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An examination of the transitional support needs for young people leaving detention

Kirsten Janke
Edith Cowan University

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**AN EXAMINATION OF THE TRANSITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS FOR
YOUNG PEOPLE LEAVING DETENTION.**

Kirsten Janke

*This thesis is presented in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor
of Social Science Youth Work with Honours*

**Faculty of Community Services, Education & Social Sciences
Edith Cowan University**

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ABSTRACT

A successful transition from detention to living in the community is a critical step in preventing young people from recidivism and entrenchment in criminal activity (Utting & Vennard, 2000). According to Outcare, an organisation that provides support services to offenders, ex-offenders and their families, there seems to be difficulty accommodating newly released young people in existing accommodation services; additionally, many of these young people are not able to access existing support services which contributes significantly to recidivist behaviour. The purpose of undertaking this qualitative study was to examine the transitional support needs for young people leaving detention. The investigation adopted an 'Action Research' approach and utilised a reference group, involving stakeholders as experts in the field (Crane & Richardson, 2000; Wadsworth, 1997). A qualitative method was employed to collect data and to extrapolate common themes and meanings. Data was collected from three main sources (a literature review and scheduled interviews with service providers and two young people), and the method of triangulation was adhered to. The findings of the research will serve to inform Outcare on how to meet the needs of young people leaving detention, so that existing services may be improved, and participants may get better support when they depart the juvenile justice system.

DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis does not, to the best of my knowledge and belief:

- (i) incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education.
- (ii) contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text; or
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Background to the Study

The number of young persons in juvenile corrective institutions has declined considerably over the last decade or so (Dagger & Mukherjee, 1994). The Australian legal system has a separate justice system and separate courts for young people. The separate system is recognition that the community is best served when juvenile justice is geared towards rehabilitating, rather than punishing young people (O'Neill & Pitman, 2004). Evaluation of efficacy should focus on the ongoing assessment of the appropriateness, effectiveness and efficacy of the diverse programs that are in place within this rehabilitation approach.

In contrast with the rehabilitative approach, many juvenile justice systems focus their post-release efforts on surveillance and monitoring, rather than on supporting young people during the difficult process of returning to society. Often, young people leave the juvenile justice system inadequately prepared to make a successful transition from a highly structured institutional environment to an unstructured and often chaotic home environment (Canadian Journal of Criminology and Criminal Justice, 2003).

According to the National Youth Affairs Research Scheme (1997) the effectiveness of transitional programs cannot be viewed separately from the wider juvenile justice system and youth policy. Coventry, Muncie & Walters (1992, p. 21) point out:

Crime prevention, by current definition, is about rectifying troublesome behaviour. By default, it has a disturbing tendency to establish the boundaries of policy for all young people. What seems needed is a shift in policy focus that de-emphasises the troublesome behaviour of particular young people and instead accentuates the positive and creative citizenship of all young people. This shift necessitates institutional changes and not behavioural management.

Podesta & Jones (1992) identify that young people require an integrated, holistic response that addresses the root causes of the offending to provide any solution to their propensity to re-offend. This study aims to address this gap.

The Significance of the Study

Studies examining juvenile recidivism are widely recognised as useful for informing criminal justice policy initiatives, however few studies in this area have been undertaken in Australia (Lynch, Bucknam & Krenske, 2003). As a result, this investigation aims to make a significant contribution to Outcare, its policies, service delivery and to society itself through crime prevention.

The significance of this research is that it will provide an interpretative study that examines the transitional support needs for young people leaving detention. The investigation is part of an 'Action Research' approach undertaken on behalf of Outcare in collaboration with the Youth Affairs Council of WA, Youth Legal Service and Edith Cowan University. The study will seek to provide Outcare with information on how best to meet the needs of young people leaving detention, so that existing services may be improved and participants may receive better transitional support when they depart the Juvenile Justice system.

The Purpose of the Study

The research will provide stakeholders with a clear picture of the options, within the Perth metropolitan area, available to young people leaving detention that will assist them to achieve a successful transition. In addition, it will identify the transitional support needs from the young peoples' perspective and the service providers' perspective. Furthermore, there will be a focus upon models that are currently in use elsewhere that may be effective and may be appropriate to implement within the Perth metropolitan area.

Objectives

The objectives of the research study are:

- To identify service delivery models currently in use nationally and internationally.
- To identify the types of services that are currently being offered to the target group within the Perth metropolitan area.
- To identify the services the target group would favour being offered within the Perth metropolitan area.
- To identify the mismatches between the services currently being offered to the target group and the services that the target group would prefer to be implemented.
- To make recommendations on alternative types of services that may be needed in the Perth metropolitan area.

Research Components

The research study is comprised of six main components:

- A search of the current literature identifying the risk factors associated with young people and re-offending.
- A search of the current literature identifying other models of service delivery, which appear to be effective nationally and internationally.
- Scheduled interviews with service providers (i.e. detention centre staff, youth housing providers, counsellors).
- Scheduled interviews with young people who recently have left detention.
- An identification of the mismatches of the current services that are provided to young people, the service practitioners' perception on young people's transitional support needs and the young people's perceptions of their own needs.
- To offer suggestions for change of new transitional support services that might be needed.

Reference Group

An initial step for the research project was to establish a reference group. The group consists of five individuals, representing a range of 'sectors' (stakeholders): Mr Peter Sirr, Executive Director, Outcare, Mr Kim Crabb, Senior Case Manager, Outcare, Ms Cheryl Cassidy-Vernon, Manager, Youth Legal Service, Ms Meredith Turnbull, Executive Officer, Youth Affairs Council WA, and Ms Jude Bridgland Sorenson, Lecturer, Edith Cowan University. Throughout the project the reference group, as the experts in the field, was involved by providing views and feedback in structured ways. Furthermore, the reference group discussed and negotiated the process of the project, providing input and make informed decisions (Crane & Richardson, 2000). The stakeholders involved in this research project are:

Outcare – Outcare operates a Reconnect Program which targets 'at risk' young people (10-18 years of age) who have come into contact with the Juvenile Justice system.

Youth Legal Service – Youth Legal Service focuses service delivery on meeting the legal needs of young people (up to the age of 25).

Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia (YACWA) – YACWA aims to be a united, independent active advocate for the non-government youth sector serving the young people of Western Australia.

Edith Cowan University – The School of International, Cultural and Community Studies at Edith Cowan University provides training for Youth Workers to assist young people in their social, personal and cultural development.

Key Definitions

Recidivism

For the purpose of this research project recidivism is defined as return to detention. For the purpose of this study, recidivism is defined as stated by the

Australasian Legal Information Institute (12 February, 2004) “recidivism relates to the repetition of offending”.

Crime prevention

Crime prevention is defined as interventions designed to forestall crime without recourse to the criminal justice system (Australian Crime Prevention Council Western Australia, 1995).

Triangulation

For the purpose of this study triangulation is defined as

cross-checking the existence of certain phenomena and the veracity of individual accounts by gathering data from a number of informants and a number of sources and subsequently comparing and contrasting one account with another in order to produce as full and balanced a study as possible (Open University Course E111, 1988).

Young people

Outcare Reconnect Service Provision defines young people as people aged 10 to 18 years of age. This definition is used in this project.

Social authorities in Sweden

The social authorities in Sweden are social agencies, which act independently from the Government ministries. The Government ministries are relatively small and merely policy-making organisations, allowed controlling the social authorities by policy decisions but not by direct orders, prohibiting interfering with the day-to-day operation in an agency or the outcome in individual cases.

Perth metropolitan area

For the purpose of this research Perth metropolitan area is defined as stated in the classification used by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in the 2001 census.

Summary

This chapter gave a brief overview on the background, the significance and the purpose of the study. Furthermore, the chapter explained the objectives of the study and the research components. Finally, the significance of the reference group was discussed in more detail. The next chapter is comprised of a literature review, which is the basis of the research study.

CHAPTER 2

SEARCH OF THE CURRENT LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter is dedicated to a critical review of the current literature, both nationally and internationally, which focus on issues associated with transitional support needs for young people leaving detention. The literature review is divided into two major sections. The first section consists on an overview on 'juvenile recidivism'. The second section reviews and evaluates previous research studies and literature examining transitional support needs for young people leaving detention. The review focuses on national and international literature giving examples of different philosophical approaches to juvenile justice. The review also looks at single-issue interventions and their effectiveness from Australian and International sources. A summary of the main points and recommendations according to the literature review will then be outlined and presented for review.

Juvenile Recidivism

There is no consensus on how to measure juvenile recidivism. Most state juvenile corrections agencies do not routinely collect data of this kind. The absence of research is largely due to the limited availability of appropriate data, data comparability across criminal justice system agencies and the substantial resources that are required to piece together the data that is available (Australian Institute of Criminology, 2003). According to the Australasian Legal Information Institute (12 February, 2004) recidivism relates to the repetition of offending, but for research purposes it is generally defined as return to prison. A person who appears before the court with a history of prior convictions, reflects the past failures of the system to provide rehabilitation and deterrence and presents a particular problem to the sentencing judge or magistrate. Where on any previous occasion a court has sentenced the offender to imprisonment, the prospect for the offender to receive a non-custodial sentence on a later occasion is very slim. The more times imprisoned, the lesser the prospects of rehabilitation and the greater the prospects of re-offending.

Lynch, Buckman & Krenske (2003) argue that although studies examining criminal recidivism are widely recognised as useful for informing criminal justice policy initiatives, few studies in this area have been undertaken in Australia. Furthermore, the under-researched nature of juvenile-to-adult offending trajectories has meant that the findings of such studies are somewhat inconsistent. One of the main findings that have emerged from previous research is that assignment of severe punishments for early criminal behaviour can result in greater recidivism. Courmarelos and Weatherburn (1995) argue that in terms of levels of harm inflicted on the individual as a result of an intervention, the least harmful response by the State for the majority of first-time juvenile offenders is to 'do nothing'. Conversely, it is also obvious that intervention of some degree must be directed towards serious recidivist offenders if the short-term and long-term interests of both the offender and the broader community are to be respected.

The Australasian Legal Information Institute (12 February, 2004) states that the Department of Family and Children Services in New South Wales commented on the effects of institutionalisation as follows:

...there is greater recidivism of comparable offenders after institutionalisation than after probation; institutionalised young offenders committed more car thefts and break-and-enters after release than did probationers after completion of their orders; recidivists who had been institutionalised committed more assaults, more malicious damage than those placed on probation; and remand in custody increased the likelihood of recidivism (p.1)

The NSW Department of Juvenile Justice in a 1996 report on juvenile recidivism found that the majority of juvenile offenders would not reappear after their first proven offence; furthermore, it is a small proportion of juvenile re-offenders that account for a large percentage of juvenile offences. Moreover, the study found that 70 per cent of juvenile offenders had only one proven criminal appearance in the Children's Court. A further 15 per cent had just two proven appearances. However, 9 per cent of juvenile offenders were responsible for almost one-third of all criminal appearances.

In an analysis of the NSW Department of Juvenile Justice recidivism study Cain (1998) states that males are one-third more likely to re-offend than females; the younger an offender is at first court appearance the greater the risk of future offending. More than 75% of the 11 – 13 year olds did so within two years (Youth Studies Australia, 2002). Young people who commit, as their first offence, a common assault, break and enter, or motor vehicle theft are more likely to re-offend, whereas those that first commit a sexual offence, drug offence or offence against good order are unlikely to re-offend. Young people given a custodial sentence, community service order, or supervised probation as their first penalty are more likely to re-offend than first time offenders given lesser penalties, such as fines or nominal penalties. Moreover, young people who were dealt with by a non-specialist Children's Court were also more likely to re-offend than juveniles who first appeared before a specialist magistrate (Cain, 1998). The recidivism study also identified that persistence in juvenile crime is marked by progressively shorter periods until the next offence. Furthermore, the majority of offences for which juveniles appear and re-appear in the Children's Court are property offences and not crimes of violence. Juveniles, who re-offend, including persistent offenders, do not escalate to more serious and violent crimes. Even those who first committed a violent offence,

when they re-offend, were more likely to commit a subsequent property crime (Cain, 1998).

The absence of women in criminological writings has been criticised by researchers, including Smart (1995) and Heidensohn (1996). Female criminality has not generally been treated as a particularly pressing social problem; not only because of its comparative rarity but also because of the nature of the offences committed by women (Carrington, 1993). Statistics indicate that court appearances by women are mostly by first offenders not recidivists (Alder, 1998). Therefore, they pose no particular problem to the agencies of social control. As a consequence, academic research into female criminality has failed to attract much interest or to receive very much 'official' support or finance, hence the relative scarcity of studies in this area (Smart, 1995).

The number of Indigenous young people in detention has almost halved since 1994. However, despite this reduction, they are more than seventeen times more likely to be in detention than non-Indigenous young people (O'Neill & Pitman, 2003). Results of research showed that Indigenous young people are over-represented in arrest rates, court appearances, and detention statistics and were most likely to progress from the juvenile to adult systems, with 86 per cent compared to 75 per cent of non-Indigenous young people entering the adult correction system and 65 per cent compared to 41 per cent serving a prison term (Department of Juvenile Justice, 1996). Beresford & Omaji (1996) suggest that involvement in offending behaviour and subsequent arrest and detention or incarceration is so common that it has become a rite of passage for indigenous young people. Incarceration of Aboriginal young people is becoming a normal part of growing up, where Aboriginal young people "grow up in a peer culture in which the experience of remand is common" (p.117).

Many juvenile justice systems focus much of their post-release efforts on surveillance and monitoring (in other words checking to ensure the offender is meeting the conditions of release), rather than on supporting young people during the difficult process of returning to society. In many places, young people leave unprepared to make the transition from a highly structured institutional environment to an unstructured and often chaotic home environment. Furthermore, there is not enough support for them in the

community to reinforce any gains they made whilst in detention. According to the Canadian Journal of Criminology and Criminal Justice (2003) part of the problem is a lack of coordination among the juvenile justice, school, mental health, drug treatment and court systems.

Literature suggests that homeless young people are at greater risk of becoming victims of criminal activity than are their peers who have a stable and supportive home environment. Young people become homeless for a range of reasons often involving high levels of conflict within their families including sexual and physical abuse. There is clear evidence of young homeless people being perpetrators of crime as a means of economic survival (Developmental Crime Prevention Consortium, 1999). Consequently, young people preparing to leave detention often do not have a home. They often return to communities where persistent poverty, lack of jobs and affordable housing make finding a permanent home difficult. Even young people who have places to live have policies or practices, including restrictions on access to subsidized housing. Ogilvie (2001, p.2) identifies accommodation as

...central to any genuine attempt at re-integrating newly released prisoners. The cost of four weeks bond, one month rent up front, plus connecting the electricity and a phone, is more often than not beyond the financial capacity of people immediately leaving prison (p.2).

Enhanced re-entry mechanisms, with their promise to help offenders better navigate the straits between incarceration and home, are seen by many in the field as one of the best hopes to reduce recidivism and in the process improve lives, maintain public safety, and reduce the costs of the criminal justice system. National-level policy makers are paying attention to this issue and have begun to support the idea that existing ex-offenders find housing could be a way to help reduce recidivism and thus ease the strain on corrections agencies and keep communities safe (Rodriguez & Brown, 2003).

Bennett (1993) believes that the most important part of juvenile re-entry planning is supporting families and helping them take the lead role in a juveniles' return to the community. It is extremely important for justice authorities to involve family members in the treatment and rehabilitation of their children. According to the National Mental Health Association (2004) family-

focused interventions have shown positive impacts on child and family functioning, 'delinquent behaviour', and recidivism.

Howell et al (1995) and Farrington (1996) point out that knowledge of the factors in young people's lives associated with an increased risk of offending and re-offending is gaining ground as the driving force behind new community-based initiatives to make it less likely that young people will commit crime in the first place. Solutions to young people and their offending require an "integrated, holistic response which addresses the root causes of the offending" (Podesta & Jones, 1992, p.334). The major risk factors have been identified as: homelessness and family factors, such as low income; poor parental supervision; harsh or erratic discipline; physical abuse; parental conflict; having a parent with a criminal record and having parents whose attitudes make allowances for anti-social behaviour and law breaking. Another risk factor identified was school factors, such as low educational achievement starting in primary school; aggressive, disruptive behaviour (including bullying); lack of commitment to school (including truancy); and attending a disorganised school. Furthermore, community factors such as availability of illegal drugs; growing-up in a disadvantaged area with a high population turnover, community disorganisation and neglect, and lack of attachment to the neighbourhood among residents were identified. Moreover, individual and/or peer factors were recognised as risk factors. These included hyperactivity and impulsivity; attitudes that condone law breaking; early involvement in crime (under 14); friends involved in crime and/or whose attitude condone law breaking (Riggs, 1998).

Single-Issue Interventions and their Effectiveness from Australian and International Sources

Recent research has produced evidence of modest reductions in offending rates achieved by a range of interventions tailored to the offending related needs of individual offenders (Gendreau & Ross, 1980; McGuire & Priestley, 1995; Gendreau et al., 1995). These reviews highlight individual programs whose effectiveness in reducing re-offending has been established through evaluation. Lipsey (1995) analysed the results from 440 evaluations by

using the technique of meta-analysis (which reduces the characteristics of individual studies into summary statistics that can be aggregated to produce an overall “effect size” for an intervention). The aim in this study was to establish which types of intervention had achieved the most significant and positive effects. Conversely, Lipsey (1995) sought to identify types of programs that had consistently achieved nothing or even produced a negative effect. The outcomes of the studies suggested that 45 per cent of juveniles who had taken part in rehabilitative programs were in further trouble with the law an average of six months after intervention. By comparison, the average recidivism rate among control juveniles who received no intervention was 50 per cent. This indicates that 5 per cent of the overall reduction in recidivism rates is attributable to intervention. Further investigation revealed factors that appeared influential:

- (a) The age, ethnic background, previous criminal history and other characteristics of young offenders were modestly related to effect size. Programs with juveniles who were older and had longer criminal records tended to show larger reductions in ‘delinquency’ than interventions with young offenders and lower risk groups.
- (b) Factors relating to the type of intervention and the circumstances in which it was delivered related very strongly to the extent to which recidivism was reduced (Lipsey, 1995).

According to Lipsey (1995) three different types of rehabilitation programs were identified as showing an average reduction in recidivism rates of 20 per cent or more. These included programs such as:

- Programs designed to improve personal and social skills.
- Programs focused on changing behaviour.
- Multiple service programs combining a number of different approaches.

On the other hand, there were two types of intervention where the evaluations identified an average increase in recidivism, including:

- Vocational counselling.
- Incarceration.

McGuire (1995) states that there is no single outstanding approach to preventing re-offending that is guaranteed to succeed. However, punitive measures such as shock incarceration are ineffective. They are counter-productive. According to the Australian Institute of Criminology even a relatively short term in custody on remand was found to significantly increase subsequent offending (64.3 per cent) compared to being placed on remand at home (36.6 per cent). Trotter (1995, p.163-177) has also pointed out that “more serious orders can influence the propensity to re-offend through a process of criminal socialisation, and that community service orders and other structured programs that bring offenders together can actually serve to magnify the very deviance that such responses to offending are intended to reduce”.

Within community-based initiatives in crime prevention, the objective is to re-integrate young people that are leaving the juvenile justice system and link offenders into services that exist within their own community. Placement of offenders with community agencies such as counselling services, psychological services, educational and drug rehabilitation groups is aimed at improving the situation for offenders in the hope of reducing their likelihood of re-offending. Some offenders, however, see programs of this kind as an intrusion into their daily lives. The disruption to their routine is considered by some offenders to be more difficult to cope with than the total loss of freedom encountered in prison (Vernon & McKillopp, 1991).

Sports and Recreation

Mason and Wilson (1988) conducted a research project that examined the effects of sports and recreation on youth offending. Paying particular attention to Aboriginal youth offending, the positive effects of sport/recreation on the reduction of delinquent behaviour have been documented. By reducing boredom through the implementation of positive alternatives, namely sport and recreation programs, has been successful in reducing youth offending patterns. A Kimberley community made similar suggestions for crime prevention when consulted, “...we need more things for kids to do to keep them out of trouble, like recreation centres, basketball courts and discos” (Kimberley Regional

Justice Project Report, April, 2003). According to Hazlehurst (1990), sport and recreation programs have proven successful by many Aboriginal communities and greater success seems to lie in Aboriginal-initiated programs. Each community is unique; therefore programs must meet the needs of the young people in a way that the community would deem suitable and effective. However, Mason and Wilson (1988) warn against depending only upon sport and recreation programs for the reduction of youth offending; although they strongly support the important role these play in community crime prevention initiatives. "We need to be careful in the context that recreation, whilst being a positive contributor, cannot achieve a result in isolation. Other support mechanisms also need to be provided (Mason and Wilson, 1988, p. 144).

Sutton (1990) cites that the 'Bonnemaison Program', a French initiative in the early 1980's, in which the French equivalent of our local government bodies, provided funding to community groups developing crime prevention programs. What Bonnemaison did to prevent ongoing crime was to ask social workers to identify problem groups within the community and develop programs aimed at diverting these young people away from the antisocial behaviour in which they were involved. For example, one of their programs took young people involved with gangs who harassed and assaulted train travellers and paid them a salary to attend drama workshops. The workshops produced a video in which the young people portrayed their lives on the Metro. It was claimed that this program directly reduced the likelihood of these young people continuing the activity that brought them to the attention of authorities.

Housing

The lack of housing presents a major, perhaps insurmountable, obstacle to successful re-entry to many inmates about to be released. Homelessness has grown among the general population over the years for several reasons, including a widening gap between rich and poor and a growing shortage of affordable low-income housing in cities. A scarcity of well-paying jobs and limited access to education or training also contribute to the problem. People who lack independent living skills or have physical or mental disabilities may be even more vulnerable to becoming homeless. It is likely that young people

leaving detention face some or all of these problems as they seek housing after prison (Rodriguez & Brown, 2003).

Results of a recent research study by the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (2003) found that the housing factor is the most predictive of re-incarceration. Furthermore, the study established that ex-prisoner represent one of the most transient groups in Australia. Causal links were made between having to move often and deteriorating relations with family members or friends, increasing drug use, unsuitability of accommodation location, expense of accommodation and not wanting to be a burden by staying too long with friends and relations.

Nevertheless, it is important to recognize in social research and its' interpretation that correlation does not equal cause (Earle, 1999). Frequently in the research literature, factors associated with becoming homeless are confused with outcomes of homelessness. Common examples of this concern mental illness and crime, both of which are at times 'linked' to homelessness without any clear understanding of whether this occurs prior to first becoming homeless, whether it accompanies the situation of homelessness, whether it is an outcome of homelessness (Hutson & Liddiard, 1994).

Examples of Different Philosophical Approaches to Juvenile Justice from the International Literature

In this section I will review three approaches of juvenile justice other than those that are current in Australia.

The Scandinavian Approach

In the Scandinavian countries 'juvenile delinquency' does not exist in the same sense as in many other countries. There are no special codes for 'juveniles' with regard to status offences and the same criminal code applies to both young and old. In Sweden prison sentences are rarely issued to young people who have not yet reached the age of 18. Social legislation is used to a great extent to regulate reactions to crimes committed by 'juveniles'. The social services play a substantial greater role, in comparison to most other countries, in

society's reaction to criminal acts committed by young people. This may be due to Sweden's political climate with its strong central power, its politicians in collective search for solutions and its strong economic growth (Sarnecki, 1985).

Sweden is a pluralistic welfare society with a highly developed public sector. The ideas of welfare and pluralism also contribute to the relatively great amount of tolerance and humanity shown towards persons who deviate from the norm. These ideas are considered to be important in the formulation of the measures to be used in regard to young offenders. Relatively substantial and long-term criminality is required before the authorities are allowed to undertake more far-reaching measures. The emphasis on treatment instead of punishment is also considered to be more humane. However, the ideas behind it have been questioned (National Council for Crime Prevention, 1986).

The main political parties are in substantial agreement about the importance of avoiding incarceration. They also agree that when incarceration must be used, it must maintain human character and offer treatment programs and opportunities to keep inmates in contact with society. Additionally, the media tend to manifest a balanced and tolerant attitude toward offenders and the work of prison and probation authorities (Osterdahl, 2002).

In Sweden the social authorities do not have the task of punishing young people for their crimes. Therefore, when the social authorities make a decision regarding a suitable measure as a reaction to a criminal act, the decision is based solely on a young person's social situation. If a young person has a serious history of criminality that naturally belongs to the overall picture of his or her social situation. The fact that Swedish law places the entire responsibility on the social authorities for the reaction to crimes committed by individuals under the age of 15 means that their criminality is considered to be a social problem (The Scandinavian Research Council for Criminology, 1991).

The social authorities' measures have the aim of helping the young offender out of the social situation that is causing to commit crimes. The measures vary substantially, depending on which factors are deemed to be causing the young person's delinquency. Measures for individuals with minor criminal histories are usually limited to one or a series of talks with the young

offender and his or her parents. If it becomes apparent that there are serious problems at home (economic problems or internal conflicts), an attempt will be made to resolve these problems. The family then has certain possibilities to receive economic support, therapy, a contact person and other forms of support. In some cases the family can get a social worker who can meet with them at home over a longer period in order to help the family members resolve various problems, for example the family's economic planning, their leisure time problems, and conflicts in relations. In cases of extensive asocial behaviour, which holds a threat over a young person's development, 'moderate coercive measures' are utilised. These measures are somewhere between voluntary measures and custody for social care. However, currently these measures are seldom used (Snare, 1991).

Osterdahl (2002) states that the development of the Swedish Prison and Probation Service must emphasize the humane and just treatment of offenders maintain safety and security and influence offenders, toward a crime-free life and enhance the quality of supportive management. Important steps have been taken towards positive changes, which involved the roles, functions, organization and working methods of all categories of staff.

The French Approach

Another overseas model is operating on the principle that crime is a structural problem in society and that the causes, rather than the results, need to be dealt with. The distinguishing feature of the French system introduced in the mid 1980s, is the total coordination of resources at the local level and directed at solving the underlying reasons for crime in an area. This approach reflects the view that sentencing and law enforcement reforms are insufficient to reduce crime rates. A coordinated attack on underlying causes such as poor housing, the alienation of young people, drugs and structural unemployment is therefore needed (Select Committee to Youth Affairs, 1992). The French model recognises that youth crime prevention must involve some constructive, enriching, broadly based community approaches such as:

- Provision of integrated employment, welfare and accommodation services.
- Facilitating communication amongst young people and between young people and local inhabitants.
- Establishing working groups to combat drug abuse.
- Provision of for compensation to victims of crime.
- An emphasis on community policing.

Project Greenlight

Helping ex-offenders return successfully to communities helps prevent recidivism. The staff of Project Greenlight, an eight-week re-entry program at Queensboro Correctional Facility, came to the same conclusion. Greenlight was implemented in 2002 as a partnership of the New York State Department of Correctional Services, the New York State Division of Parole, and the Vera Institute of Justice.

The project provided an array of transitional services, including housing assistance as one of the program's cornerstones. Greenlight systematically identified inmates needing housing, developed relationships with transitional housing resources in the community and helped inmates develop a plan for where they would live upon release. Project Greenlight's broad goal was to address a spectrum of re-entry issues during the final months of incarceration, integrating the efforts of both corrections and parole staff. It required close collaboration with community-based organisations and inmates' families so ex-prisoners could establish connections with people able to support them after their release.

The 348 men who participated in Project Greenlight at the Queensboro Correctional Facility – a minimum-security state prison in New York City – attended mandatory workshops focusing on job readiness, practical skills and cognitive-behavioural tools. Project Greenlight trained two Division of Parole institutional officers and two Department of Correctional Services counsellors to be re-entry case managers. Thus, both the state releasing agency – corrections – and the state agency supervising people in the field – parole – had roles in preparing inmates for the transition from prison. Re-entry case managers helped

the men prepare individual release plans that served as guides for both the individual prisoner and their parole officers.

To connect the men with organisations that could support them in the community, Project Greenlight brought to Queensboro representatives of programs that addressed employment, education, substance abuse, family issues and constructive leisure time. Re-entry case managers assisted participants in securing appointments with these groups and with other organisations that did not visit the facilities.

Part of the family re-integration programming was that the people could invite their families to Queensboro to participate with them in regular counselling sessions, which aimed to help the men strengthen bonds with family members where it was possible, reconcile their expectations with those of their families and plan how they would fit back into family life.

Project Greenlight's effort to provide housing assistance demonstrated that prisoners preparing for release could be prevented from going to homeless shelters or the street. The project's community coordinator worked full time in the prison and devoted approximately half of his time to providing housing assistance. The coordinator systematically asked the people if they wanted assistance and then worked intensively with them and with community organisations to make sure inmates had a place to live when they left.

However, the project also had to deal with obstacles to serving homeless inmates. Greenlight staff made several assumptions when they decided to assist inmates with housing. One was that people who would request assistance truly would be homeless -- that they would not have anyone with whom they could live. Staff learned that many people had relatives who were able to provide housing but that they were restricted from living with them because of criminal justice related policies and practices. A second assumption was that people who were homeless would ask for and accept assistance. This was not always true.

Nevertheless, evaluation of the project confirms that Greenlight's effort to use existing resources more effectively by connecting inmates to housing resources in the community demonstrated that such collaborations can be successful (Vera Institute of Justice, 2003).

Conclusion

What is clear from the literature is that solutions to young people and their offending require an “integrated, holistic response that addresses the root causes of the offending” (Podesta & Jones, 1992, p.334). Detention does not resurrect or redeem these young people’s lives. In fact, severe punishment for early criminal behaviour can result in greater recidivism (Lynch, Buckman & Kranske, 2003). As pointed out by a family youth outreach worker in an article in *Youth Studies Australia* (2002,p. 4) “...the number of re-offenders would drop if there were more services to get them back into mainstream society... What stop them re-offending are opportunities for employment, opportunities for training and education, stable and affordable accommodation and hooking them into meaningful and affordable recreation pursuits”.

The search of current literature suggests that the following factors associated with young people and recidivism play a key role in developing effective support strategies for young people leaving detention:

- Social and demographic factors.
- Homelessness.
- Institutionalisation (there is greater recidivism of comparable offenders after institutionalisation than after probation).
- Unprepared transition from a highly structured institutional environment to an unstructured chaotic home environment.
- Lack of coordination between support services and juvenile justice system.
- Professionalism of staff.
- Unemployment and/or low income.
- Low educational achievements.
- Family factors.
- Parental conflict.
- Drug abuse.
- Developmental and/or psychological issues.
- Physical and/or sexual abuse.

Recommendations

This is what the literature suggested:

- Support programs tailored to the individual's need (culturally appropriate).
- Parenting and other family based programs.
- Support for finding affordable accommodation and housing.
- Rehabilitation programs tailored to the individual's need.
- Support programs for job seeking, education and training.
- Support through community involvement (Community Mediation Center).
- Support for mental and/or physical health issues.
- Mentoring.
- Support for accessing affordable meaningful recreation and leisure activities.
- Change in media attitude towards its' reporting of young people within the juvenile justice system.
- Agreement within the political parties on the importance of avoiding incarceration.
- Raising public awareness.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODS

Theoretical Framework

The research is a qualitative study and is positioned within a feminist framework. The study utilised a critical paradigm and facilitate the use of multiple types of data to increase understanding and interpretation of meaning (Sarantakos, 1993; Morse, 1989). Feminist qualitative research shares in general the assumption of 'intersubjectivity' between the researcher and the participant and the mutual creation of data. Participants, along with the researchers, constructed the meanings that became 'data' for later interpretation by the researcher (Olesen, 1992). Furthermore, the study is concerned about inequities and inequalities derived from male dominance rooted in the gender, economic and structural spheres (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998).

Methodology

The project utilises an 'Action Research' approach. According to Burns (1990, p.252) Action Research is:

the application of fact finding to practical problem solving in a social situation with a view to improving the quality of action within it, involving the collaboration and co-operation of researchers, practitioners and laymen (p. 252).

This type of research is characterised by a number of criteria. Burns (1990) notes that action is situational (it diagnoses a problem and attempts to solve it), collaborative, participatory and self-evaluative (for it involves a constant evaluation of its process and modifications to adjust research and practice). Proponents of action research criticise the theoretical and methodological basis of conventional social research, both by its challenges and by its claims. Winter (1987, p.2) notes:

it challenges a scientific method of inquiry based on the authority of the "outside" observer and the "independent" experimenter, and it claims to

reconstruct both practical expertise and theoretical insight on the different basis of its own inquiry procedures (p.2).

Furthermore, the methodology used in this research project is qualitative; where the following characteristic elements suggested by Sarantakos (1993), will guide the implementation of this action research namely:

- 'It assumes that the social world is always a human creation not a discovery; consequently interpretive science tries to capture reality as it is, namely as seen and experienced by some of the stakeholders.
- It tries to capture reality in interaction.
- It studies a small number of respondents who are representative of a cross section of the stakeholders.
- It employs non-probability sampling methods, such as 'Purposive Sampling'.
- It attempts to present the information gathered verbally, in a detailed and complete form, not in numbers or formulas.
- It uses no quantitative measures or variables.
- The researcher tries to approach reality without preconceived ideas and pre-structured models and patterns.
- It perceives the researcher and the researched as two equally important elements of the same situation. Respondents are not reduced to variables, units or hypotheses, but are seen as parts of the whole. Reducing people into numerical symbols and statistical figures results in loss of a perception of the subjective nature of human behaviour.
- Its purpose is to interpret meaningful human actions and interpretations that people give of themselves or others.
- It attempts to capture the meaning and regularities of social action.
- It aims to understand people, not to measure them.
- It employs research procedures that produce descriptive data, presenting in the respondents' own words their views and experiences.
- Interpretive inquiry ultimately is a moral inquiry' (p.45).

Research Questions

Two key research questions arose from an analysis of the problems of the practitioners in the situation, specifically: ‘What are the transitional support needs for young people leaving detention and, What would it take to improve the transitional support needs for young people leaving detention?’ Consequently, Outcare identified these problems and the need to improve the transitional support needs for young people leaving detention. The research involved the collection of qualitative data. Due to the application of multiple methods for the data collection and the process of triangulation, the study ought to result in a rich and considered document where the reality of major stakeholders has been gathered and interpreted.

The three main components of the data collection are:

- A comprehensive literature review.
- Scheduled interviews with service providers.
- Scheduled interviews with two young people.

Sampling Procedure

This research project utilised the ‘Purposive Sampling’ method, a non-probability sampling method, which is usually used for exploration and qualitative analysis. According to Sarantakos (1993, p.138) this procedure does not employ ‘the rules of probability theory and does not claim representativeness.’ In this sampling technique the researchers purposely choose subjects who, in their opinion, are thought to be relevant to the research topic. In this case, the judgment of the reference group as experts in the field is more important than obtaining a probability sample (The process of sampling involved identification of the informants, for example, young people and service providers), and arranging times for meeting them.

The Literature Review

The literature review features an overview on young people and recidivism (Australasian Legal Information Institute, 2004). Furthermore, it examines both current national and international service delivery models to identify the resources and services that have been effective for young people leaving detention and making a successful transition (Bennett, 1993). Publications of English literature, as well as literature that has been translated into English, was used for the review. From the initial information collected, suggestions were made on what kind of transitional support young people need to achieve a successful transition from detention to living within the community.

Scheduled Interviews with Service Providers

The main emphasis of the interviews with the service providers was to identify, from a service practitioner's point of view, what options are available to young people leaving detention, what services are currently being accessed by young people and what services need to be implemented to improve the transitional support needs for young people leaving detention. Data was collected from a cross section of service providers, who deliver services to young people leaving detention, including government and non-government agencies such as local housing service providers, case workers and detention centre staff. Sampling was executed through the 'Purposive Sampling' method as discussed earlier. Standardised interviews were held with representatives from different agencies using interview schedules (questionnaires). The schedules featured mainly open questions.

How were the Service Providers Chosen?

From the search of current literature, the following key factors associated with young people and recidivism determined the sampling of the service providers.

Socio-Demographic Factors

According to the Crime Research Centre (1999) the local government areas of Swan, Belmont, Victoria Park and Perth exhibit high rates of 'juvenile offending' while Bassendean, Vincent, Stirling, Fremantle, and Kwinana occupy the second rank. Consequently, care was taken to especially target service providers from those areas, namely Cyril Jackson Youth Service, Bassendean, Youth & School Help Services, Midvale, Swan Emergency Accommodation, Centrelink Youth Services Unit, Victoria Park, Passages Northbridge, Mission Australia, East Perth, Fremantle Youth Services and Great Mates Crisis, Accommodation Spearwood.

Homelessness

The research project addressed the key factor of homelessness by choosing agencies or organisations that provide services such as crisis accommodation, supported accommodation and any other means of providing housing for young people leaving detention. The agencies and organisations covered here were: Great Mates Crisis Accommodation Spearwood, Swan Emergency Accommodation, Passages Northbridge and Fremantle Youth Services.

Institutionalisation

According to the literature review there are greater incidents of recidivism of comparable offenders after institutionalisation than after probation. Institutionalisation is one of the key factors associated with young people and recidivism. Therefore, Rangeview Juvenile Remand Centre was an appropriate choice.

Unemployment and/or Low Income

The research project addressed these key factors by interviewing staff at South East Metropolitan Youth Association, Fremantle Youth Services and Centrelink Youth Services Unit Victoria Park.

Low Educational Achievements

Findings of the literature review point out that another key factor constitutes low educational achievements. For that reason Cyril Jackson Youth Service and Youth & School Help Services Midvale were asked to participate in the project.

Family Factors

What is apparent from the literature is that family factors, such as dysfunctional families and/or parental conflict, play an important role when addressing issues with young people and recidivism. Hence, Safe Care and the Bentley Family Centre were chosen to participate.

Drug Abuse

Drug abuse is one of the key factors associated with young people and recidivism. Services who deal with these issues were asked to participate and included Mission Australia Youth Withdrawal and Respite Service and the Bentley Family Centre.

Developmental and/or Psychological Issues

Developmental and/or psychological issues were also key findings of the literature review. To address these issues Bentley Family Centre and Safe Care were asked to take part in the research project.

Physical and/or Sexual Abuse

From the investigation of current literature it is evident that physical and/or sexual abuse are/is factor(s) associated with young people and recidivism. The agency addressing these and other related issues chosen to participate in the project was Safe Care and the Bentley Family Centre.

Professionalism of Staff

The examination of current literature revealed that professionalism of staff is a factor associated with young people and recidivism; hence, only 'professional staff' was interviewed.

Scheduled Interviews with Young People

Scheduled interviews were held with two young people who had re-offended and recently had been released from detention. The interviews took place at Outcare, 27 Moore Street, East Perth. The participants were recruited on the basis of expressions of interest by the young people themselves (Sarantakos, 1993). The main focus of the scheduled interviews was to identify and highlight the transitional support needs of young people leaving detention from the young person's point of view. Furthermore, the participants were encouraged to explore their feelings, reservations, hunches and instincts around the research issue. Last, but certainly not least, their hopes and dreams for the future. Each interview session lasted approximately 40 minutes. The sessions were guided by a set of questions. The interviews were tape recorded, with the respondents' permission. Later, notes were taken from the recorded data in order to check information gathered from the sessions. Care was taken to build a relationship of trust, where the participants felt free to speak.

Data Analysis

The tape-recorded interview sessions were transcribed at Youth Legal Service. The researcher collated, coded, entered, cleaned, preliminarily analysed and interpreted the survey data. The qualitative data analysis involved development of a data set describing the main issues and grouping the information into appropriate theme areas, creation of a qualitative data base capturing non-quantitative comments and sample descriptions (Winter, 1987; Merriam 1998; Guba & Lincoln, 1991). I have found, as did Merriam (1998) that data analysis is ongoing and often informs the next level of analysis of data.

Once the data was processed, a descriptive report of the findings was prepared that provides summary tables and information. Interpretation of the findings was then undertaken. A final major document was prepared that

encompasses the literature review, discussion of methodology, description of samples and process, findings, interpretations and recommendations.

The Pilot Study

The decision was made that prior to the commencement of data collection, a pilot study would be initiated. A pilot study is a small-scale replica and a rehearsal of the main study (Sarantakos, 1993). The purpose of a pilot study is to discover possible weaknesses, inadequacies and problems in the research method. This is achieved by testing the suitability of the research method and research instruments, by giving the researcher the opportunity to practice research in a real situation and environment prior to the commencement of the major study; and to test the response of the participants to the method of data collection and thereby determine the adequacy of their structure (Sarantakos, 1993). Pilot studies are very useful instruments and offer invaluable information on reliability and validity of a research project (Morse, 1989). For this research project I interviewed one young person. As there were no problems apparent regarding the research method and research instruments, data gathered from the pilot study was included in the data gathered for the major study.

Research Process and Ethics Considerations

It needs to be reiterated that there are a variety of critical ethical considerations that need to be acknowledged when involved in scheduled interviews. Strategies for ensuring that respondents are not adversely affected by engaging in this research included the guarantee of confidentiality, the provision of referral if needed and the voluntary nature of the research. Where respondents agreed to participate, it was assured that the participants were anonymised (see appendices letters to parents and young people). Information arisen from the project were not used for specific operational purposes, but were used to inform policy development and implementation of diverse transitional support programs for young people leaving detention.

Participants were provided with an 'information sheet', which explained the rationale of the study in plain language, and a 'consent form' which ensured voluntary participation in the project (see appendix). Furthermore, where participants were quoted, pseudonyms were used. Before the commencement of the interviews participants were briefed about the purpose of the study, the process for the interviews and their rights as participants (e.g. the right to withdraw at any stage).

Strengths and Weaknesses of the Research Approach

Limited time and financial resources restricted the research. Furthermore, the project encountered significant difficulty in recruiting the research participants, as young people leaving detention are often in a very vulnerable position and therefore, are reluctant to be interviewed. The initial plan to hold focus groups at Banksia Hill Detention Centre was eliminated; due to a recent change relating to research after the project had started. This resulted in a small sample size. There was the potential for legal issues to emerge during the course of this research. For instance, young people may have revealed information about themselves and their peers regarding criminal acts or engagements. Participants were advised not to give any information that might incriminate themselves or their friends except, and unless, a strict 'no names' approach was adhered to throughout the interview session.

CHAPTER 4

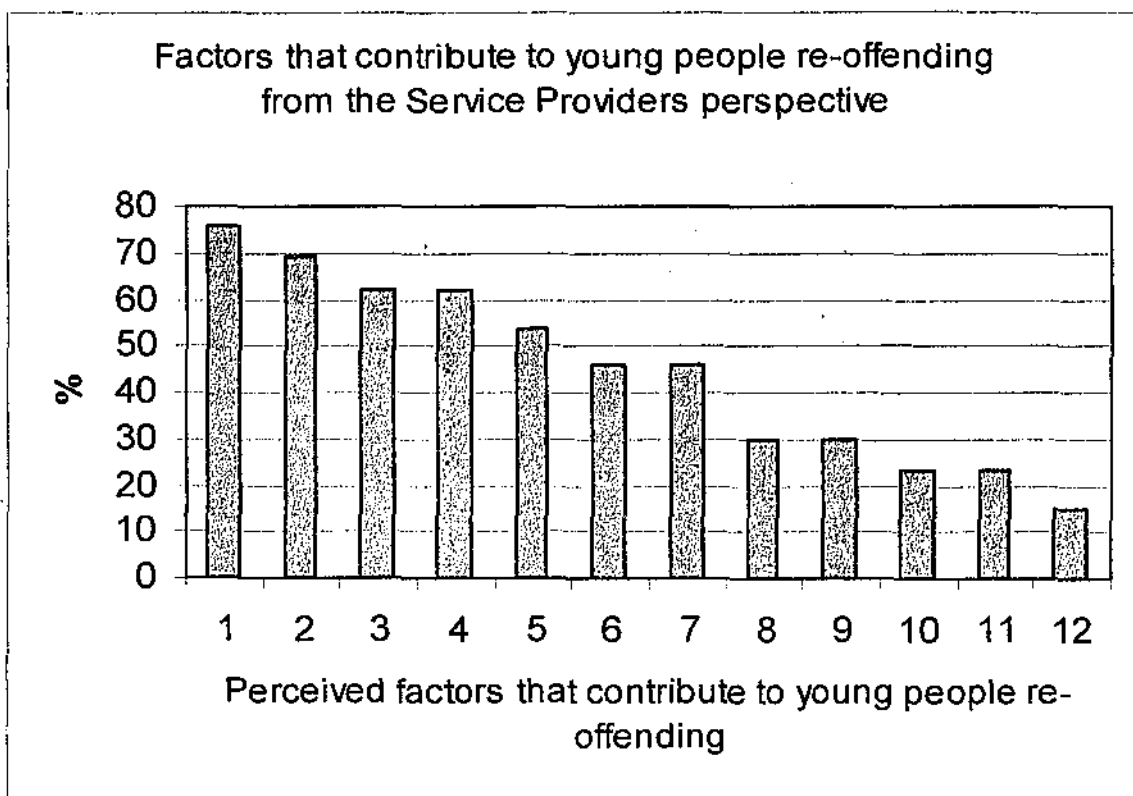
DATA ANALYSIS

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present the findings of the study and to provide an explanation of the schema used in structuring the key issues that emerged from the interviews, the literature review and the discrepancies that have become apparent. The intersections between what the literature says, what the service providers say and what the young people say, formed the relational basis for the emergent themes. This chapter will present quotations from young people and service providers and refer back to the literature. (Additional data is found in the appendix).

Summary of Themes Identified by Service Providers

Service providers identified issues as important to re-offending; see Figure 1. There was good agreement (over 60%) on four issues: financial issues, accommodation issues, break down in families, and drug abuse. Service providers thought that organisational issues, basic needs, intervention strategies, physical and sexual abuse, gender issues and 'offending as a game' were moderately (30% – 60%) important issues relating to re-offending. There was little agreement by the service providers (less than 30%) on issues relating to social structure, lack of good mental health and media perception. It needs to be noted that individually mentioned intervention strategies were discussed as a single category.



Legend

- 1= Financial issues
- 2= Accommodation issues
- 3= Break down in families
- 4= Drug abuse
- 5= Basic needs
Lack of education and training
- 6= Offending as a game
Unemployment and/or low income
- 7= Intervention strategies
Other issues
- 8= Organisational issues
- 9= Sexual and physical abuse
Gender issues
- 10= Lack of opportunity
- 11= Lack of good mental health
- 12= Media perception

Figure 1. Bar graph of perceived factors that contribute to young people re-offending from the service provider's perspective.

Summary of Themes Identified by Young People

The group of young people was small. The two young people interviewed both mentioned the following issues as important to re-offending: accommodation issues, dysfunctional families, basic needs, financial issues, mental health, professionalism of staff, information and advertising of services, gender issues and unemployment and/or low income and drug abuse.

Agreement and Disagreement between Young People and Service Providers and the Literature

The theme clusters can be grouped together and presented within seven categories formed by the intersections of what the literature, service providers and young people agree on; what the literature and the service providers agree on but not the young people; what the literature review and the young people agree on but not the service providers; and what the service providers and the young people agree on but not the literature review. By organising the theme clusters in this way, it is hoped that the schematic structure will give clarity and depth to the study findings. The categories appear in figure 2.

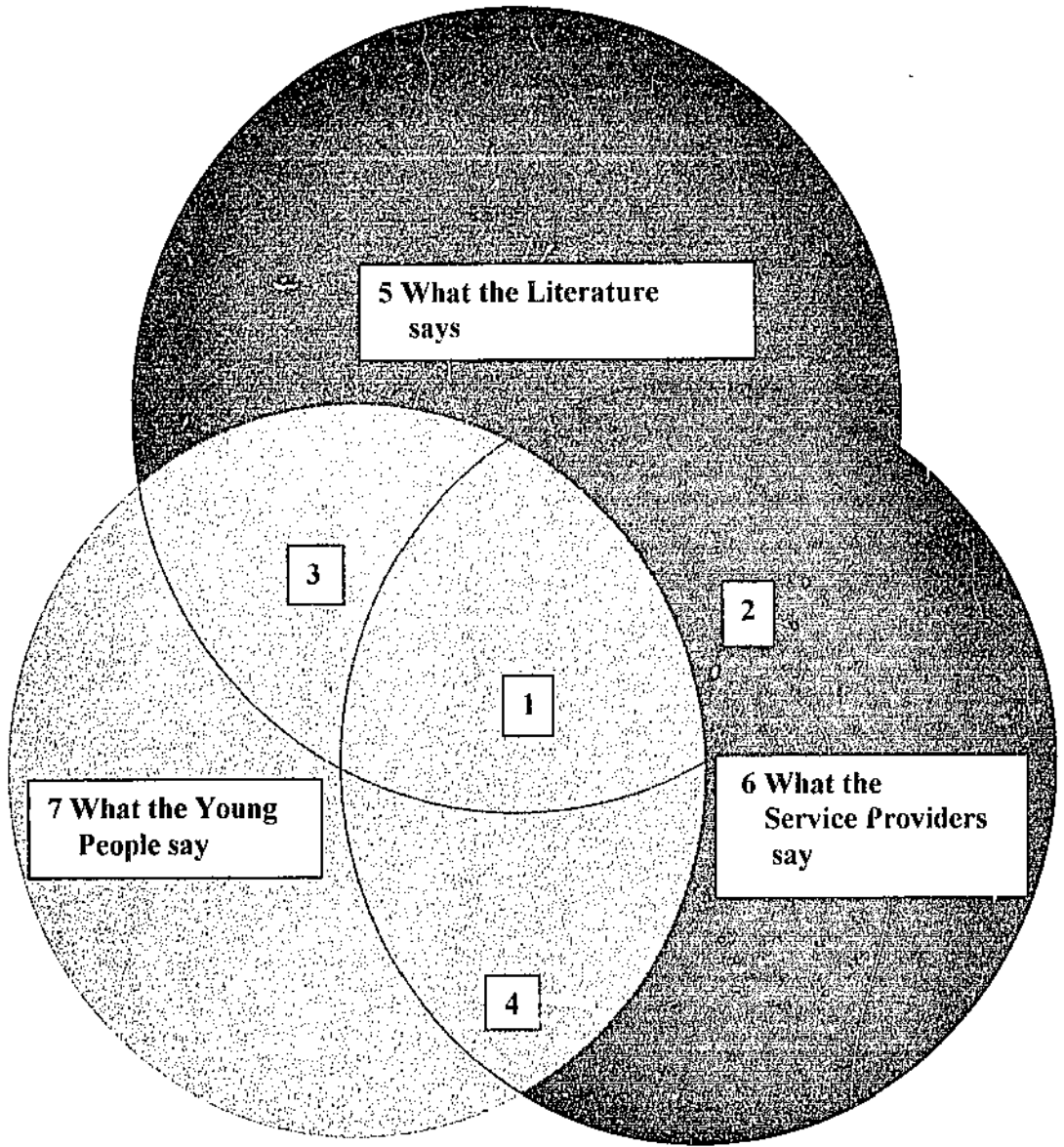


Figure 2. Diagram of the schematic structure of the seven categories.

Category 1: Factors Identified in the Literature, by the Service Providers, and by Young People.

Eleven main issues relating to re-offending were discussed. The issues are ordered from the most important issue to the less important issue from the service providers' point of view. The literature, the service providers and the young people agreed on the following issues:

- Accommodation issues
- Financial issues
- Dysfunctional families
- Drug abuse
- Basic needs (recidivism as a 'mean to an end')
- Lack of education and training
- Unemployment and/or low income
- Organisational issues
- Gender issues
- Mental health
- Lack of opportunities

The issues will now be discussed in the order of perceived importance to service providers.

Accommodation Issues

The literature asserted that accommodation was an important issue relating to re-offending (Ogilvie, 2001; Podesta & Jones, 1992; Rodriguez & Brown, 2003; Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute, 2003; Youth Action Housing Option, 2002). When asked the young people what happened when they got out last time both participants described their journey respectively:

I've been jumping from place to place since I was 14...lived at friends places, stuff like that...Basically you have nowhere to go or anything. I was living on the streets. And it's a vicious cycle...you are hungry and you shoplift to survive...and you end up in something like Rangeview or Banksia. (Matthew)

And another thing we need more beds – there has been many times when kids have been sent to some place and there were no beds. There is nothing. (Matthew)

We slept in an old empty house and drank rainwater out of an old bath...(Roberta, 16 years).

When the service providers were asked, from your experience why do you think young people re-offend, two thirds (69%) of the service provider respondents believed that accommodation issues were the most significant reason for young people to re-offend. The service providers' perception of accommodation issues was explained more from a macro level. That means that accommodation issues are not seen as single-issues, but more as a result of a wider problem or change within the family structure.

Accommodation habits are changing. We don't have traditional nuclear families anymore. Families often exist of single mothers. The young person especially the sons are taking over the father role. When the mothers have a boyfriend, often the son does not get along with the boyfriend. Often the result is that the son leaves the house with nowhere to go. Crimes are committed to survive and to supplement the cost of accommodation. (Service Provider)

Financial issues

The literature (Bennett, 1993; Podesta & Jones, 1992; Ogilvie, 2001) agreed that financial issues are a significant factor relating to re-offending. Young people also agreed that this is an important factor.

Mark Latham and John Howard say we care about the future of our children...if they care about this they need to get off their bloody arses and do something...they have to spill some money...I was shoplifting to survive out in the streets. It's a vicious cycle...if you really need money you break into somebodies house or steal a car...(Matthew)

The service providers (76%) strongly agreed that financial issues were important factors relating to re-offending.

The level of debts prevent young people to move on...crime pays for substance abuse...young people are recidivists by choice...they acknowledge that they are better off in detention. Young people have three meals and a roof over their heads. (Service Provider)

Dysfunctional Families

Another significant factor apparent in all three data sources in relation to young people and re-offending was dysfunctional families. The literature (Bennett, 1993; Podesta & Jones, 1992) asserted that dysfunctional families are one of the major issues associated with re-offending. Both young people also mentioned dysfunctional families as important issues. The young people described their thoughts as follows:

I see so many young people being kicked out of their homes or whatever. More common than not, most crime committed by young people is because of survival or in a way revenge towards parents or things like that'. (Matthew)

When my grandma died (I was living with her at the time) everything went gradually down hill. I gave up; I lost hope'. (Roberta)

When the young people were asked, if they needed help, whom did they turn to, family members or relations were not mentioned.

Most service providers (over 60%) mentioned dysfunctional families as an important issue.

Breakdown in families is the biggest trend...our society is based on 'Nuclear Families' – this is not the norm anymore...there is no family support or the support network is not very positive. Parents don't support their children (Service Provider)

Drug Abuse

The literature (Cain, 1998; National Mental Health Association, 2004; Alder, 1992) agreed that drug abuse has an impact on young 'peoples' re-offending. Young people also agreed that drug abuse is a factor associated with re-offending.

I've inherited alcoholism third generation. I know I've got a problem. My mother, my grandmother and my auntie are alcoholics. (Roberta)

I need to go down to the doctors, so I can get back my 'dexies' so I can concentrate more. I wouldn't even think about going back to TAFE, if I wouldn't have my 'dexies'. It would be a waste of time. (Matthew)

The service providers (over 60%) thought that drug abuse is a significant factor relating to young peoples' re-offending.

Drug abuse is only a link in the chain. Why did the young person abuse drugs in the first place? The need to re-offend stops, when the need for drugs stops, the need for drugs stops, when the root causes of the cycle are addressed. (Service Provider)

Basic Needs

The literature (National Crime Prevention, 1999; Ogilvie, 2001) agreed that basic needs are a major fact in relation to re-offending. Service providers (46%) believed that basic needs play a moderate factor in young peoples' re-offending.

Young people re-offend because their basic needs are not met. Often young people recognise that they are better off being inside (detention) – three meals and a roof over their heads. (Service Provider)

Young people also agreed with the view that basic needs are an important factor in relation to re-offending.

I was shoplifting to survive on the streets. Basically, you have nowhere to go or anything. You are hungry, you shoplift. If you really need money you steal someone's car or break into somebody's house. (Matthew)

Lack of Education and Training

The literature (Podesta & Jones, 1992) agreed that a lack of education and training has an impact on young peoples' re-offending. Service providers (other issues) mentioned that a lack of education and training has an impact on young peoples' re-offending.

We need more courses for young people, especially life skill programs and work experience programs...Individual education plans are important. (Service Providers)

Young people also mentioned a lack of education and training as a factor relating to re-offending.

I've always wanted to be a Marine Biologist...but then my grandmother died; I was living with her. Everything went down hill. (Roberta)

They want somebody trained. I'm at the point right now where I don't care where I work as long as I'm working, which really sucks because at the end of the day, you might get a job that you don't really like. (Matthew)

Unemployment and/or Low Income

The literature (Canadian Journal of Criminology and Criminal Justice, 2003; Podesta & Jones, 1992; White, 1997) agrees that unemployment and/or low income is a significant factor relating to re-offending. Young people also agreed on this issue.

I was on the streets again. I had no income and things became a little bit desperate and there were three of us and none of us had eaten for five days... We decided one night that we all had enough and we picked up our weapons and committed a robbery. (Roberta)

People are not willing to hire an 18 year old, they want someone younger, someone trained. I know they don't hire me, because somebody younger is cheaper. It's a real curse...I'm at the point right now, where I work as long as I'm working, which really sucks, because at the end of the day, you might get a job that you don't really like. I'm a firm believer in yes – work for the money, but if you don't enjoy your job, you don't enjoy life and you're stuck in a job where you never wanted to be. (Matthew)

The service providers (46%) agreed that unemployment and/or low income had a moderate impact on re-offending.

Young people re-offend as a means for financial support...benefits from crime pay for medication, food, public transport, cigarettes and supplement the cost of accommodation. The types of offenses are often a barometer of young people's needs. (Service Provider)

Organisational Issues

Organisational issues were pointed out by the literature (Canadian Journal of Criminology and Criminal Justice, 2003) as an important factor relating to re-offending. Both young people also agreed on this issue.

The possibility to do something is there. They just have to spill some money. It's so frustrating. (Matthew)

The service providers (30%) moderately agreed that organisational issues had an impact on young peoples' re-offending.

The local government needs teams. Organisations and agencies need to liaise with each other. Often the question is raised, 'who is in charge of what'? Agencies are reluctant to liaise with each other, because of the confidentiality code. Departments at a high level need to communicate. I it can happen at a high level, it can happen at the grass roots and vice versa. (Service Provider)

Mental Health

Another significant factor relating to re-offending is mental health. The literature points out that mental health is a factor impacting on young peoples' re-offending. Young people also agree the mental health is an important issue.

Now my dream is to get out of this rubble, stop wallowing and having everyone else wallow around me. This is bringing me back down...I've noticed of all my associates that are street kids...it's in their heads...it's something they've been dwelling on and no one has actually listened'. (Roberta)

Another thing I need to do is go down to the doctors, so I can get back my 'dexies' so I can concentrate more. I wouldn't even think about going back to TAFE, if I wouldn't have my 'dexies'. It would be a waste of time. (Matthew)

Service providers (less than 30%) thought that mental health had only a minor impact on young peoples' re-offending. Service providers who did mention mental health as an important issues described the issue as follows:

Mental health problems have a significant impact on the lives of young people. We need to improve the mental health services for young people; young people fall through the gaps. (Service Provider)

Lack of Opportunities

The literature (Wilson & Lincoln, 1992; White, 1997) suggests that a lack of opportunities is an issue associated with re-offending. Young people also strongly agree on this point of view.

I've worked so hard and I've been rejected so many times, because of my lifestyle, and I didn't have enough money. It breaks your spirit. You don't want to do it anymore – you don't want to keep trying. (Roberta)

Service providers (23%) believed that a lack of opportunity is only a minor factor in relation to re-offending.

There is lack of opportunities for young people in terms of education, employment and accommodation. (Service Provider)

Category 2: Factors Identified in the Literature, and by the Service Providers but not Mentioned by Young People.

Four issues were mentioned in the literature and by the service providers but not mentioned by young people. The issues are ordered in terms of perception of importance by service providers.

- Offending as a 'game'
- Intervention strategies
- Physical and sexual abuse
- Media perception

Offending as a 'Game'

The literature mentioned offending as a 'game' as a factor relating to young peoples' re-offending. Service providers (40%) also believed that this is a moderately important factor in relation to re-offending.

Young people see offending as a 'game'...some think it's a game. (Service Provider)

More common than not, most crime committed by young people is because of survival or in a way revenge towards parents or things like that. I've noticed that with kids. No one does it, because they really

enjoying doing it. They do it for a reason, whether they know what the reason is or not (Roberta).

Intervention Strategies

The literature (Lipsey, 1995; Gendreau & Ross, 1980; McGuire & Priestley, 1995; Courmarelos & Weatherburn, 1995) agreed that intervention strategies have an impact on re-offending. Service providers (46%) are also in agreement with the literature that intervention strategies are factors relating to re-offending. It is important to note that intervention strategies are discussed as a single category. Also service providers, when interviewed did not explain what was meant by intervention strategy.

Intervention needs to go back to the grass roots, otherwise it won't work. There is always a reason for the crime. Why did the young person re-offend in the first place? Why did they take drugs in the first place? Where did the cycle start? Young people have different layers of need. It is important to see the individual. What works for one person does not necessarily work for another. Somebody re-offends, gets punished. But incarceration doesn't work. (Service Provider)

Physical and/or Sexual Abuse

The literature (National Crime Prevention, 1999) pointed out that physical and/or sexual abuse is an important issues relating to young people and re-offending. Service providers (30%) believed that physical and/or sexual abuse is a factor impacting on young peoples' re-offending.

Abuse, especially sexual abuse has to be dealt with in a more direct way. (Service Provider)

Media Perception

The literature (Blagg & Wilkie, 1995; Bessant & Hill, 1997) agreed that media perception is a factor impacting on young peoples' re-offending. Service providers (less than 30%) believed that media perception is a significant factor relating to re-offending.

The media plays up juvenile offending. Especially Aboriginal young people face more difficult tasks when facing the courts. Media is anti-Aboriginal young people.

Category 3: Factors Identified in the Literature and by Young People but not Mentioned by Service Providers.

- Professionalism of staff
- Information/advertising of services

Professionalism of Staff

The literature (Bennett, 1993) suggested that professionalism of staff is a factor that impacts on re-offending. Both young people also pointed out that professionalism is an important factor.

They've said they (service providers) understand and stuff but they haven't shown that they do understand and you still think in your head, no – you don't, you're just telling me that you understand. It's kind in a way that you need proof. Proof that people do understand and they have been there. You need more people that have been there, done that... and seen it all. (Roberta)

Information/Advertising of Services

The literature (Lipsey, 1995) agreed that information and advertising of services have an impact on young peoples' re-offending. The young people also recognised this issue as important.

There is not enough information out there. Most of the times they don't know (especially the younger kids). We had a 12 year old there the other day...I am one of the older ones out there and if people have problems they turn to me, which is one of the good things I got going for me. I help them out. The thing is there is so little information out there for them. Service agencies expect kids to be in Centrelink or places like that, but otherwise there is nothing. They don't have information like this in schools either. Even if they do, it (information) is hiding on a small rack in some place and it's never going to catch people's eyes, 'cause it's a

pamphlet and kids are not really going to worry about it. The thing is there are some kids that can't go on Centrelink payments or things like that, so they don't get the information, because they don't go there. It just makes it hell'.

Category 4: Factors Identified by the Service Providers and Young People but not Mentioned in the Literature.

There were no issues identified by the service providers and young people in this category.

Category 5: Factors Identified only in the Literature and not Mentioned by Young People and Service Providers.

There were no issues identified only in the literature and not mentioned by young people and service providers.

Category 6: Factors Identified only by Service Providers and not Mentioned by Young People or in the Literature.

There were no issues identified only by the service providers and not mentioned by young people and in the literature.

Category 7: Factors Identified only by Young People and not Mentioned in the Literature and by Service Providers.

There were no issues identified only by young people but not mentioned in the literature and by service providers.

Summary

There was agreement by the literature, the service providers and the young people on most issues relating to young people and re-offending. The research findings for future direction of policy and service provision will be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Introduction

This chapter discusses the implications of the findings of this research for policy and service provision in Western Australia, for service provision generally and for future research and the limitations of the findings. The chapter begins by discussing the seven categories formed by the intersections of what the literature, service providers and young people agree on; what the literature, and the service providers agree on but are not mentioned by young people; and what the service providers and the young people agree on, but is not mentioned by the literature. The chapter then concludes with recommendations for service provision and policy in general, including Outcare, and for future research.

Issues Identified in the Literature, by Service Providers and by Young People (Category 1)

This category was concerned with the issues mentioned by the literature, the service providers and young people in relation to young people and re-offending. The study revealed that there were many issues on which the literature, service providers and young people agreed. Accommodation and financial issues were mentioned most frequently. It was also agreed that release presents young offenders with a difficult transition from the structured environment of a detention centre. The research literature, the service providers and the young people all agreed that many young people, after release, have no place to live, no job and no family or social support and often lack the knowledge and skills to access available resources for adjustment to life on the 'outside'. If service providers provide programs and supports that are aligned with research outcomes, where young people, service providers and literature agree, young people are more likely to cooperate when offered these services. That means the services are more likely to be effective and are more likely to achieve positive outcomes for young people leaving detention.

There was agreement between literature, service providers and young people that there are a range of government and non-government programs and supports available to young people leaving detention that help break down some of the barriers between institutional and community life. Both service providers and young people were concerned at the lack of coordination between supporting programs and the literature affirmed that coordination is essential. This implies that there is a need for coordinating and managing the services, so programs and supports are readily available and easy to access for young people leaving detention. It will ensure that young people and service providers will use the services and resources available, more effectively.

Literature, service providers and young people agree that incarceration is not effective in dealing with young people's re-offending. This observation implies that funding resources should be diverted into support for young people leaving detention and alternatives to incarceration, rather than supporting the extremely high cost of keeping young people 'locked up' in detention centres. This has implications for the support of young people leaving detention. If fewer young people are incarcerated, fewer need support when they leave detention and within the same overall budgets, more per capita funding is available to support those leaving detention.

The research literature, service providers and young people agree that incarceration does not work, yet in Western Australia, imprisonment and juvenile detention levels are well above the national average (Crime Research Centre, 2002)

Currently, in Western Australia, we are echoing our penal past through the exhibition of a rigidly punitive community attitude that seeks to reduce crime by keeping offenders out of the community through detention. This is based on the mistaken belief that detention is the most effective response to offending and in some way acts as a general deterrence. Such a response fails to take into account the complex social problems, such as homelessness, family breakdown, unemployment, mental illness, physical and sexual abuse, and substance abuse that contribute to offending behaviour and the special disadvantage of young Aboriginal people (Cassidy-Vernon, 2004).

An ABC radio interview with Christopher Binse, a repeat offender who since the age of 13 has spent most of his life behind bars, affirms that incarceration does not work.

I just wasn't happy at home and it's as simple as that...I just kept on running away, and that started the whole ball game really...I'd run away and break into cars and steal cars just to sleep and stuff like that, and that caused me to come into contact with the police, be arrested, and sent to juvenile detention centres...It wasn't a place I should have been really at the end of the day. If they had addressed the issue then, then I wouldn't have chosen this path...That didn't help me at all, if anything it just spiralled things further. I just started to learn more about crime...it was education in further crime (Australian Broadcasting Corporation, 1 March 2005).

In addition, legal measures designed to create disincentives for drug abuse and crime can complicate efforts to re-establish a place in society. In Western Australia, under the new legislation, the courts and Supervised Release Review Board have the option of imposing juvenile home curfews and electronic monitoring for juveniles. This initiative clearly identifies the young person as an offender and therefore makes re-integration and respect for privacy difficult. Supporters of these measures would argue that curfews are designed to keep young people away from the lifestyle that supported their participation in criminal activities, to make it more difficult for young people to re-integrate into a life style that supports criminal behaviour. Home curfews cannot effectively do this (White, 1996). The problem is the overriding harm that is caused if young people released from custody are subject to curfews. Home curfews displace young people even more from their community and set them up for failure. Because curfews, as part of an intensive supervision order are more often than not subject to contravention (Cunneen & White, 1995).

In 1990, Australia signed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CROC). However, 15 years later there is little evidence to suggest that Western Australia has responded to CROC (Cassidy-Vernon, 2004; Blagg & Wilkie, 1995). The latest initiatives of the State Government to reduce juvenile offending are of great concern. Electronic monitoring involves wearing a leg bracelet, which clearly identifies a young person as an offender. The leg bracelet will enable authorities to track a young person's movement and restrict

his or her movement within the community; yet, article 40 of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child promotes re-integration, and respect for privacy (Cassidy-Vernon, 2004; White, 1997).

Issues Identified by the Literature and by Service Providers but not Mentioned by Young People (Category 2)

This category was concerned with the issues mentioned by the literature and service providers, but not mentioned by young people. The findings of this study revealed that the young people disagreed with the literature and service providers on these issues:

- Intervention strategies
- 'Offending as a game'
- Media perception
- Physical and/ or sexual abuse

It is important to examine each of these issues separately, as the reasons that they were not mentioned by young people in the study differs for each issue.

Intervention Strategies

The fact that young people did not mention intervention strategies may have multiple explanations. Firstly, there is a potential to misinterpret data, as jargon used by professionals is not necessarily used in the language of young people and secondly, it may be difficult to convince young people that intervention may be necessary. Thirdly, it is possible that the small sample size may have been a contributing factor why young people did not mention intervention strategies. The apparent disagreement of opinions by the young people with the literature and the service providers is probably not very important.

'Offending as a Game'

Young people strongly disagreed with the perception of 'offending as a game'. This is contrary to the perception of the literature and the service providers that it is a thrill seeking behaviour or a game. There is a possibility for future research for further exploration of this issue. Furthermore, there is a need for professional staff training for service providers relating to this issue, as the perception of service providers around 'offending as a game' differs significantly from the apparent perception of the young people. Service providers ought to be aware of this difference, as there may be a risk that young people are being treated inappropriately. This apparent difference of opinion is important because programs based upon this assumption of 'offending as a game' would be different from programs not based on this assumption.

Media Perception

The reason why young people did not mention media perception may have been due to a multitude of factors. This topic may not have referred to because of the way young people see things. Media perception may not be a significant issue for young people themselves. Also the small sample size may have been a factor why young people did not mention media perception. This apparent difference of opinion may have some significance to programs; however, young people did not mention media perception.

Physical and/or Sexual Abuse

Young people did not mention physical and/or sexual abuse. The reason for this, again, may be the sample size. However, it is a very sensitive and personal issue and the topic was not canvassed directly, consequently, young people may have been reluctant to talk about it, especially in research interviews. This is an issue that service providers, such as Outcare have to be aware of when developing programs and supports. A possible implication of this is to raise issues relating to this topic with service providers and recommendations for case workers in general and for Outcare, to specifically raise the issue of safety and family violence. This apparent difference of opinion is significant because it may be important to assume physical and/or sexual

abuse is an issue even though young people may not readily volunteer discussion of the issue.

Issues Identified in the Literature and by Young People, but not Mentioned by Service Providers (Category 3)

There were two issues identified by the literature and young people but not mentioned by the service providers:

- Professionalism of staff;
- Information and advertising of services.

Research (Lipsey, 1995; Bennett, 1993) affirms that both of these issues play significant roles within the service provision. Acknowledging that the study was limited on the number of service providers interviewed (20), the outcome was nevertheless interesting.

Professionalism of Staff

The fact that the service providers did not mention professionalism of staff strongly suggests that service providers wanted to externalise the issues concerned with young people and re-offending. The findings suggest that service providers did not want to acknowledge that professionalism could be one of the key issues for effective transitional support service. To combat potential inadequacy on a service provision level, an important element is ongoing self-reflection amongst service providers. Furthermore, staff training and evaluation that is continuous is vital for effective service provision. On the policy level, professional codes of practice and standards need to be implemented to ensure quality processes and consistency within service provision. This will be effective, only if services are adequately resourced. Professionalism of staff is an important factor for service providers to keep in mind.

Information and Advertising of Services

The issue of information and advertisement of services was mentioned in the literature and by young people but not mentioned by service providers, (although the fragmentation and lack of co-ordination of services was mentioned by service providers as a source of frustration). In Western Australia, the Department of Justice has made some moves to address this area by implementing an internationally acclaimed multi-systemic therapy intervention model. The program involves working with both the offenders and their families in their everyday environment. The findings of the study reveal that to get the most out of the efforts of meeting the needs of young people leaving detention, a coordinating and management of the diverse services and programs for easier access to young people is vital. It would be possible for Outcare to take on such a role within Western Australia, if resources were provided for co-ordination. On a policy level, collaborative approaches need to be developed. Furthermore, community education needs to be addressed, to increase public understanding of the negative consequences of juvenile incarceration and the positive role of community based offender programs for the majority of young people.

Other Categories (Categories 4, 5,6,7)

There were no other issues identified within the remaining categories, namely, factors identified by the service providers and young people but not mentioned in the literature (Category 4); factors identified only in the literature and not mentioned by young people and service providers (Category 5); factors identified only by service providers and not mentioned by young people or in the literature (Category 6) and; factors identified only by young people and not mentioned in the literature and by service providers (Category 7). This finding in itself suggest that service providers are generally well informed in relation to young people and re-offending. Young people also understand their needs, and there seem to be not a lot of disagreement between literature, service providers and young people.

Implications of Recommendations

The findings of this research reveal that there is a three-way agreement by literature, service providers and young people on most issues relating to young people and re-offending. It is therefore important for Outcare and for service provision in general to provide programs and supports for young people leaving detention that meet the perception of young people's needs. How can these programs and supports be developed? According to a report by the National Youth Affairs Research Scheme (NYARS) (1997), recent years have seen a number of juvenile justice authorities starting to fund non-government organisations to provide post-release support to young people. The report claims (p. 67) that some of the advantages of such services may be:

- Exclusive focus on the needs of the young people
- Independence from correctional authorities, which encourages young people to use the service
- Well in tune with community and networks
- With cooperation of juvenile justice authorities, such services can be linked to all young people in detention
- Possibility to provide true transitional service by providing institutional, transitional and post release support to young people
- Possibility to provide intensive support, if needed, in the first few weeks or months after release.

The NYARS report (1997) claims that the key to effective transitional support for young people leaving detention are properly funded and managed non-government organisation, which are able to focus on the perceived needs of young people, and provide ongoing intensive support where needed. The service provision should be a true transitional service, focusing on institutional, transitional and post release support for young people.

Outcare runs a Reconnect Youth Service that is funded by the Federal Department of Families and Children and by the Department of Justice and employs two full-time and a part-time caseworker and recently received funding from the Attorney General's Department for an Aboriginal caseworker. There is a shortage of resources, which results in heavy caseloads and this limits the amount of post-release support that can be provided by caseworkers. It is difficult to accommodate newly released young people in existing accommodation services and the lack of suitable accommodation for young people; which is widely acknowledged to contribute significantly to recidivist behaviour.

A change in social policy is vital to meet the needs of young people at risk of offending. The findings of the study reveal that coordination and management of the diverse services and programs is vital to maximise the effectiveness of services meeting the needs of young people leaving detention. There is the possibility for Outcare to take on such a role within Western Australia, providing sufficient funding is available.

The study identified issues that need to be addressed at the systems level rather than at the individual level. For example, working relationships need to be improved with juvenile justice authorities, police, health, mental health, welfare, education and training bodies, other government authorities and the non-government sector with organisations such as Outcare to address the problems and oppressions commonly experienced by young people upon their release into the community. Part of this improvement may be better communication processes where selected data, that is non-incriminating to the young person, may be shared with other organisations, if this meets the needs of the young person. This could be executed in the form of a case conference where the young person, Outcare and other relevant service providers design an individually tailored support package. Current fragmentation of services makes it difficult for young people to access the services they need. In addition, young people often have to tell "their story" over and over again. Organisations such as Outcare could act as an advocate for the young person, without the compromising of human rights, for example, the breach of privacy and confidentiality of the individual young person. Improved working relationships

may include a formalised role of duty that departments and organisations have towards other organisations such as Outcare, so that specialised transitional support services can be delivered to young people where needed. Therefore, it is important to focus on the needs of young people and implement individualised support packages that effectively support young people through their transition to successful integration into the community.

Community education in regards to the inefficacy of detention as a preventative measure and support needs of young people leaving detention is also recommended. It is important to understand that juvenile justice policy and practice is a highly politically sensitive area and is very responsive to community attitudes and media reporting. Therefore, an effective professional relationship with each of the bodies is critical for implementing successful transitional supports and programs. As political climates change, supports and programs have to be able to adapt and be flexible within their approach to ensure they best meet the needs of young people leaving detention. This is only possible if cooperation, collaboration, and communication exist between non-government organisations, such as Outcare, the juvenile justice authorities, police, health and mental health, education and training bodies and other government and non-government organisations. Another positive outcome may be that there would be a possibility for Outcare to lobby on behalf of young people within the juvenile justice system. On the other hand, there are undeniable negative sides to this approach. For example, different service providers have different ideological views and therefore models of intervention strategies may take on certain formats, which other service providers may not agree on. In addition, funding bodies have a greater capacity in monitoring their funded services, which in turn may lead to greater restrictions being placed upon these service providers.

Limitations of the Study

There were issues that restricted the research such as limited time and financial resources. Furthermore, the project faced great difficulty in recruiting the research participants, as young people leaving detention are often in a very

vulnerable position and very reluctant to be interviewed. The initial plan to hold focus groups at Banksia Hill Detention Centre was eliminated; due to a recent policy change relating to research after the project had started. This resulted in a small sample size; two young people (one female, one male) were interviewed for this study. In addition, only literature written in the English language was used in this study, which may have limited the literature review.

Recommendations for Service Provision in General and Outcare

The following recommendations for service provision in general and for Outcare have been developed arising from the results from this study.

Suggestions for future actions:

- That support programs are tailored to the individuals need (individualised support packages).
- That public awareness needs to be raised through community education and involvement.
- That political parties need to be in agreement on the importance of avoiding incarceration.
- That organisations such as Outcare lobby on behalf of young people on the policy level.
- That access to low cost housing for young people leaving detention is improved.
- That programs and supports are in alignment with research outcomes.
- That coordination of support services is centralised and managed by organisations such as Outcare, so services are more readily accessible to young people.
- That funding resources are diverted into support services, and alternatives to incarceration.
- That future research into ‘offending as a game’ is to be conducted by organisations such as Outcare.
- That service providers, such as Outcare are aware of and sensitive to physical and/or sexual abuse issues, when developing support programs.

- That service providers implement self-reflection and evaluation processes into their services.
- That service providers recognise and understand the importance of professionalism in all areas of service provision.
- That professional code of practice and standards are implemented into their services to ensure quality processes and consistency within service provision.
- That service providers such as Outcare are appropriately resourced.
- That government and non-government services establish working parties to examine issues relating to service provision.
- That co-ordination of services is implemented consistent with human rights perspectives, especially confidentiality and privacy of young people.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine the transitional support needs for young people leaving detention. The findings inform Outcare and service provision in general, on how better to meet the needs of young people leaving detention, so that existing services may be improved and participants may get better support when they depart the juvenile justice system. The findings of the study revealed that the literature, the service providers and the young people agree on many factors relating to re-offending, with accommodation and financial issues mentioned most frequently. In terms of service provision, this means that if support services are aligned with the research outcomes, service provision will be more effective and young people leaving detention will be more likely to access these services. Furthermore, there was agreement by the literature, service providers and young people that incarceration does not work and funding resources should be diverted into support programs for young people leaving detention and alternatives to incarceration. Young people disagreed with the literature and the service providers on intervention strategies, media perception, physical and/or sexual abuse and particularly opposed to 'offending as a game'. The contrary perception of the literature and the service

providers that offending is a thrill-seeking behaviour or a game is calling for further exploration and is a possibility for future research. Interestingly, professionalism of staff and information and advertising of services was mentioned by the literature and the young people but not mentioned by service providers. This strongly suggested that service providers wanted to externalise the issue concerned with young people and re-offending. The fact that no other issues were identified within the remaining categories suggested that service providers are generally well informed in relation to young people and re-offending. Young people also understood their needs. Overall, literature, service providers and young people seem to agree on a lot of issues relating to young people and re-offending.

The findings of this research study imply that for service provision in general, and in particular for Outcare, it is vital to align the services with research outcomes and provide programs and supports for young people leaving detention that meet the perception of young people's needs. For example, it is vital to tailor the support packages to the individuals' needs. Furthermore, there is a strong need for community education regarding the difficulties encountered by young people leaving detention. Additionally, the mechanism of custodial sentences must be reserved as a last resort or for the most serious of crimes. By adapting and adopting the recommendations for service provision in general and for Outcare as outlined in this study in a meaningful way, it is anticipated that a significant impact may be made on the transitional support services for young people leaving detention.

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APPENDICES

What the Literature Says

Socio-Demographic Factors

Young people leaving detention often return to communities where persistent poverty and lack of jobs and affordable housing make finding a permanent home difficult (Ogilvie, 2001).

Homelessness

According to a recent study published by the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (2003) the most predictive factor of re-incarceration is the housing factor. The study established that ex-prisoner represent one of the most transient groups in Australia.

Institutionalisation

There is greater recidivism of comparable offenders after institutionalisation than after probation; recidivists who have been institutionalised committed more assaults, more malicious damage than those placed on probation (Australasian Legal Information Institute, 2004).

Unemployment and/or Low Income

Podesta & Jones (1992) identified the major risk factors for re-offending, including low income and unemployment. "The number of re-offenders would drop if there were opportunities for employment, training and education (Youth Studies, 2004).

Low Educational Achievements

Podesta & Jones (1992) identified low educational achievements starting in Primary School; aggressive disruptive behaviour (including bullying); lack of commitment to school (including truancy) and attending a disorganized school as another major risk factor for re-offending.

Family Factors

Risk factors that increase the likelihood of an offence occurring or being repeated include family factors, especially parent's harsh discipline or weak supervision (White, 2003).

Drug Abuse

Data shows that a typical young offender profile may include certain elements, such as having a history of drug and alcohol abuse (Cunneen & White, 2002).

Developmental and/or Psychological Issues

According to NYARS (1997) for young people with mental health problems or those with an intellectual disability there are very few community placements which can deal with both offending behaviour and psychiatric or intellectual disability, the likelihood of being placed in custody is increased due to the perceived lack of other sentencing options.

Physical and/or Sexual Abuse

Literature suggests that young people who experience physical and/or sexual abuse in the home are at greater risk of re-offending (National Crime Prevention, 1999).

Professionalism of Staff

Literature suggests that professionalism is an important factor relating to young people's re-offending (National Youth Affairs Research Scheme, 1997).

Summary

The search of the literature suggests that there are numerous risk factors associated with young people and recidivism. Listed above are some of the major risk factors that have emerged from the literature review.

What the Service Provider Say

These are the main themes identified from the agencies responses:

Question 1: From Your experience why do you think young people re-offend?

Accommodation Issues

- Homelessness.
- Lack of accommodation is the greatest issue.
- Accommodation habits are changing due to breakdown of families – young people need a place to stay.
- Recidivist by choice. Young people re-offend as a mean to an end – supplement the cost for accommodation. Young people acknowledge they are better off in detention.
- Parents don't support their children with accommodation.

Summary

Two thirds (69%) of the service provider respondents believed that homelessness and accommodation issues were the most significant reason for young people to re-offend.

“Some young people are better off inside (detention). They have three meals a day and a roof over their heads...”

Gender Issues

- More males commit crime. 80% boys and 20% girls re-offend. Rates are changing – more girls re-offend. The cause maybe empowerment of women.

- Males more dominant within the Juvenile Justice System – lack of role models.
- Men and boys are neglected (anthropological perspective). No male initiation – no transition from boy to man within our society.
- Males often don't know how to express themselves verbally – they express themselves physically.
- Today more violent crimes are committed by both males and females.

Summary

Analysis of the interviews reveals that 30 % of service providers mentioned gender issues as key factors associated with young people and recidivism. Some service providers deemed young males as more dominant within the Juvenile Justice system.

“Males are more dominant within the Juvenile Justice system, because of lack of role models. There is no male initiation – no transition from boys to men within our society.” However, others believe that the rates are changing. “We see more girls re-offending now; maybe the cause of this is the empowerment of women”.

Dysfunctional Families

- Biggest trend is a breakdown in families.
- Our society is based on ‘Nuclear Families’ – this is not the norm anymore.
- Role changes within the family unit. Often mothers previously looked at their sons for taking over father role. This role is often lost and taken over by new partners. Sons may feel rejected and pushed away.
- Relationship with parents (attachment theory).
- More restraining orders are taken out – parents are confused with the law (not clear on legal procedures).
- No family support or support network is not very positive. Parents don't support their children with the basic needs (e.g. food, accommodation).

- Young people learn crime from parents while growing up.
- Young people are displaced from families.
- Lack of parental guidance.
- Severe shortage of early intervention staffing for families needing support.
- Not all young people will offend that come from dysfunctional families.
- Inside (detention) young people feel excepted and part of a family.
- Supervised bail is used as surrogate parenthood.
- Young people have been through welfare all their lives – they feel marginalized – commit crime.
- Causal issues have not been dealt with.
- Family support is crucial for young people.
- Families own issues need to be addressed.

Summary

Over 60% of the service provider respondents said that break down in families is the reason for young people to re-offend.

“The biggest trend is a breakdown in families. Our society is based on the nuclear family. This is not the norm anymore... Parents don't support their kids... The families own issues need to be addressed”.

Basic Needs

- Basic needs have to be addressed. Young people re-offend to survive.
- Accommodation habits are changing.
- Lack of education and training, life skills, health and recreation.
- Lack of support (family and community support).
- Financial hardship, no income, unemployment (re-offend for financial support, benefits from crime pay for medication, food, public transport, cigarettes and supplement cost of accommodation).
- Lack of opportunities for young people.
- Young people re-offend as a means to an end. Types of offends are a barometer of young people's needs.

- Boredom (young people don't attend educational programs, lack of recreation).
- Mental health issues.
- Lack of self-esteem, lack of confidence.

Summary

According to service providers the type of offences are a barometer of young people's needs. 46% of the service providers interviewed acknowledged that the lack of fulfillment of basic needs contributed to young people to young people re-offending.

“Young people re-offend as a means to an end...The need to re-offend stops, when the root causes are attended to. Intervention needs to go back to the grass roots, otherwise it won't work.”

Financial Issues

- Low socio-economic backgrounds.
- Young people re-offend as a mean to an end – supplement the cost for accommodation. Recidivist by choice. Young people acknowledge they are better off in detention.
- No family support or support network is not very positive. No one cares for them. Parents don't support their children with the basic needs (e.g. food, accommodation).
- Financial hardship, no income, unemployment (re-offend for financial support, benefits from crime pay for medication, food, public transport, cigarettes and supplement cost of accommodation).
- Types of offends are a barometer of young people's needs.
- Crime pays for substance abuse.
- Young people may have debts caused by drug abuse.
- Level of debts prevents young people to move on.

Summary

A significant amount of service providers (76%) said that financial issues were a factor in young people re-offending.

“Young people re-offend as a means of income – benefits from crime pay for medication, food, public transport, debt, drugs and is a supplement for accommodation”.

Social Structure

- Issue should be seen from a macro point of view.
- Through empowerment of women we see more girls offend now. Rates are changing.
- Our society is based on ‘Nuclear Families’ – this is not the norm anymore.
- No male initiation – no transition from boy to men within our society.
- Young people feel like part of the system – rehabilitation makes them feel uncomfortable.

Summary

23% of respondents interviewed believed that the social structure contributes to young people to re-offend.

“There is a certain percentage of recidivists within a society – the population grows, the percentage of recidivists raises”.

Mental Health

- Lack of good mental health.
- Benefits from crime pay for medication.
- Rehabilitation makes young people uncomfortable.
- Shortage of staff addressing youth health needs.
- Boredom in the young person’s individual mind.
- Lack of self-esteem, lack of self-confidence.
- Agencies may not meet young person’s needs.
- Abuse – trauma, mental health problem has huge impact.
- Sexual offending needs to be dealt with in a more direct way.

Summary

Only 23% of the service provider respondents mentioned the lack of good mental health as a reason for young people to re-offend.

“We need to improve our mental health services for young people”.

Drug Abuse

- Where did the cycle start – drug abuse – why did the young person abuse drugs in the first place? The need to offend stops, when the need for drugs stops, when the root causes are addressed. There are always trends: a few years ago drugs were an issue – drugs were harder to get. Now drugs are more available and cheaper. Cannabis can be grown cheaper. Drug induced antisocial behavior is not seen anymore as it used to be. Now there is more violent crime.
- Drug abuse is a symptom; the grass roots need to be addressed.
- Crime pays for substance abuse.
- Young people may have debts caused by drug abuse.

Summary

From the service providers interviewed, 62% considered drug abuse as a reason for young people to re-offend. Additionally, the interviewees recognized that drug abuse was symptomatic of underlying issues.

“Drug abuse is only a symptom – the grass roots need to be addressed”.

Organisational Issues

- Prison system does not offer rehabilitation. Young people learn of others while in prison.
- Incarceration does not work.

- Young people feel like part of the system – rehabilitation makes them feel uncomfortable.
- Young people have been through welfare all their lives – they feel marginalized – commit crime.
- Organizations often look at socio-political links – however, American models do not necessarily work in our society.
- Departments at a high level need to communicate. If it can happen at a high level, it can happen at the grass roots, and vice versa.
- Address policy area.

Summary

30% of the respondents said that organizational issues have an impact on young people re-offending.

“Young people often feel like part of the system – rehabilitation makes them feel uncomfortable”.

Intervention Strategies

- Whatever placed the young person into detention has not been fixed up. Where did the cycle start? Intervention needs to go back to the grass roots, otherwise it won't work.
- Prison system does not offer rehabilitation. Young people learn of others while in prison.
- Young people feel like part of the system – rehabilitation makes them feel uncomfortable.
- Organizations often look at socio-political links – however, American models do not necessarily work in our society.
- Lack of opportunities for young people.
- Level of debts prevents young people to move on.
- Intervention comes too late.
- Shortage of staff addressing health needs.
- Lack of true community support and intervention on release.
- Agencies may not meet young people's needs (e.g. hours of service).
Young person may not want support.

- Sexual offending needs to be dealt with in a more direct way.
- Families own issues need to be addressed.
- Alternative treatments are important. Prisons don't work.
- We need to provide a solid program for young people.

Summary

46% of respondents believed that issues surrounding intervention strategies contributed to young people re-offending.

“Young people have been through welfare all their lives – they feel like part of the system – rehabilitation makes them feel uncomfortable”.

Media

- Media plays up juvenile offending.
- Media is anti young people, especially aboriginal young people (aboriginal young people face more difficult task when facing court).

Summary

Media perception (15%) is also seen as a factor by service providers why young people are perceived to partake in crime.

Other Issues

- There are a certain percentage of recidivists within a society. As the population grows, the percentage of recidivists raises.
- Young people are breaking their supervised release order.
- History of criminality.
- Peer group pressure.
- Offending as a game.
- There are always trends: a few years ago drugs were an issue. Drugs were harder to get. Now drugs are more available and cheaper. Drug induced anti-social behavior is not seen anymore as it used to be. Now there is more violent crime. Males and females.

- Biggest trend is a breakdown in families. Our society is based on the 'Nuclear Family'. This is not the norm anymore.
- Things we take for granted is not the norm for these kids.

Summary

The respondents mentioned other issues as factors relating to re-offending in young people (54%). These included growing population, breach of supervised bail order, history of criminality, trends, peer group pressure and offending as a game.

Question 2: What do You do (service delivery) to Prevent Young People Re- Offending?

Question 3: How do You Provide Support to Young People who are About to Leave Detention or have Recently Left Detention? What does it Look Like?

<u>Service Provider</u>	<u>What do you do (service delivery) to prevent young people re-offending?</u>	<u>How do you provide support to young people who are about to leave detention or have recently left detention? What does it look like?</u>
Rangeview Juvenile Remand Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervised Bail (agreement with young person) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselling • Coordinate and liaise with other support services for young person • Detention as respite for families and children • Detention provides basic needs (accommodation, food, clothing) • Remand is a form of detention

<p>Great Mates Crisis Accommodation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide supported accommodation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full assessment once supervised bail is organised • Individual support plan (young people may have bail conditions and/or curfews) • Education programs • Liaise with other support agencies re basic needs
<p>Centrelink</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide financial support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise financial support before young people leave detention • Outreach • Provide information • Liaise with Juvenile Justice Officer • Referrals to other support agencies • Provide counseling • Link young people back to family and community • Provide practical support (e.g. take young people to appointments)
<p>Cyril Jackson Youth Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education, training and work experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide safe environment • Provide individual Education Plans • Provide drug education • Liaise with other support agencies • Deliver transitional programs • Provide independent living

		skills
Mission Australia Youth Withdrawal and Respite Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential setting for young people wanting to manage their withdrawal from alcohol or other drugs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs offer group work twice a day for 14 days • Address psycho-behavioural issues – anger management • Address cognitive-behavioural issues – decision making process • Provide support in financial budgeting, life skills, and communal living • Promote self esteem • Provide counselling support 24 hours 7 days a week
Youth & School Help Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide support to young people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselling for young people and/or family • Provide healthy connection programs at school • Outreach • Referrals to other agencies • Community development
Passages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information and referrals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find out what is the young person's need • Provide as much information and support as young person wants
Aboriginal Family Supervision Program (Mentoring Program)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate aboriginal supervision programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide young people with mentors (Mentors act as role model and give support e.g. going to

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit mentors 	Centrelink, report to Juvenile Justice Officer)
Swan Emergency Accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supported accommodation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify issues (e.g. legal issues) • Develop case management procedures for young people • Address reasons for homelessness • Referrals to other agencies
South East Metropolitan Youth Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide support to young person (employment, career path, career direction, training and work experience) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver program to young people at Banksia Hill Detention Centre • Develop awareness in young people • Referrals to other agencies • Address life skills, employment needs and provide information to young people
Fremantle Youth Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referral agency • Provide long-term accommodation • Emergency relief program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link young person with other support agencies • One-on-one basis needs assessment • Advocacy • Provide emergency financial support • Provide education and information • Long-term externally supported accommodation
Bentley Family Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment and intervention • Service is prioritised (young person who is

	diagnostic	<p>suicidal has priority)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual therapy (medication) • Family therapy • Group work addressing life skills, social skills, anger management, anxiety, depression and transitional issues. • Referral to other agencies
Safe Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intensive individualised counselling service for adolescent sexual offenders and their families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holistic approach • Provide intensive individualised counselling for adolescent sexual offenders and their families • Provide support to child and adolescent victims of intra-familial sexual abuse and their families • Provide long-term support for young people outside the Juvenile Justice System • Develop prevention plan with young person • Couple work • Preventative intervention for families • Develop social networks, social skills, address basic needs • Address offending behaviour

Question 4: What would you like to see your agency do to provide better support for young people?

Mentoring

- Mentors that act as mediators. Mentors can deal with practical stuff (e.g. basic needs, such as food, accommodation etc.). Also access and negotiate on young people's behalf with agencies.
- Compulsory mentoring (young people may not listen to their parents/family members).

Accommodation

- More supported accommodation
- Transitional homes with visits from 'case worker' once a week.

Community support

- More support from community (young people that have re-offended need support from the community).
- Community based work helps young people's rehabilitation.
- Non threatening community work. Create a teamwork environment within the community.

Organisational issues and services

- 24 hour service (services haven't kept up with the demand, services have been reduced).
- More networking (better communication with agencies).
- Links to referral agencies and other links have to be made prior to release.
- Case planning conferencing in collaboration with other agencies.
- More of a collaborative approach across the board.
- More resources.
- Raise level of support for young people.
- Continuous updates on services and other resources.
- Quicker support delivery to young people. Being able to see young people without delay.

- More flexibility in program delivery.
- Realistic programs in very early intervention services to families. (Parents become part of program for offenders).
- Options for alternative treatment.
- Deal with causal issues.
- More support for families. (Parenting support).
- More practical support. (Address basic needs).

Funding

- Realistic funding.
- Sustainable long-term funded programs.
- More funding for supported accommodation.
- Eliminate competition between agencies. Work collaboratively.

Mental health

- Provide more mental health support.
- Outreach worker to get young people engaged with mental health.

Conclusion

Accommodation, mentoring, community support, funding, organizational structure, support services and mental health were the main issues discussed by service provider when asked what they would like to see their agency do to provide better support for young people.

Question 5: What other support services do you think would make a difference to young people leaving detention?

Family issues

- Build stronger families. More attention to family background. More family support (especially for aboriginal families).
- Stability of family structure needs to be addressed.

- Work with constellation of family. Family involvement.

Drug issues

- More drug treatment program for young people.

Employment, education and training

- Individual education plan.
- More courses especially life skill programs.
- Work experience programs.
- More funding for resources.
- Employment opportunities.
- Job links – J Pet.
- Combined efforts with other government agencies.

Accommodation

- More supported accommodation.
- Permanent accommodation.
- Good quality and suitable accommodation services.
- Collaborative approach with other agencies.
- Improve staff ratio (often young people are being turned away, due to understaffing).
- More accommodation services for single men.
- Staff needs to make links with other services, before young people leave detention.
- More crisis accommodation (often difficult for young people to get into housing due to biases and prejudices).

Gender and cultural issues

- More support for indigenous young people and their families (family support, accommodation etc.).
- More Aboriginal Legal Officers.

- Specialised support services for young men.
- More accommodation services for single men.

Mentoring

- More mentoring services.
- Match the right person with client. Also mentors should be more like a friend.
- Easier and more readily available access to mentor system.

Organisational issues

- Eliminate competition between agencies – work collaboratively.
- Transparency within agencies. Confidentiality issue needs to be more flexible without breaking the rules.
- Young people need to be linked into support continuously. Support needs to be tailored to young people's needs.
- Good referral services within big organisations.
- Combined effort with other agencies, especially in health.
- Better coordination of services (somebody to take responsibility for the whole service). Services that are rapt around the young person.

Staff issues

- More Aboriginal Legal Officers.
- Police Officers – barriers have to be broken down by working together with young people
- Long-term case worker.
- Staff needs to make links with other agencies. Young people need continuity of staff. “We need to break down the business of owning kids”.
- Create trust relationships between agencies and young people.

Other programs or issues

- Holistic approach.
- Weekend programs (awareness raising that we need support services that deliver support to young people 24 hours a day every day).
- Financial hardship needs to be addressed.
- Lack of awareness has to be addressed (e.g. not knowing what kind of support is out there).
- Address community attitude, biases and prejudices.
- Improvement of mental health services. Young people with mental illness fall through gaps.
- More flexibility in age range.
- Address general health issues.
- More generic services.
- Resources need to go back into local government.
- More emphasis on reintegration and restorative justice model.

Summary

Data generated by the service provider's interviews and the literature review was examined for similarities and differences in opinions and attitudes expressed. Interestingly, the majority of service provider responses echoed the findings of the literature review. Again, research findings from the literature review are based on male samples, due to scant research studies being undertaken from a female needs perspective. In addition, rarely are the findings of previous literature tested for their applicability to young women in general or young women from diverse subgroups. This is particularly true of Aboriginal young offenders (Cunneen & White, 1997).

An important observation needs to be pointed out; most service providers did not mention social structure and class inequality as factors relating to young people and re-offending. The few respondents, who did talk about this aspect, conveyed their view in a manner, which portrayed a level of helplessness and frustration. Does this support the previous assertion that the tragedy of contemporary reactions to youth crime is that young people themselves are seen as the focus for action? Moreover, does this relate directly to perceptions

regarding the position of young people as part of a new underclass in society, and an emphasis in official policy on policing this section of the marginalised population (Cunneen & White, 1998)?

From the response of the service provider's interviews and the literature review it is clear that there needs to be an integrated and holistic response to recidivism. However, it is important to recognise that financial support and the provision of accommodation play a crucial role in the successful integration of young offenders into the community. Nevertheless, without a holistic approach to addressing the transitional support needs, young people leaving detention will be set up to fail.

Recommendations

From the findings of the literature review and the service provider's interviews the following suggestions for future action have been made:

Organisational Structure

- That the reaction from the Juvenile Justice System to a criminal act is based solely on a young person's social situation.
- That incarceration is avoided under the age of 18; if incarceration must be used, it must maintain human character and offer treatment programs and opportunities to keep young people in contact with society.
- That responsibility for the reaction to crimes committed by individuals under the age of 15 is placed on social authorities.
- That resources directed at solving underlying reasons for crime in an area, are coordinated on a local level.
- That departments at a high level support communication within their own organisation and with others.
- That the policy area is addressed

Media

- That the media manifests a balanced and tolerant attitude toward its reporting on young offenders and the work of prison and probation authorities.

Community issues

- That community based initiatives in crime prevention links young people into services that exist within their own community (e.g. Community Mediation Centre).
- That communication between young people and young people and local inhabitants are facilitated.
- That public awareness of young people exiting the juvenile justice system need community support is raised.
- That community attitude regarding existing biases and prejudices are addressed.

Accommodation issues

- That affordable and suitable accommodation and housing (e.g. supported accommodation) is made available.
- That the availability of supported accommodation places is increased.
- That accommodation places for single men are increased.

Intervention strategies

- That intervention strategies are implemented as early as possible.
- That integrated, holistic responses address the root causes of the offending.
- That intervention is family focused (e.g. address economic problems or internal conflicts).
- That provision of integrated employment, welfare and accommodation services are implemented.
- That working groups that combat drug use are established.
- That affordable and meaningful recreation programs are implemented.
- That support programs and rehabilitation programs are culturally appropriate and tailored to the individual's needs.
- That support programs for job search, education and training are being implemented.

- That mental and/or physical health issues are being addressed.
- That mentors are being made available.

Economic issues

- That society recognises that young people exiting the juvenile justice system can experience severe financial pressure and therefore support young people accordingly.
- That young people leaving detention receive appropriate financial support.

Existing services

- That existing services are being improved (e.g. 24 hour service, more flexibility within services).
- That relevant government and community service providers develop a coordinated, collaborative and cooperative approach to meeting the needs of young people exiting the juvenile justice system.
- That easy access to services is made available to young people.
- That there is a continuous update on services and resources.
- That funding is long-term and sustainable.
- That agencies are transparent.

Staffing issues

- That the severe shortage of early intervention staffing for families is being addressed.
- That the shortage of staff addressing health needs is being addressed.
- That staff training is further developed.
- That professional and competent staff are being employed to deliver services to young people.
- That barriers are being broken down between authority figures, such as police officer, and young people.

What the Young People Say

Accommodation issues

- Homelessness
- No stable accommodation
- Crisis accommodation is only for 2-3 months
- Jumping from place to place (friends)

I've been jumping from place to place since I was 14...lived at friends places, stuff like that...(Matthew, 18 years)

We slept in an old empty house and drank rain water out of an old bath...(Roberta, 16 years)

Gender issues

- Limited job availability; only in traditional gender specific occupations

I mean some of the jobs Kelly has gone for she probably could have actually got, but because she's a girl she didn't. (Matthew)

Dysfunctional families

- Relationship with parents
- Displaced from families

I see so many kids being kicked out of their homes...(Matthew)

Basic needs

- Re-offend to survive

More common than not, most crime committed by young people is because of survival or in a way revenge towards parents or things like that. I've noticed that with kids. No one does it, because they really enjoying doing it. They do it for a reason, whether they know what the reason is or not. (Roberta)

I was shoplifting to survive out in the streets. It's a vicious cycle. Basically you have nowhere to go or anything...you are hungry, you shoplift. If you really need money you break into somebody's house or

steal somebody's car...and it's a vicious cycle... 'cause you got nowhere to go and you do this and you end up in something like Rangeview or Banksia. (Matthew)

Financial issues

- No income
- Difficult to get meaningful jobs
- Financial debts

Mark Latham and John Howard say we care about the future of our children...if they care about this they need to get off their bloody arses and do something...they have to spill some money.

Mental Health

- Some young people experiencing drug and alcohol problems as well as mental illness

I need to go down to the doctors, so I can get back my 'dexies' so I can concentrate more. I wouldn't even think about going back to TAFE, if I wouldn't have my 'dexies'. It would be a waste of time. (Matthew)

I have got an alcohol problem...I have inherited alcoholism...third generation. My mother has it; my grandmother and my aunty have it. (Roberta)

Staffing issues

- Better training for service provider
- Appoint professional staff

I have noticed of all my associates that are street kids, all really...it's in their head...it's something that they've been dwelling on and no one has actually listened...They've said that they understand and stuff but they haven't shown that they do understand and you still think in your head 'no you don't, you're just telling me that you understand. It's kind of in a way that you need proof. Proof that people do understand and they have been there... You need more people that have been there, done that. And seen it all...(Roberta)

Information/advertising of services

- Providing more information to young people on easy to access services

➤ More outreach worker

There is not enough information out there. Most of the times they don't know, (especially the younger kids). We had a 12 year old there the other day... I am one of the older ones out there and if people have problems they turn to me, which is one of the good things I got going for me. I help them out. The thing is there is so little information out there for them. Service agencies expect kids to be in Centrelink or places like that, but otherwise there is nothing. They don't have information like this in schools either. Even if they do, it (information) is hiding on a small rack in some place and it's never going to catch people's eyes, 'cause it's a pamphlet and kids are not really going to worry about it. The thing is there are some kids that can't go on Centrelink payments or things like that, so they don't get the information, because they don't go there. It just makes it hell. (Matthew)

Unemployment and/or low income

- Difficult to get meaningful jobs
- Difficult to get jobs without any training over the age of 16 years
- Employees under 16 years are on lower rates

People are not willing to hire an 18 year old, they want somebody younger, somebody trained. I know they don't hire me, because somebody younger is cheaper. It's a real curse. (Matthew)

I'm at the point right now, where I don't care where I work as long as I'm working, which really sucks, because at the end of the day, you might get a job that you don't really like. I'm a firm believer in yes – work for the money, but if you don't enjoy your job, you don't enjoy life and you're stuck in a job where you never wanted to be. (Matthew)

Questions that Guide the Scheduled Interviews with Young People

1. What happened when you got out last time?
(in terms of accommodation, job, financial support, friends, other support etc.)
 - a) If you needed help, who did you turn to?

2. How soon did you begin to re-offend?
 - a) What sorts of things did you do?
 - b) Why did you do it?

3. What do you think will happen this time? Why?

4. Are you going to do things differently this time? How? Why?

5. What do you think, in terms of support services, would make a difference to you, so you won't re-offend?

6. What are your hopes and dreams for the future?

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4. Are you going to do things differently this time? How? Why?

5. What do you think, in terms of support services, would make a difference to you, so you won't re-offend?

6. What are your hopes and dreams for the future?



Information sheet for service providers

An examination of the transitional support needs for young people leaving detention.

Project Management Group: Peter Sirr (Outcare), Kim Crabb (Outcare), Cheryl Cassidy-Vernon (Youth Legal Service), Jude Bridgland-Sorenson (Edith Cowan University), Meredith Turnbull (Youth Affairs Council of WA)

Researcher: Kirsten Janke (PH: 9202 1688)

The research project is being undertaken by Outcare and also as part of the requirements of an Honours thesis at Edith Cowan University.

The purpose of the study is to examine the transitional support needs of young people leaving detention. The aim of the research project is to provide stakeholders with a clear picture of the options within the Perth metropolitan area available to young people leaving detention to assist them to achieve a successful transition. Furthermore, it will also identify any gaps within the current services that are provided to young people leaving detention.

Participation in the research project will involve a scheduled interview, lasting approximately 30 minutes. I will ask you about the services your agency/organization provides to young people and what other services would be of benefit for young people leaving detention. Furthermore, I will ask of your perception why young people re-offend.





To maintain your personal privacy your name will not be mentioned in the study, however, the agency/organization will be named as participants in the study.

Participation is, of course, entirely voluntary and you may withdraw from the study at any time.

The results of the research study will be available from Outcare.

If you want more information about the study, you can contact Kirsten Janke at Youth Legal Service on 9202 1688. The Honours study has been approved by the ECU Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns or complaints about the research study and wish to talk to an independent person, you may contact the Research Ethics Officer at ECU on 6304 2170.

Thank you very much.





CONSENT FORM

An examination of the transitional support needs for young people leaving detention.

Project Management Group: Peter Sirr (Outcare), Kim Crabb (Outcare), Cheryl Cassidy-Vernon (Youth Legal Service), Jude Bridgland-Sorenson (Edith Cowan University), Meredith Turnbull (Youth Affairs Council of WA)

Researcher: Kirsten Janke (PH: 9202 1688)

Ihave been provided with information about the Outcare project. "An examination of the transitional support needs for young people leaving detention".

I have read the information sheet and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.

I agree that the interviews will be utilized by Outcare for the sole purpose of contributing to its findings.

Unless I request otherwise my name will not be made public in any reports or publications which emerge from this research. However, I agree that the agency/organization will be named as participants in the study.

I understand that I am free to withdraw from further participation at any time, without explanation or penalty.

Signature:

Witnessed by:

Date:

Edith Cowan University
Edith Cowan University
Edith Cowan University





Information sheet for young people

An examination of the transitional support needs for young people leaving detention.

Project Management Group: Peter Sirr (Outcare), Kim Crabb (Outcare), Cheryl Cassidy-Vernon (Youth Legal Service), Jude Bridgland-Sorenson (Edith Cowan University), Meredith Turnbull (Youth Affairs Council of WA)

Researcher: Kirsten Janke (PH: 6263 8622)

The purpose of the study is to find out what kind of help young people need when they get out of detention.

The research project is being undertaken by Outcare and also as part of the requirements of an Honours thesis at Edith Cowan University. We will be speaking to young people within the Perth metropolitan area. No names will be used in the study, and all participation is entirely voluntary.

We will ask you a few questions on why you re-offended and what would have made a difference in terms of support services.





The interview will last approximately 40 minutes and will be tape-recorded and transcribed, which you will be able to edit to your satisfaction. To protect your privacy the recordings will be erased after completion of the project.

Everything you say will be treated confidentially, which means that no one else will know what you have told us. We are more than happy to answer any questions you might have about the project at any time.

If you don't feel like answering a question or you wish to drop out half-way through, then that's fine too.

The results of the research study will be available through Outcare within the next few months.

If you want more information about the study, you can contact Kirsten Janke at Outcare on 6263 8622. The Honours study has been approved by the ECU Research Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns or complaints about the research study and wish to talk to an independent person, you may contact the Research Ethics Officer at ECU on 6304 2170.

Thank you very much.





CONSENT FORM

An examination of the transitional support needs for young people leaving detention

Project Management Group: Peter Sirr (Outcare), Kim Crabb (Outcare), Cheryl Cassidy-Vernon (Youth Legal Service), Jude Bridgland-Sorenson (Edith Cowan University), Meredith Turnbull (Youth Affairs Council of WA)

Researcher: Kirsten Janke (PH: 6263 8622)

Ihave been provided with information about the Outcare project, "An examination of the transitional support needs for young people leaving detention".

I have read the information sheet and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.

I agree that Outcare will record the Interview and that the recording can be utilized by Outcare for the sole purpose of contributing to its findings.

My name will not be made public in any reports or publications which emerge from this research.

You may, if you wish, use a pseudonym.

I understand that I am free to withdraw from further participation at any time, without explanation or penalty.

Signature

Witnessed by

Date





Information Sheet for Parents

An examination of the transitional support needs for young people leaving detention.

Project Management Group: Peter Sirr (Outcare), Kim Crabb (Outcare), Cheryl Cassidy-Vernon (Youth Legal Service), Jude Bridgland-Sorenson (Edith Cowan University), Meredith Turnbull (Youth Affairs Council of WA)

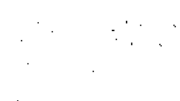
Researcher: Kirsten Janke (PH: 6263 8622)

The purpose of the study is to find out what kind of help young people need when they get out of detention.

The research project is being undertaken by Outcare and also as part of the requirements of an Honours thesis at Edith Cowan University. We will be speaking to young people within the Perth metropolitan area. No names will be used in the study, and all participation is entirely voluntary.

We will ask the young person a few questions on why he or she re-offended and what would have made a difference in terms of support services.

The scheduled interview will last approximately 40 minutes and will be tape-recorded and transcribed, which participants will be able to edit to their satisfaction. To protect the young persons' privacy the recordings will be erased after completion of the project.



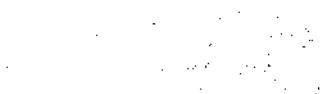


If participants, at any time, don't feel like answering a question or wish to drop out half-way through, then that's fine too.

The results of the research study will be available through Outcare within the next few months.

If you want more information about the study, you can contact Kirsten Janke at Outcare on 6263 8622. The Honours study has been approved by the ECU Research Ethics Committee. If you have any concern or complaints about the research study and wish to talk to an independent person, you may contact the Research Ethics Officer at ECU on 6304 2170.

Thank you very much.





Outcare

PARENT CONSENT FORM

An examination of the transitional support needs for young people leaving detention

Project Management Group: Peter Sirr (Outcare), Kim Crabb (Outcare), Cheryl Cassidy-Vernon (Youth Legal Service), Jude Bridgland-Sorenson (Edith CowUniversity) Meredith Turnbull (Youth Affairs Council of WA)

Researcher: Kirsten Janke (6263 6822)

I have been provided with information about the Outcare research project. "An examination of the transitional support needs for young people leaving detention".

I have read the information sheet and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.

I agree that Outcare will record the Interview and that the recording can be utilized by Outcare for the sole purpose of contributing to its findings.

Participants' names will not be made public in any reports or publications which emerge from this research.

I understand that participants are free to withdraw from further participation at any time, without explanation or penalty.

I am the parent/guardian ofand give consent for her/him to participate in the interview.

Signature:

Date:

Witnessed by:

Dr. Kirsten Janke
Researcher

