics are accounted for, they are slightly (14%) more likely to have these issues recorded than other young offenders.

Table 39: Children with mental health concerns recorded at their latest assessment Missing = 0%

Mental health concerns	Gang associated % (n)	Not % (n)	Yet to clarify % (n)
No	29 (700)	32 (3,280)	30 (2,120)
Yes	67 (1,620)	65 (6,730)	58 (4,070)
Yet to clarify	4 (100)	3 (290)	12 (830)

> However, they are also slightly less likely to have any contact with mental health services recorded than other young offenders. This difference is non-significant and remains so when demographics are accounted for (p=0.004).

Table 40: Children with any contact with mental health services recorded at their latest assessment Missing = 0%

Any contact with mental health services	Gang associated % (n)	Not % (n)	Yet to clarify % (n)
No	59 (1390)	56 (5,780)	58 (3,830)
Yes	40 (940)	42 (4,310)	38 (2,470)
Yet to clarify	2 (40)	2 (170)	4 (240)

> They are also slightly less likely to have any formally diagnosed mental health condition. This difference is non-significant when demographics are taken into account.

Table 41: Children with any diagnosed mental health condition services recorded at their latest assessment Missing = 0%

Any formally diagnosed MH condition	Gang associated % (n)	Not % (n)	Yet to clarify % (n)
No	86 (2,040)	82 (8,420)	82 (5,350)
Yes	11 (270)	16 (1610)	13 (880)
Yet to clarify	2 (60)	2 (230)	5 (310)

> The difference in identified concerns is greater amongst the CIN data set. 26% of gang associated CYP had their mental health identified as a factor at their latest assessment. Once demographics are accounted for, they are 77% more likely to have these issues recorded than other CYP assessed by children's services.

Table 42: Children with their mental health recorded as a factor at their latest assessment Missing = 0%

Child mental health identified as factor at assessment	Gang Associated % (n)	Not % (n)
No	74 (5,100)	88 (324,490)
Yes	26 (1,750)	12 (43,240)

> Across both samples overall, 31% of gang associated CYP had mental health concerns identified as a factor at assessment by practitioners.
> There are also notably higher rates of self-harm identified as factors at assessment for gang associated CYP. Once demographics are taken into account, gang associated CYP are 2.1 times more likely to have self-harm recorded than other CYP assessed by children's services.

Table 42: Children with their mental health recorded as a factor at their latest assessment Missing = 0%

Self-harm identified as factor at assessment	Gang Associated % (n)	Not % (n)
No	89 (6,080)	96 (352,020)
Yes	11 (760)	4 (15,710)

> Younger children associated with gangs are also at particular risk of mental health issues and self-harm compared to children of a similar age. A child under 13 years old that has gangs identified as a factor at assessment is 2.7 times more likely to also have self-harm identified at assessment compared to a non-gang associated child aged under 13.

> Gang associated children aged under 13 are 80% more likely to have their mental health identified as a factor at assessment compared to non-gang associated children aged under 13.

SEND

Key point:

> **Gang associated CYP have higher rates of identified Social, Emotional and Mental health difficulties. There are also limited indications that gang associated CYP may be less likely to get statements or EHC plans, when SEN is identified.**
> – Note: this analysis is based on CYP with SEN information in the spring census 2017/18.

> Gang associated CYP over-represent on children with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) difficulties. 23% of gang associated CYP have SEMH identified as their primary SEN type. Once demographic differences are accounted for this is 95% more than other children assessed by children's services.
> Gang associated CYP are as likely to have any identified SEN as other children assessed by children's services, once differences in demographics are taken into account.

Table 43: Children assessed by children's services with valid SEN information in January 2018. Base =211,420

Any identified SEN	Gang Associated % (n)	Not % (n)
No	60 (2,020)	66 (136,740)
Yes	40 (1,360)	34 (71,300)

> However, when gang associated CYP do have SEN identified, they are less likely to have a statement or EHC plan. Of the 40% of gang associated CYP with identified SEN, 80% do not have a statement or EHC plan compared to 70% amongst other children in need. This difference is not fully explained by their demographics or mix of primary SEN types ($p<0.0001$).

Table 44: Primary SEN type of children assessed by children's services with any SEN identified in January 2018. Base = 72,670

SEN without statement	Gang Associated % (n)	Not % (n)
No	20 (280)	30 (21,120)
Yes	80 (1,080)	70 (50,190)

Summary

This analysis provides the most complete picture of the characteristics and scale of currently identified gang associated CYP in England, using datasets that have not been analysed before. It echoes previous work from the Early Intervention Foundation[11] and Local Government Association[12] (amongst others) in demonstrating that these are a highly vulnerable group of young people. They repeatedly over-represent on:

> Family related vulnerabilities
> Housing issues
> Personal risks faced
> Being outside of mainstream education
> Issues related to health and disability

There is also evidence that where a need is identified (for example SEN), gang-associated CYP may be less likely to meet thresholds for support. However, this analysis must be caveated by the fact that most measures are subject to variations in practitioner judgement and local area recording practices. This is particularly the case given that there is no consistent definition of a gang association used across areas (this variation amongst gang associated CYP is explored further in Appendix A below). This analysis has done what is possible to account for these local variations, but it remains a limitation of analyses in relation this population.

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[11] Source: EIF, Preventing Gang and Youth Violence: Spotting Signals of Risk and Supporting Children and Young People – Overview, http://www.eif.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Final-R1-Overview-Preventing-Gang-Youth-Violence.pdf

[12] Source: LGA, The relationship between family violence and youth offending, https://www.local.gov.uk/relationship-between-family-violence-and-youth-offending

Appendix A: Differences in characteristics by offending histories of gang associated CYP

> Key point: **the YOT data allows us to investigate how vulnerabilities differ between gang associated CYP involved with different types of offending.**

> **This analysis presents a typology of gang associated CYP based on their offending histories, that can be used to provide a summary profile of gang offending in a local area**

> **Interestingly rates of vulnerabilities are similar across the groups found**

Method

Youth offending teams also supplied details of the young people's offending histories alongside the concerns identified by practitioners. This provides indications of the criminal activities that gang associated CYP are involved in, including historic offences, those linked to a current disposal as well as outstanding charges.

Latent class analysis (LCA) provides a data led way of grouping together gang associated CYP with similar offending histories. This has the advantage of allowing the number of groups formed to be guided by patterns in the data. It also provides a predictive model for group membership that can be applied to further samples to be used and/or validated on other cohorts.

To avoid the effect of any duplicate entries in the offending histories, the indicator variables used were whether a gang associated child had any of each of the following types of offence recorded:

> Weapons
> Violence with injury
> Robbery
> Drugs production/trafficking
> Drugs possession

Age was also incorporated into the model as it is likely to be a key determinant of the offending histories of the children, simply because older children are likely to have more extensive histories.

Choosing the number of groups

LCA requires that the analyst specify the number of groups and model fit indices are then used to determine whether this number of groups appropriately summarises the patterns of offending histories in the data.

Here, the number of groups was varied from 1 to 9 Figure 3 below demonstrates that the Bayesian information criterion is minimised at 3 groups suggesting this is the most appropriate summary of the offending histories

*Figure 3: BIC values for different numbers of latent classes (groups)*
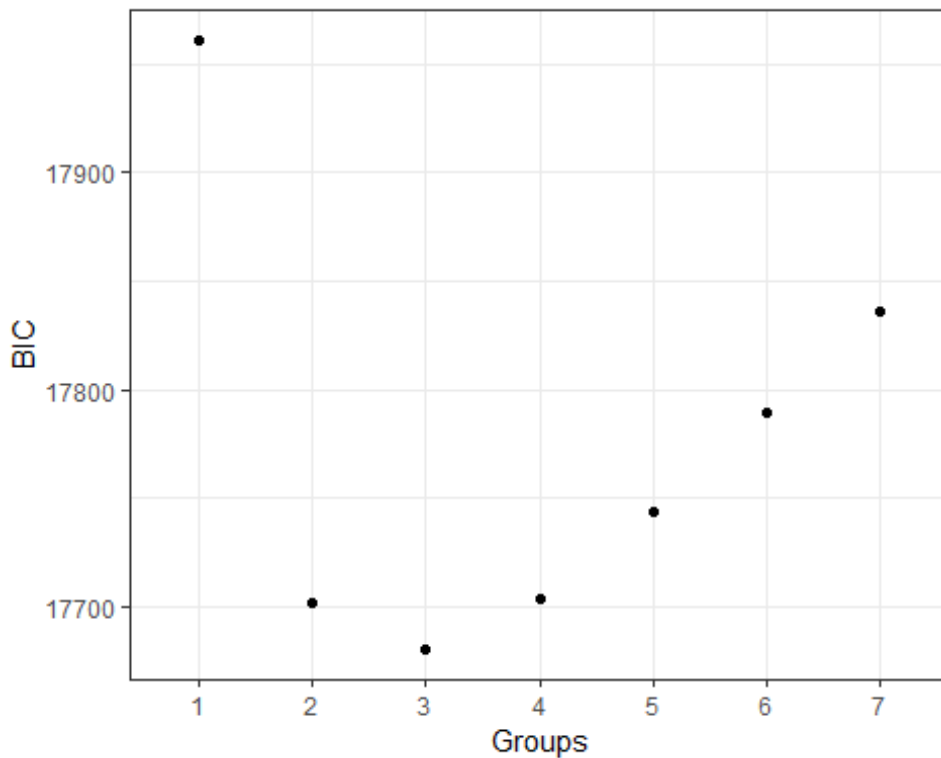
The G squared statistic is also non-significant for this number of groups (p = 0.21), providing further evidence for a good fit for 3 groups. Finally, residual correlations between indicators are also low for a 3 group model, suggesting correlations between items are well explained.

It is worth noting that entropy values (a measure of how well separated the groups are) are quite low for this 3 group model (entropy = 0.45). This suggests the groups are not perfectly separated and that there is some uncertainty in the classification of some individuals. To preserve this uncertainty and avoid biasing estimates, the proportions presented below are based on the summed probabilities of each gang associated child being a member of each of the 3 groups.

3 groups of gang associated CYP

> Through grouping gang associated CYP with similar offending histories, this data suggests that patterns of offending can be summarised by 3 broad groups:

- Younger (10-15 yr old) gang associated CYP (51% of the sample) - below average rates on all types of offending except for violence with injury and robbery
- Drug offending gang associated CYP (17% of the sample) - average or below average rates on all types of offending except for drugs possession and drugs trafficking/supply
- Extensive offending gang associated CYP (32% of the sample) - above average rates on all types of offending except for drugs trafficking offences

Figure 4: % of each group of gang associated CYP with each included indicator item
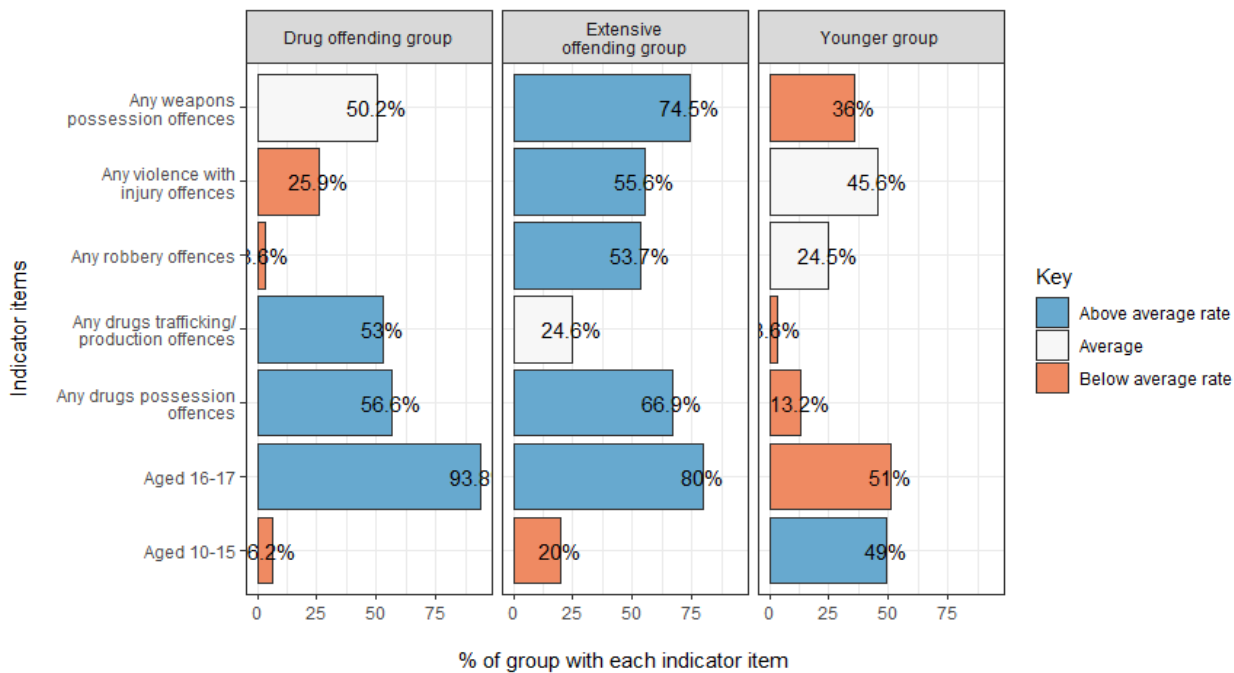
Preliminary analysis of differences in vulnerabilities by type of gang associated CYP

> **Overall the differences in vulnerabilities between CYP involved in different patterns of offending are small, regardless of patterns of offending. They are also nearly always higher than for non-gang associated CYP suggesting that all 3 groups are comparatively vulnerable.**

> **There are some small but notable differences however:**

  – **Younger group - at greater risk of sexual exploitation than other 2 groups and highest rates of family concerns**

  – **Extensive offending group - particular concerns around living with known offenders and schooling**

  – **Drug offending group - comparatively low rates on most vulnerabilities, with the exception of susceptibility to exploitation and drug misuse concerns.**

Demographics

There are notable differences in the gender and ethnic profiles of these 3 groups.

> The younger group are notably more likely to be female and of white ethnicity than the other 2 groups

> The extensive offending group are most likely to be male and of black or mixed ethnicity

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Table 45: Demographic differences between 3 groups of gang associated CYP

Demographic	Younger group	Extensive offending group	Drug offending group	Not gang associated
Asian	5%	6%	6%	4%
Black	26%	37%	33%	7%
Missing	1%	1%	2%	1%
Mixed	12%	16%	13%	6%
Other	1%	2%	2%	1%
White	54%	39%	45%	80%
Female	12%	3%	5%	16%
Male	88%	97%	95%	84%

Family factors

Overall family factors do not strongly differentiate between the three groups. However, there are some small differences that are noteworthy.

> The extensive offending group have notably higher rates of concerns around living with other known offenders than the other 2 groups.
> The drug offending group have the lowest rates of concerns across all family factors
> The younger group have the highest rates across the majority of other family factors, though this is likely due to their younger age profile.

Table 46: Differences in identified family factors between 3 groups of gang associated CYP

Family factor	Younger group	Extensive offending group	Drug offending group	Not gang associated
Living with known offenders	16%	20%	14%	8%
Offending by family members	32%	31%	28%	20%
Parent/carer substance use	9%	8%	8%	7%
Parent carer alcohol use	9%	8%	8%	8%
Parent/carer mental health	20%	19%	15%	14%
Parental/carer violence or abuse towards young person	15%	17%	14%	12%
Witnessing domestic violence or abuse	24%	23%	23%	19%
Young person basic care needs not being met	11%	12%	10%	7%

Personal risks

There are also some small differences in the risks faced by these gang associated CYP.

> The younger group are at notably higher risk of sexual exploitation than the other 2 groups. These have the lowest rates of absconding and drug misuse.
> The drug offending group are less at risk of violence directed towards them than the other 2 groups. However, they have equally high risks of drug misuse and going missing as the extensive offending group.

Table 47: Differences in identified personal risks between 3 groups of gang associated CYP

Personal risk	Younger group	Extensive offending group	Drug offending group	Not gang associated
Absconding/staying away	24%	29%	28%	12%
Is the young person at risk of sexual exploitation	26%	18%	20%	18%
Substance misuse concerns	74%	88%	87%	61%
Violence abuse towards the young person from others	19%	19%	15%	12%

Health and disability

There are few differences between these groups on health and disability related factors. The one clear pattern however is that the drug offending group seem to under-represent on all factors in comparison to the other 2 groups whose rates are similar.

Table 48: Differences in identified health concerns between 3 groups of gang associated CYP

Health concern	Younger group	Extensive offending group	Drug offending group	Not gang associated
Concerns about unidentified undiagnosed need or difficulties	14%	12%	10%	11%
Have any special educational needs been identified	29%	29%	21%	28%
Mental health concerns	68%	68%	63%	65%
Mld (base = any identified SEN)	6%	6%	7%	2%
Semh (base = any identified SEN)	47%	49%	49%	15%
Spld (base = any identified SEN)	5%	3%	5%	1%
Unspecified learning difficulties (base = any identified SEN)	13%	11%	13%	4%

School factors

Differences on available schooling factors are clearer.

> The extensive offending group over-represent on both attendance concerns and concerns around school moves and exclusions.
> The younger group are most likely to currently be in alternative provision
> The drug offending group have low rates across the factors included

Table 49: Differences in identified schooling concerns between 3 groups of gang associated CYP

Schooling concern	Younger group	Extensive offending group	Drug offending group	Not gang associated
Attendance participation issues	58%	62%	58%	39%
Complex history e.g moves, disruptions, previous exclusions	40%	44%	38%	25%
Attending alternative provision	47%	40%	24%	31%

Concerns around how young person relates to others

The YOT data also provides practitioner judgements on concerns relating to how the gang associated CYP relates to others. Again there are differences between the 3 groups:

> The extensive offending group have higher rates of fear of others and controlling Behaviours than the other 2 groups

> The younger group have the highest rates of concerns around giving in to pressure from others

> The drug offending group have comparatively low rates on all concerns, with the exception of concerns around susceptibility to exploitation

Table 50: Differences in identified concerns around how children relate to others between 3 groups of gang associated CYP

Concern	Younger group	Extensive offending group	Drug offending group	Not gang associated
Fear mistrust of others	20%	24%	19%	11%
Gives in easily to pressure from others	27%	25%	20%	16%
Over assertive controlling	16%	18%	12%	12%
Susceptible to manipulation/ exploitation	39%	38%	37%	20%
Victim of bullying	8%	8%	4%	7%

Appendix B: Constructing local area measures of gang activity

Currently there are no centrally collected measures of gang activity at a local level in England. However, there are a number of available proxy measures in both recorded crime statistics and children's services data. Factor analysis is a useful technique for combining together known proxy indicators into summary measures in a data led fashion - rather than having to specify the relative importance of indicators.

Factor analysis assumes that we can't directly measure gang activity - it acts as an underlying (latent) factor. However, we do have proxies and that the joint variation (correlation) in these proxy measures can be explained by changes in underlying gang activity plus some level of error. This lets us set up a model to predict levels of these

proxy indicators in each local authority if correlations between indicators were explained by this underlying factor. We can then assess how well this model fits based on how well it recreates the observed patterns of these proxy indicators.

It may be though that 1 factor is not sufficient to explain the variation in these proxies and so this model can be varied to have multiple underlying factors, until a good fit is found. However, interpretation is important here as well as indicators of how well the model fits.

The following proxy indicators for gang activity at upper tier local authority level were included in this model:

Recorded crime offences (offences per 1,000 people - source: CSP level police recorded crime open data tables aggregated up to LA level)

> Assault with intent to cause serious harm offences
> Possession of knives offences
> Possession of firearms with intent offences
> Drugs trafficking offences

CIN factors at assessment (all rates per 1,000 children - Source CIN underlying data):

> Going missing
> Gangs
> Socially unacceptable behavior

Table 51 below demonstrates common fit indices for a 1 and 2 factor solution. This suggests that a 2 factor solution is a notable improvement on a single factor:

Table 51: Fit indices for 1 and 2 factor solutions

Number of factors	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR	BIC
1	0.73	0.59	0.21	0.11	2838.72
2	0.97	0.92	0.10	0.04	2780.44

After a geomin rotation, there is a clear interpretation of the 2 factors, which are highly correlated (r = 0.501, p<0.001):

1. Police recorded crime indicators of relevant offences
2. Children's services indicators of children vulnerable to/associated with gangs

Figure 5: Geomin rotated factor loadings for a 2 factor solution
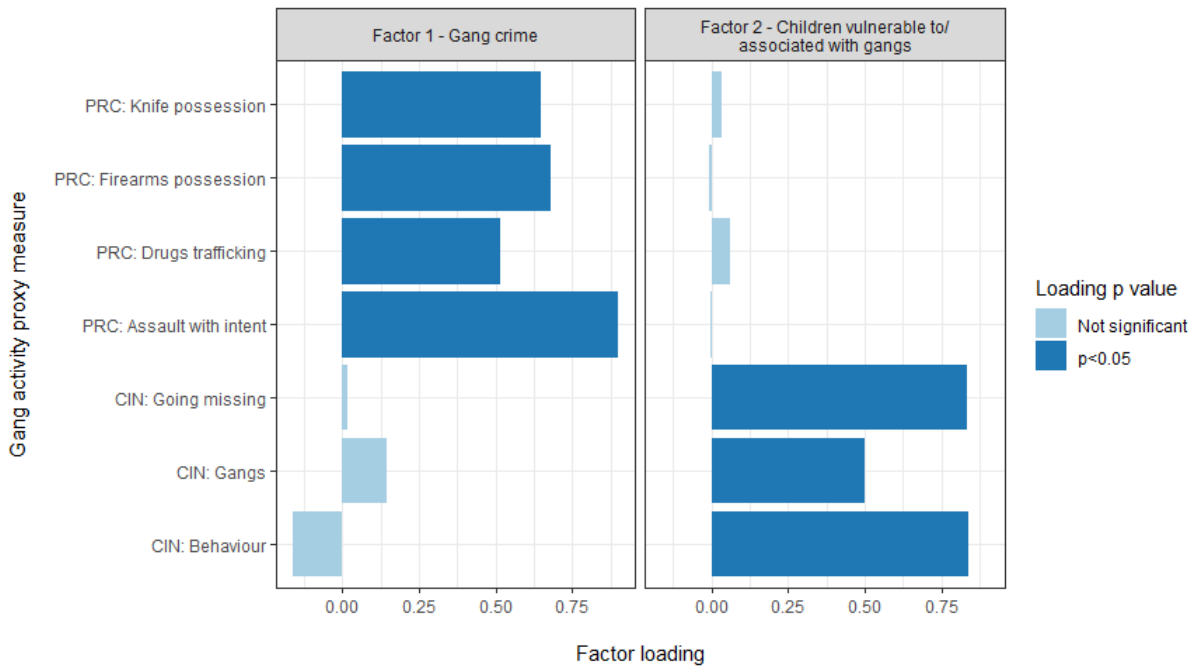
These loadings were then used to produce factor scores for local authorities on both summary factors. These scores were calculated in MPlus via an Exploratory Structural Equation Model and the regression method Asparouhov & Muthen 2007. Local authorities were included on the shortlist of areas for surveying if their factor scores were in the top 25% of local authorities on either measure, alongside local intelligence.

References

Asparouhov, T & Muthen, B (2007) 'Exploratory Structural Equation Modeling' http://www.statmodel.com/download/EFACFA810.pdf

Zhou, G (2004) 'A modified poisson regression approach to prospective studies with binary data' American Journal of Epidemiology 159(7):702-6

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