

The Michael Sieff Foundation

working together for children's welfare



A SECOND CHANCE: The Employment and Training of Children with Criminal Records

Report on the Conference

Hosted by
the Michael Sieff Foundation at
The Inner London Probation Service Conference Centre
19th June 2000

Supported by HW Fisher & Company

TOPICS AND SPEAKERS

	page
1. Background to Conference	1
Lady Haslam	Founder and Trustee Michael Sieff Foundation
2. Introduction	1
Lord Laming	Formerly Chief Inspector Social Services Inspectorate, DoH.
3. Government Initiatives to Tackle Youth Crime	2
Lord Bassam of Brighton	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State Home Office
4. The Prison Service and Its Management	4
Sir David Ramsbothom GCB CBE	H.M. Chief Inspector of Prisons
5. Law Reform and Criminal Records	7
Allan Levy QC	Child Law Specialist
6. New Co-operative Initiatives in Prevention and Inclusion	11
Joyce Moseley	Youth Justice Board
7. Enhancing Employment Opportunities for Young Offenders	15
Penny Robson	Chief Education Officer, Home Office
8. People As Human Beings First	18
Neil Wragg and Nathan	Youth At Risk
9. A Probation Perspective	21
John Harding	Chief Probation Officer Inner London Probation Service
10. Getting A Headstart	25
Gill Henson	SOVA
11. The Employment of Training of Children with Criminal Records	27
Beverley Thompson	NACRO
12. Issues that Arose in Discussion	30
13. The Way Forward	31
Lord Laming	
14. Acknowledgements	32
Lady Haslam	
15. Summary of Conference Recommendations	33

The Michael Sieff Foundation

working together for children's welfare



1. Background to Conference

Lady Haslam

In January 1998, the Michael Sieff Foundation held a conference “Moral Opportunities: 16 to 18 year Olds Leaving Care”. Many of the recommendations made at that conference, and published in the conference report, have since been taken onboard by the Government and acted upon. However, the specific issues of children and young people who had offended, many of them disadvantaged children who were in care, was an area that we felt had been badly neglected. It is primarily to address this neglect, that today’s conference had been arranged.

2. Introduction

Lord Laming, previously Chief Inspector, Social Services Inspectorate, DoH.

The Trustees of the Michael Sieff Foundation have a unique ability to organise relevant and timely conferences, in an atmosphere which encourages the sharing of experiences between people from a range of different professions and backgrounds. As a result, their conference reports are of enormous value in improving the quality of life of young disadvantaged people. This conference aims to prevent children and young people from ending up in prison, either for the first time or as repeat offenders, especially those young people who for one reason or another seem to have fallen out of the system, despite the government’s high priority for tackling social exclusion.

Evidence shows that poor performance at school is not necessarily an indication of lack of ability. Indeed, many people have performed badly at school but have gone on to become very successful. When I first became a Probation Officer, I was helping a group of young offenders whom I discovered were much more adept at calculating betting odds on races and race results than I was. I never did develop that kind of specific mental

agility. I realised that these young people had a capacity that hitherto had gone unrecognised. They developed a great deal of resourcefulness and they were survivors in many ways, but their abilities had never been properly developed, either for their own or society’s benefit. We must find new ways of engaging and motivating these young people to lead a more fulfilled life, and to become valued and productive members of the community.

3. Government Initiatives to Tackle Youth Crime and Reforms of the Youth Justice System

Lord Bassam, Under-Secretary of State, Home Office

Youth crime not only creates victims, it blights the quality of life for many communities. If it is not properly addressed and nipped in the bud, it can also set young people on a career of crime where regular contact with the criminal justice system becomes a way of life. This is a waste of their potential, for which we all pay in the end. Tackling youth crime is therefore a priority, with education, training and employment all playing a vital role.

Reforming Youth Justice

Research shows that there are many factors associated with youth crime: poor parenting, truancy and social exclusion. The government has responded by taking steps in these areas, because clearly prevention is better than cure, not least for the victims of crime. Those who start committing offences at an early age are more likely to become serious and persistent young offenders. This is detrimental to their welfare and denies them the opportunity to develop into fully contributing members of society.

The principal aim of tackling youth crime and reforming the youth justice system, therefore, is to prevent children and young people from offending in the first place, and from re-offending.

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 introduced a range of measures to help local communities take effective action to tackle youth crime. New local and national structures have also been introduced:

The Youth Justice Board has been in operation since September 1998. Its role is to provide national co-ordination and leadership, to identify and develop good practices, to advise the government on standards for service delivery, and to monitor the performance of the youth justice system.

Youth Offending Teams have been in operation since 1 April 2000. They are responsible for delivering community-based interventions to help young offenders face up to their crimes and change their attitudes and behaviour. The teams also work to promote social inclusion.

Under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, the police and courts have new powers to intervene earlier and more effectively when a young person begins offending, delivering community-based interventions. Such programmes include the Action Plan Order, the Reparation Order, the New Parenting Order and the Child Safety Order.

The Detention and Training Order was implemented nationally from 1 April 2000. It focuses on constructive use of time spent in custody and effective supervision and support in the community after release.

The Relationships Between Employment and Offending

British and American studies have shown that offenders who find stable employment on their release are half as likely to be re-convicted as those who have a pattern of unemployment.

The key problems affecting the ability of ex-offenders to find employment upon release, and which also make it difficult to provide an accurate figure for those who are employed on release, are:

- problems of definition, where ex-offenders have a pattern of intermittent employment on release and the majority of jobs are not found through formal channels;
- problems of confidentiality, where ex-offenders are not keen to reveal their employment position because they are often formally unemployed and drawing benefit although they have a 'cash in hand, no questions asked job';
- problems of employer attitudes, with many employers unwilling to take on young people with a criminal record, regardless of the offence or the offender's level of employability.

Evidence suggests that some prison work and training initiatives can make a difference. The Lipsey Study (1995) found that some well supervised programmes in institutional settings can be very effective, although this was not a large scale study.

The 1996 Saylor and Gaes study of 7,000 convicted prisoners in the United States found that those who had received training while in custody were 24 per cent more likely to be employed on release. The

results of this study show that there is a concrete link between increased offender 'employability' and increased offender employment.

Training Initiatives in Prisons and Increasing Employability

One of the Prison Service's objectives is "to reduce crime by providing constructive regimes which address offending behaviour, improve education and work skills, and promote law-abiding behaviour in custody and after release".

In pursuit of this, the Prison Service has introduced a number of initiatives aimed at increasing the employability of young offenders on release. For example:

- The Prison Service is a partner in the Welfare to Work initiative, which aims to help the long-term unemployed back into work. The initiative is a preparation for early entry into the New Deal process offered by the Employment Service. The Prison Service programme targets 18 to 24 year olds, to improve their employability and increase their chances in the job market, and to help them gain the maximum benefit from the New Deal Gateway on release. Twelve establishments deliver Welfare to Work. Since the start of the scheme in prisons, some 3,600 prisoners have completed the course, and participants have averaged 5.6 qualifications out of a potential seven.
- The Military Orientation Course is an 8 to 10-week course which is being piloted at Her Majesty's Youth Offender Institute (HMYOI) Wetherby, and is due to start at HMYOI Dover in the near future. It is aimed at preparing young offenders who are interested in a career in the forces for the Army's physical fitness test and entrance exam.

The course is not an alternative to prison and there is no element of recruitment involved. The only Army involvement in the course is specific briefing about entry into and employment in the Army. There is a six-month minimum waiting period between release and application for the Armed Forces.
- The Prince's Trust offers a 12-week Personal Development programme for the 16 to 25 age group. The course is delivered by franchise partners and is currently offered by nine establishments.
- The High Intensity Treatment Programme is run at HMYOI Thorn Cross, and is in part delivered by the Society of Voluntary Associates (SOVA).

This programme consists of five stages of five weeks. The final stage involves work experience placement, with the young people returning to Thorn Cross at weekends. The signs from this programme are encouraging: there is a 10 per cent drop in the expected reconviction rate after one year for those undertaking the programme.

The general principles of the High Intensity Treatment Programme are being incorporated into Prison Service regimes for young people under 18, and more similar programmes are being considered for over-18s.

- The Foundation Training Company delivers pre-release courses in four establishments in London, Essex and Suffolk, which primarily deal with young offenders.

Post-release Support

We know that offenders need to have continuity of support on release. This is because many do not have an appropriate social network from which to get support, support that can be crucial, especially in the period immediately after release, if the ex-offender is not to drift back into crime.

The key to reducing re-offending is to ensure wherever possible that ex-offenders actually get jobs on release. Training and work to reduce re-offending needs to relate to the job market. Moreover, when probation supervision takes employment needs on board, it can be successful in getting offenders into jobs and reducing re-offending.

NACRO evidence suggests that small employers are more willing to take someone on, especially where there is back-up support. This was also found by SOVA in arranging High Intensity Treatment stage 5 placements. In short, there is much good work being done, but there is also plenty of anecdotal evidence of the difficulties which offenders face in getting employment.

That is why an interdepartmental group, with full ministerial backing, is looking into the barriers that offenders face in gaining employment and accommodation. That work will better inform us about the nature of the problems and the practical steps that can be taken to overcome them.

Securing employment and accommodation is a key factor in the effective resettlement of young offenders following time spent in custody. The Prison Service continues to consult and work with all the departments and agencies involved, including the voluntary sector.

Neither the government in general, nor the Prison Service in particular with its partners in the voluntary sector, can hope to make a difference without the active support of employers.

There are many good relationships between individual prisons and employers across the country. I pay tribute to those businesses and voluntary sector organisations who have been working closely with establishments to find

placements for ex-offenders. But I would make a plea to those businesses which, for understandable reasons, may be reluctant to consider taking on ex-offenders.

Don't dismiss this idea out of hand. Make contact with a Prison Service establishment in your area. Taking on staff who had vocational training in prison is not simply an act of social responsibility, it can make good business sense too.

4. The Prison Service and its Management

Sir David Ramsbotham GCB CBE, H.M. Chief Inspector of Prisons

A major objective of the Prison Service is "to reduce crime by providing constructive regimes which address offending behaviour, improve education and work skills and promote law-abiding behaviour in custody and after release". We must help prisoners to help themselves inside the prison, but we also need to ensure that this help continues outside the prison, in the form of employment and accommodation.

Management Versus People

As you know, Lord Laming is undertaking an enquiry into the Prison Service and its management, and, in particular, its failure to identify failing prisons. As part of this enquiry, he will also look at issues such as the preparation for release, links with the community and many issues that are directly linked to the issue of young people in detention.

There is no doubt that the management structure in today's prisons needs serious review. Somehow in the last 20 or 30 years, leadership seems to have been replaced by the idea that management is simply a question of publishing visions, statements of purpose, key performance indicators, targets, and a host of other 'management tools', wrapped up in glossy documents.

In the Prison Service, for example, every prison has to complete 753 work sheets on 69 standards to be audited every three years. This swamps the system and does not in any way guarantee success. If the Prison Service management is not identifying failing prisons, therefore, it is because it is concentrating on 'management' and not on prisons. Prisons are about prisoners; and prisoners have to be looked after. This is not achieved by filling in forms.

Communication and Implementation

This is important to remember because, at the heart of the issue under consideration, are two people

talking to each other. In this exchange, there is one person who can help guide, advise, mentor, and produce opportunities for another. But this person cannot just advise and make promises; he or she needs a support mechanism that can make sure that those promises happen.

What is needed is one-on-one communication between the offender and someone who can guide and advise them together with back-up mechanisms and structures to implement the possibilities that are discussed.

The Punishment and the Crime

What is also needed is some sense of proportion. A good example of this is the recent case of a young man who was given three months in detention, after being convicted of urinating in Trafalgar Square. Is this sentence in proportion to the offence? Some people may think so, but there are more factors at play than simply the relationship between the offence and the sentence. This young man will now have a criminal record, and all that implies.

The Concept of a 'Healthy' Prison

The responsibility of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons is to "monitor and influence the treatment of, and conditions for those in prisons in England, Wales and Northern Ireland". I would refine this to say that the responsibility is, in fact, monitoring and influencing the treatment of, and conditions for prisoners in healthy prisons.

What is a Healthy Prison?

- It is a prison in which the weakest prisoners feel safe. If the weakest prisoner feels safe, then everyone else will feel safe: not only the people who are in prison, but also the people who work with them, volunteers who come in, professionals, and others. People must feel safe because, unless they do, they can't do anything, for example, to combat bullying, to maintain discipline and standards, to make sure that the prison environment is 'healthy'.
- A healthy prison is one where everyone, including prisoners, is treated with respect as a human being. This is a question of attitude. It's the attitude of managers to staff, staff to prisoners, prisoners to staff and managers, to the job, and to responsibility. It is not the job of prison staff to regard prisoners as subordinates, nor to be judgmental about their offences. The staff has a responsibility, a duty of care, to those prisoners who are put in their charge for the time that they are there.
- In a healthy prison all prisoners must be encouraged to improve themselves, and be enabled to do so through the provision of purposeful activity. This is not a question of spoon-feeding prisoners or creating a regime where they don't have to think and everything is done for them. It is a question of ensuring that all detainees, regardless of age, sex, and ability, are able to take as much responsibility for their own day as is possible. The day must be full, purposeful and active and it must, above all, be one that aimed at the concept of 'improving'. If detainees are encouraged to improve themselves, it stirs something inside them. They can only achieve this if appropriate activities are provided.
- For a prison to be healthy, it is vital that all prisoners are able to maintain contact with their families, if they have them, and to prepare for release. At the moment, the Prison Service does not handle preparation for release adequately. That is why my Inspectorate and the Probation Service Inspectorate are embarking on a joint thematic review of preparation for release and resettlement, covering all aspects of the Prison Service. This will be done in the context of the three things that are said to be most likely to contribute to the fight against re-offending: a job, a home and a stable relationship.

But if a job, a home and a stable relationship are effectively pre-requisites to the successful

reintegration of offenders into society, and to diminishing the possibilities of re-offending, then we face significant challenges. A look at some statistics illustrates this:

The Challenges

Basic education and further opportunities.

These figures relate to under-18 year olds when they enter prison:

- 80 per cent have no educational qualification whatsoever,
- 60 per cent have below average literacy standards,
- 70 per cent have no basic numeracy standards,
- 73 per cent left school before the statutory leaving age, more than half of them being evicted or expelled.

These figures say a great deal, but they represent only one part of the challenge. It is important not to forget those detainees who have higher qualifications. They must also be given the opportunity to develop, for example through higher education opportunities, art therapy, creative mixes of activity that encourage and open up potential. It is vital that the Prison Service does not forget these groups in the drive to provide better basic education. We must look, not only at basic needs, but also at opportunities for all.

Jobs and Unemployment

There is dispute over the figures relating to employment. Some say that 85 per cent of offenders were unemployed when they came into prison; others put the figure at 66 per cent. The doubt is caused by what the employment actually was although, whatever it was, it was unskilled work with no training. Forty-eight per cent have no work experience of any kind. This is not a very strong bedrock on which to build, particularly since many come from a third generation of unemployed families. The figure that the Director General quotes is that 70 per cent of people are not qualified for 96 per cent of available jobs. This is a challenge: it can be reduced by ensuring that the time during the sentence is used to help unqualified detainees to become qualified, and those that are qualified to be better qualified.

Statistics further show that 55 per cent of young detainees have been in care for two years or more, 19 per cent of the under 15's have been disowned by their parents, and 34 per cent were living alone or with friends at the time of arrest. Every one of

the 78 young offenders in Swansea were on prescribed tranquillisers. Thirty-seven per cent of young women and 7 per cent of young men say they have attempted suicide, with a greater number talking about self-harm. Forty-six per cent have been referred to psychiatric examination before reception. Forty-nine per cent of young women and 17 per cent of young men report having been sexually abused. Thirty-four per cent of young women and 17 per cent of young men are, or are about to become parents. Do these figures matter? They do, not least because this is the age when these young people are starting their lives. Prisons have an opportunity to do something positive to help redress some of the social neglect that underlies these statistics.

Reception and Relationships

This opportunity relates above all to helping prisoners to help themselves. It begins immediately, with proper reception, first night arrangements and induction. That may seem very detailed, but there is nothing more important in a prison than the reception of a person when they arrive. Particularly that applies to the young offender. The relationship between the two people, the person meeting and the person arriving, will underpin the whole attitude to the person during imprisonment and therefore the likelihood of being able to achieve anything.

All too often the offender is met with an aggressive manner and anti-deluvian conditions.

And yet, everything in prison stems from that moment, because if the person can be faced with something positive about what is happening, then there is something to build on. Perhaps the first and most important thing that should happen after the immediate arrangements is a structured needs assessment of each individual, particularly related to:

- **Education.** Not just basic skills assessment, but an in-depth analysis, for example whether there are learning disabilities, difficulties, dyslexia. Quite often these can have resulted from boredom or drugs or something which has taken people away from education, and has nothing to do with ability.
- **Work skills.** At the moment a lot of work is being done on the New Deal aptitude testing. This must be done right at the start, to understand the person's potential and to be able to build on it.

- **Social skills.** This includes skills like parenting, and learning to live alone. How capable are they of looking after themselves?
- **Health.** This includes not just physical health but mental health, including latent morbidity, much of it advanced by substance abuse.
- **Substance abuse.** Everyone talks about drugs and it gets a great deal of attention, but don't forget alcohol and, with the youngest generation, things like glue. There is also a need to consider those who enter prison on prescribed medication. Often several of these substances are abused at the same time, in a dangerous cocktail. The time in prison should surely be used to tackle a problem like this.

Multi-agency Responses

Once needs assessments are done, there must be a multi-agency response. In early 2000, the Forum of Criminal Justice Inspectors - probation, prisons, police, social services, Her Majesty's Services and Crown Prosecution Service - published a report on information flow within the criminal justice system. This report sought to identify what each service needed of the other, but was either not getting or only getting with difficulty. It was these breaks in the flow of information that were impeding the ability of each to do its work. The report demonstrated clearly that, by statute, police, social services, probation, education, health and the courts must exchange information. But prisons were left off the list, ostensibly because prisons "do not get involved with every offender". That may be so, but that is not to say that every offender who comes into prison may not have been involved with a Youth Offending Team. Put prisons on the list; make certain that there is this exchange of information. The fuel of the process is information. Information about the individual is needed to start the process of deciding what can be done in the time available, and that information must be passed to those who are going to continue with the aftercare, otherwise it will come to a grinding halt.

Multi-sector Engagement in Resettlement

The question that should be asked, at all stages of activity, is what will become of the offender when he or she is released. The ultimate goal must be to prepare the person for a fresh start. Of course this is a two-way process. It is not only the job of prisons, but of all the people who can help in the community: the providers of jobs, the agencies with

responsibility for monitoring continued treatment programmes or continuing a period of supervision as a result of a Court Order. Unless the Prison Service engages with these people and engages them early enough, then, in fact, they will not be able to influence the way the time in prison is used.

A good example of this is a very good initiative at Deerbolt in County Durham, where two prison officers started a small business course with funding from some local firms. The local firms involved sent staff into Deerbolt, and began to talk to the prisons about the work place so that, when they came out, two of them went into a firm and then started their own business. In short, prisoners were educated by people “on the job”, not just by teachers. The staff from the firms said they had not recognised quite what an opportunity they had to do this work, until they went into a prison. Now they thought they could give something back. This is replicated all over the country, most particularly in an admirable project called The Partnership Project in Buckley Hall in Lancashire. The City of Manchester underpins this project, for instance, by stipulating that no firm will be given a sub-contract on Manchester Airport unless it agrees to interview an ex-prisoner for a job. The prison prepares people, not to be given a job, but to interview for one. In this way, there is due process

and the individual is able to prove his or her competence.

At Thorn Cross, the young offenders establishment in Cheshire, the catering industry instructor found that there were lots of jobs in the catering industry around the country, many of which also provided accommodation. He had the relevant job cards sent up and encouraged the young men to apply. If a young offender got an interview, the instructor took him down for the interview and then saw him into the job with the training that he had been able to provide. This is a good example of a truly holistic approach, since the young man is trained, prepared for interview, supported into employment which carries with it reliable accommodation and the chance for a real new beginning.

The only raw material that every nation has in common is its people and woe betide any nation that does not do everything it can to identify, nurture and develop the talents of all its people. This is therefore a particular appeal to employers.

I continue appealing to the Prison Service to do what it can do to ensure that employers feel that they are getting the best value, not only for the public purse but also for their own purse, when they employ the people with the talents to be employed.

5. Criminal Responsibility, Criminal Records and Law Reform

Allan Levy QC Child Law Specialist

Laws relating to the age of criminal responsibility in this Country need reforming as do those relating to the rehabilitation of offenders. Continuing to treat children as adults is a very uncivilised approach.

At the outset, I must say what a pleasure and a privilege it is to be associated with the Sieff Foundation, and how much admiration I have for everybody connected with it. I have spoken at and attended a number of their conferences, and it is so rewarding to know that action takes place, often on quite a large scale. It really has been an inspiration and, in particular, has today made me want to raise the flag for reform of the law. I want to say something about what I would like to see in the future.

The title of the Conference is “A Second Chance: The Employment and Training of Children with Criminal Records”. What if we could take away the criminal records?

I want to look at how that could sensibly occur and how the law could be reformed. I accept that it can only deal with part of the problem. One obviously would have to look at what has brought the child or young person to the attention of the authorities and clearly some of the things I refer to have no applicability to the more serious offences. However, that still leaves quite a significant area where reform of the law would permit children and young people, not only a second chance but perhaps an only chance and a better chance.

A person's criminal record is fundamental to everything we are dealing with today. I would like to take away this crucial element, so far as one can, that triggers the problems. I want to consider in

particular the age of criminal responsibility and also the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, or as it is put in the United States, the Expungement of Records. I recognise that what I suggest may not be politically correct or popular, and may not be politically practical at present. I hope those who are familiar with the topics will still keep open minds, and I hope to persuade those who are less familiar with the details, to think about the problems so that ultimately there will be reform of the law.

The Age of Criminal Responsibility

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified by over 190 countries, carries enormous authority. Article 40, paragraph 3(a) of the UN Convention provides that “State Parties shall seek to promote the establishment of laws, procedures, authorities and institutions specifically applicable to children alleged as, accused of, or recognised as having infringed the penal law, and in particular: the establishment of a minimum age below which children shall be presumed not to have the capacity to infringe the penal law.” In England and Wales the age of criminal responsibility is 10, and in Scotland it is 8. These are significantly lower than the age of criminal responsibility in many other countries world-wide and particularly in Europe. In France the age is 13, in Germany, Austria and Italy it is 14, in the Scandinavian countries it is 15, in Spain and Portugal it is 16 and in Belgium it is 18. Eastern Europe is generally between 14 and 16. In its report in January 1995, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child pointed out and recommended that serious consideration should be given to raising the age throughout the UK. The committee is on record as stating that the age of 12 is certainly too low. No action was taken by the previous administration and, as far as I am aware, the present government contemplates no action. This is a far cry from a previous Labour government’s action in the Children and Young Persons Act 1969, where Section 4 raised the minimum age for prosecution in England and Wales to 14. This did not include homicide, although the intention was probably to encompass it eventually. The provision was never implemented and was repealed by the Criminal Justice Act 1991. The then Labour government’s reasoning was that children under 14 should be taken out of the criminal justice system and be made subject to what was described as case and control. Research and formidable documentation supported this approach.

The official commentary to the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (the Beijing Rules) notes the wide differences in the age of criminal responsibility. It observes: “the modern approach would be to consider whether a child can live up to the moral and psychological components of criminal responsibility; that is whether a child by virtue of his or her individual discernment and understanding can be held responsible for essentially anti-social behaviour.” If the age of criminal responsibility is fixed too low or if there is no lower age limit at all, the notion of responsibility would become meaningless. In general there is a close relationship between the notion of responsibility in delinquent or criminal behaviour and other social rights and responsibilities.

I would like to quote from one other report and I have to declare an interest because I was part of this commission, as it was called – the 1995 Gulbenkian Commission on Children and Violence. It had, in my view, something very relevant to say.

“We have explained that acts of criminal violence are by definition acts of individual choice. Children who act violently, like those who act violently to children, are immediately ‘responsible’ for their actions. If we wish to move as we do towards a society in which everyone takes responsibility for reducing violence, it is not helpful to cloud or confuse the issue of individual responsibility. But the general acceptance of the concept of individual responsibility for violence does not mean that juvenile offenders should be tried as adults. The process must be one that they can understand and respect. Nor does it mean that young people should face retribution, once they are regarded as responsible. It is for these reasons that the Commission proposes raising the age of criminal responsibility.”

The recommendation of the Gulbenkian Commission was to raise it to at least 14 years throughout the UK.

The trend world-wide has indeed been to raise the age of criminal responsibility. In Canada the age was raised from 7 to 12 years; in Israel it was raised from 9 to 13; in Norway from 14 to 15; in Cuba from 12 to 16 and in Rumania from 14 to 18. The trend, if any, in England and Wales is in the other direction. The low age of criminal responsibility here used to be softened somewhat by the use of

the presumption of *doli incapax*, the presumption that children under the age of 14 were incapable of crime. In effect, this meant that for children between the age of 10 and 14, the prosecution had to establish, not only that the child had the required *mens rea* for the specific crime charged, but also that the child knew that what he or she had done was seriously wrong, and not merely naughty or mischievous. By abolishing the presumption, a protection going back hundreds of years has been taken away from children. It has been described by leading academic commentators as “a dangerous blindness to the incapacities of children” and as a breach of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 40(3).

In addition, the government has effectively lowered the age of criminal responsibility by criminalising the activities of those below the age of 10, with the introduction in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, of child safety orders and local child curfew orders. Both target the under 10's. We are out of step with almost every other civilised country in respect of the age of criminal responsibility. Thirty years ago we took a positive step. It was thwarted by the lack of political will, and indeed, political cowardliness. Like many other countries we should reform our law and bring it into line with civilised standards. It would have the effect of contributing significantly to the eradication, in part, of some of the problems caused by children and young people having criminal records.

The Expungement of Criminal Records

The second question that I want to deal with is the expungement of records. The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act was passed as long ago as 1974. Its provisions have been brought into focus by the Police Act 1997 which introduces new arrangements for the handling and disclosure of criminal records information. The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act emerged as a result of the report of the Gardiner Committee, “Living it Down”. In it, it was estimated that in 1992 there were about one million people in England and Wales who had a criminal record but who had not been re-convicted for at least 10 years. The report noted that although these people were unlikely to be convicted again in the future, they faced great difficulties, especially in securing employment and insurance. The report concluded that “it is in society's interest that when someone has done all he can to live down his past, and enough time has passed to establish his sincerity, his record should

no longer be held against him so long as he does not offend again.” The Gardiner Committee then proposed legislation, which would regard certain people as “rehabilitated persons when they had not been re-convicted for a number of years.” The 1974 Act enabled some criminal convictions to become ‘spent’ after a period of time had elapsed from the date of conviction. The rehabilitation period varied depending upon the sentence or order imposed by the courts and after the period had elapsed the former offender no longer needed to disclose the spent conviction when applying for a job or taking out insurance.

Interestingly, the Gardiner Committee said this about children and young people: “Changes of personality take place more quickly during most people's teens, and less time is needed to give society a reasonable assurance that the change will last.” Its recommendation was acted upon in Section 5 of the Act and the rehabilitation periods are halved, for those convicted as juveniles.

Further, the Gardiner Committee recommended that those who fell outside the provisions of the Act, for instance those sentenced to a custodial sentence, including juveniles, of periods of more than 2 1/2 years, should be able to benefit from a procedure called “rehabilitation by application”. This would permit offenders to apply to the courts, to make their convictions ‘spent’ subject to certain limits and restrictions. However, this was not put into the Act.

Reform of the 1974 Act

The Penal Affairs Consortium, amongst others, has expressed the firm view for some years that an overhaul of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act is long overdue. The Consortium's main argument, as I understand it, is that the core element of the Act is too limited to encourage rehabilitation. The Gardiner Committee did apparently consider the idea of including all offenders in the proposed legislation, but decided that such a proposal would be too radical. The Consortium notes that the balance struck in the Act has meant that large numbers of offenders are excluded from it, and therefore from the prospect of becoming legally rehabilitated. In addition, many of those that are included must undergo very long periods before their convictions become spent.

It is strongly suggested by the Penal Affairs Consortium, therefore, that the core elements of the Act should be reviewed in order to give more support to the original intentions of the Act. The

Consortium pointed out in a November 1999 Paper that the case for a review has been strengthened by the May 1999 report of the Government's Better Regulation Task Force on 'Fit Person Criteria'. The report states that "The act sets out a complex array of rehabilitation periods to determine when different types of conviction are spent. These periods seem to have arisen more from political expediency than any rational justification." The Task Force called on the government to review the Act with a view to simplification of its rehabilitation periods. It added that a review should not be used as an opportunity to extend its exemptions.

As far as I am aware the particular position of children and young people has not been specifically addressed. However, one relevant fact is that a survey of employers in London carried out in 1997 found that less than half (46%) would offer a job to a young person with a criminal record. I am sure that many of you here have many other statistics and observations as to the handicaps. The Consortium suggested that the restriction of the benefits of rehabilitation to those sentenced to less than 2 1/2 years in custody is the first element of the Act that should be tackled. It proposed an increase in the threshold to 4 years, with an appeal system for those sentenced to periods in custody above 4 years. They favoured a procedure that permits an application to a Criminal Records Tribunal sitting at the local magistrates' court. The applicant would apply to the Tribunal to suspend their obligation to disclose their criminal record if they were free of criminal convictions for a period of not less than 7 years and can establish a demonstrable change of lifestyle. Again, that is appropriate for adults.

It seems to me that in the case of children and young people a more radical change is needed. After 25 years, it is right that the Act should be re-considered, particularly as many of its central aims have not assisted in the rehabilitation of many people, particularly in the field of employment. The opportunity should be seized to put the case for a much more direct and immediate method for the expungement of the criminal records of children.

The American Experience

I want to refer to the United States where generally there is a more liberal approach. For example the State of Indiana's expungement statute provides that in relation to records created as a result of

allegations that a child is a delinquent child or a child in need of services: Any person may petition a juvenile court at any time to remove from the court files, the files of law enforcement agencies or the files of any other person who has provided services to a child under a court order – those records pertaining to the person's involvement in juvenile court proceedings. There seems no reason, either in theory or in practice, why a reform here should be limited to juvenile court proceedings.

The Indiana statute sets out the factors to be considered in making the decision:

- The best interests of the child;
- The age of the person during the person's contact with the juvenile court or law enforcement agency;
- The nature of the allegations;
- Whether there was an informal adjustment or an adjudication;
- The disposition of the case;
- The manner in which the person participated in any court ordered or supervised services;
- The time during which the person has been without contact with the juvenile court or with any law enforcement agency;
- Whether the person acquired a criminal record; and
- The person's current status.

If the application is granted, the records may be destroyed or given to the person to whom the records pertain.

The statutes in the U.S.A. that govern the expungement of juvenile records vary between the various States, with jurisdictional differences as to which offences will be expunged from a juvenile's record and at what age expungement is appropriate. In decided cases, the test adopted regarding whether to expunge, (or seal the record), had usually involved weighing the interests of society against those of the individual.

Conclusion

There are, therefore, two areas for urgent consideration: the age of criminal responsibility and the expunging of records. Perhaps it is more practical to give consideration at the moment to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, because there does seem to be at least some interest and concern about it, as well as enthusiasm for a review. We really must not forget children and young people when these statutes and laws are being reformed.

It seems that we continually want to, and do, treat children as if they were adults. This is a very uncivilised approach.

I would like to support strongly the Action Recommendations that have been put out by the Foundation at this conference. In particular, I think good parenting as a school subject is absolutely essential and the more campaigns to that end the better. The proactive creation of a non-bullying system among offenders, is also vital. The Howard League Commission on Children and Violence, of which I was a member, published a report that highlighted many places where bullying, self-harm and other undesirable happenings are occurring. Maintaining family ties, which Sir David

emphasised, is also of great importance.

Finally, regarding release from prison: when I chaired the Pindown Enquiry in Staffordshire some 10 years ago, one of the many horrors we discovered was that children were being literally turned out from Care and placed in lodgings where often no checks whatsoever were made. However, in a number of cases the landlords were Schedule 1 offenders and paedophiles. The recommendation that the Probation Service or other teams should offer access to safe supportive accommodation rings very true. Although I have highlighted a few specific recommendations, I strongly support all the recommendations, which produce a coherent approach to this difficult issue.

6. New Co-operative Initiatives in Prevention and Inclusion

Joyce Moseley, Youth Justice Board

The bold programme of reform upon which the Youth Justice Board has embarked is ensuring that much of what is being called for is already in hand, especially the improvement of young offenders' education and training opportunities.

The Youth Justice Board was set up in 1998 as an executive non-departmental public body with the sole aim of preventing offending by children and young people under the age of 18. Its statutory duties include: advising the Home Secretary on all matters relating to youth justice; setting standards to improve practice and work with many different agencies across the country to develop these standards; identifying and disseminating good practice and letting people know what works; commissioning and purchasing places in secure accommodation as well as monitoring the performance of the whole youth justice system, whether in the courts, the Youth Offending Teams or in Secure Accommodation.

Systems and Coherence

The exercise of these duties could perhaps be seen in total as the creation of a coherent youth justice system where before there was none. That is not to say that good work in the youth justice field has never been done. But the shortcomings in the way things were done previously were clearly due to a lack of coherence or system to bring together the various agencies who all had a legitimate claim on working with children and young people in trouble.

The Audit Commission's report *Misspent Youth* confirmed that all was not well within the youth justice field; much work was expended in the *process* of justice, but little energy went into *interventions* that made a difference.

Since 1998 the Board has aimed at creating a system in which agencies work together, resources are pooled and used efficiently and, perhaps just as importantly, information about what works most effectively (in preventing offending) is collated and disseminated.

In support of the principal of preventing offending are six key objectives:

- The swift administration of justice so that every young person accused of breaking the law has the matter resolved without delay. If it does take six months between committing a crime and getting to court, then the connection between punishment and offence is undermined.
- Confronting young offenders with the consequences of their offending – for themselves, their family, their victims and their community – and helping them to develop a sense of personal responsibility.

- Interventions that tackle the particular risk factors – family, personal, social, educational or health – that put the young person at risk of further offending and that at the same time strengthen protective factors. The aim is to change around those risk factors and put in protective factors.
- Making punishment proportionate to the seriousness and persistence of offending.
- Encouraging reparation to victims by young offenders.
- Reinforcing the responsibilities of parents, engaging them with their young people. They often feel totally out of control themselves, they do not know what to do, or how to help their child. Helping parents to regain some feeling of responsibility and control over their youngsters is very beneficial.

Youth Offending Teams

The creation of Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) has been a major achievement. These teams are the front line troops, ensuring that the national perspective and direction determined by the Board is implemented at a local level. There are now 154 YOTs covering all of England and Wales.

Change started at the local level with the coming-together of strategic steering groups. These have been led in the main by Local Authority Chief Executives, along with chief officers from the police, probation and health services, education and social service departments – the statutory partners. Wider representation has also included the voluntary sector, victim organisations, drug team co-ordinators, accommodation and employment organisations, and the local courts.

This partnership structure is replicated at the YOT level. By April 2000, most areas of the country had YOTs with the same core representation – the statutory partnership – and many had organised useful additional resources from the wider statutory and voluntary workforce, such as youth workers.

The importance of these partnership structures is that they produce services that can be effective, relevant, and make sense of young people's and victims' complex lives. Young people who continue to offend often also face other difficulties, including maintaining a healthy lifestyle and getting the most out of educational opportunities. More persistent offending is also often associated with family breakdown or difficulties. Using members of the team to help with these difficulties,

and where necessary accessing the wider network of partnership resources represented, YOTs can have an impact that is greater than the sum of the individual staff member's contributions.

Prevention and Avoiding Custody

YOTs are charged, through published National Standards, with the responsibility to involve themselves and work with others to prevent first offences, as well as intervening early to prevent those who have already been detected, from committing further offences. This role in vital preventative work, or in social inclusion, means YOTs need to come together with others locally, who are involved in other initiatives that impact on social inclusion, such as Crime Reduction partnerships, Health Improvement, Drug Action Teams and the important new Connexions service, that impact on the education and training needs of young people.

The YOTs will also be administering a range of new orders introduced in April and June 2000. They will provide programmes and interventions as part of the court orders that are aimed at preventing offending. Since poor educational attainment - along with other risk factors - is strongly associated with offending, many of the programmes have an educational or training slant.

The Board has invested money in these community programmes. Between April 1999 and March 2002, more than £80 million will be invested in locally based initiatives, providing alternatives to custody, remand review programmes, mentoring schemes and education, training and employment schemes. They are all evaluated programmes, with achievement targets, bringing statutory and voluntary agencies together to deliver innovative locally targeted services. Some charities are also involved in delivering such schemes. These are likely to significantly change the face of what goes on in the community over the next year or two, to provide magistrates with real alternatives to custody.

Backing up all this work is a new assessment tool called ASSET, which is in use nationally. It records risk factors influencing a young person's offending, and points towards interventions to tackle them. It will be used both by YOTs and the Secure Estate, and will provide a comprehensive record, no matter where young people are within the Youth Justice System.

When Custody is Necessary

The urgent call to keep children out of prison is loud and clear. The sad fact, however, is that there is always likely to be a small but significant proportion of young people for whom there is little alternative but custody. Thankfully the rapid increase in custodial placements of the early and mid-nineties is now levelling off. In mid-2000, there are about 2800 children and young people under the age of 18 in custody, about one-third remanded and two-thirds sentenced.

Home Office figures comparing March 1999 and March 2000 show there was a decrease of 18 per cent in remands to Prison Service accommodation and a very slight decrease of 0.6 per cent in sentenced young people. Whilst these figures are encouraging, they do mask a rather worrying increase of 18 per cent in the number of girls and young women between the ages of 15 and 20 in custody.

But reform has only just begun. The investment in bail and remand programmes should see a further reduction in secure remands, and the Youth Justice Board will be tracking carefully the sentencing patterns for the new detention and training orders. There are worrying indications that the new Detention and Training Order is proving popular with magistrates, and the numbers sentenced since April have started to rise.

There will always be children and young people in custodial care, and the Board has extended its programme of reform into secure accommodation to ensure that any young person going into custody has an experience of opportunity rather than waste. There is little evidence to suggest custody is effective in preventing re-offending, so it is vital to establish what does work best in the custodial environment, and ensure that it is replicated.

To this end, the Board is creating a system in which the provision of secure accommodation is actively managed according to the following principles:

- Young people are placed appropriately, taking into account such factors as age, mental health state, vulnerability, closeness to home;
- Regimes are purposeful, geared towards education and training - 25 hours a week of meaningful education;
- Preparations for release and throughcare are properly co-ordinated;
- Proper assessment is conducted to inform sentence planning;
- Specific anti-offending work is provided where necessary.

Setting Standards and Delivering

These principles are enshrined in draft National Standards for Secure Accommodation. There are inevitably resourcing implications in bringing all providers up to these standards, and the Board has been active in bidding for these resources through the Spending Review.

But setting standards is not always enough. Providers have to deliver them. To ensure this, the Board has become the central commissioning and purchasing agency for all secure accommodation places for the under-18s, whether they are provided by the Prison Service, local authorities or the independent sector.

From April 2000, therefore, any young person under the age of 18 going into custody will be placed there through the Youth Justice Board placement clearing house, and will go into a placement paid for by the Board through a contractual relationship with the provider. All placements are paid for by the Board. This should drive standards up and give better value for money. Most importantly, it helps ensure that regimes take particular care of young people's health and education, so that on release they may be better placed to return to school or fare better in the job market. It will no longer be a case of saying goodbye to them at the prison gates as has been the case up until now.

Bridging the Gap

The Detention and Training Order, for new custodial sentencing that became available to the courts in April 2000, is no panacea, but it does address the fundamental issue of throughcare. The Order is a '50/50' sentence, with half being served in the custodial environment and half in the community. The sentence plan covers both, with an emphasis on continuity. The supervising officer will be a member of the YOT. He or she will be there at the beginning, the middle and the end of the sentence to ensure that sentence planning goals are achieved.

The staff of secure establishments and YOT members have been trained together. They share the new ASSET form as their assessment tool.

Education or training started on the inside now has a chance of being continued on the outside as the YOT member is responsible for the planning of it both inside and outside. There is a clear opportunity to influence the provision of education and training delivered to those in secure accommodation. But the Board sees that much more has to be done to ensure that education is

available for those coming out of secure accommodation and for those on community orders. YOT staff cannot do this alone and need to work with partners in education and the world of employment to change the present state of affairs. In one example, 80 per cent of the young people of school age who were being discharged had no schooling whatsoever to go to.

The government has set up a number of nationally led initiatives to improve the life chances of all children and young people, with which the YOTs must work:

New Start, New Deal, Youth Inclusion, Quality Protects, Health Improvement, Behaviour Support, Health and Education Action Zones, Drugs Action Teams and a number of other activities and relevant schemes.

Among these is the Connexions service, which is targeted at 13-19 year olds. Prime Minister Tony Blair has said,

“The best defence against social exclusion is having a job, and the best way to get a job is to have a good education, with the right training and experience... Getting this right offers the prospect of a double dividend: a better life for young people themselves, saving them from the prospect of a lifetime of dead-end jobs, unemployment, poverty, ill-health and other kinds of exclusion; and a better deal for society as a whole that has to pay a very high price in terms of welfare bills and crime for failing to help people make the transition to becoming independent adults”

This aspiration clearly applies to young people who offend. YOTs and secure facility staff are well placed to contribute to ensure that this “double dividend” becomes a reality. The Connexions service when it begins in April 2001, will be vital to this. It will provide every 13 to 19 year old with a personal adviser responsible for ‘breaking down the barriers to learning’.

On a practical level, the Board is helping to develop the Connexions service role of ‘Personal Adviser’ within YOTs. This should help maximise the YOTs’ role in dealing effectively with young people’s educational and employment needs, and thereby preventing their future offending.

It is within this context that the Youth Justice Board is steering its programme of reform. It is a challenging agenda that demands a lot of those who work at the coalface. There are never enough resources to go around, but in its first two years the Board has invested considerably both in financial terms and by way of providing leadership

and direction. The feedback is encouraging, but it is important to maintain the momentum, home in more on what works, and target resources more carefully to where they will have maximum impact. The Board is committed to the education, training and employment needs of young offenders. Without some decent education, they remain unemployable and, while unemployed, they waste their lives and are likely to continue offending.

Questions and answers:

Jim Lester: Have any further measures been taken to try and obtain a corporate budget, so that the YOT can not only recommend the action, but fund it?

Joyce Moseley: There is a need to work things out locally, since people have invested different amounts of money into their YOTs, both between regions and within regions. We will soon release the figures from the Youth Justice Plans, which show what contribution each agency has made across all the teams and across all the regions. They can use this information, to argue for better resources at a local level. We will be monitoring them, not on how much they put in, but on the outcomes of their achievements on reducing offending. Will the higher amount of money lead to higher rates of reduced offending?

Juliet Lyon: The Youth Justice Board has responsibility for all those up until their 18th birthday - 2,800 young people. Currently there are another nearly 9,000 young people between 18 and 21 in custody. I am concerned about the new Criminal Justice and Court Services Bill, currently in the Commons and shortly to go to the House of Lords. It contains a proposal to release the Prison Service from its obligations to identify young people as such, allowing them to be put into any kind of adult setting the Prison Service chooses.

Joyce Moseley: We are probably not at this stage going to alter the 18 deadline for the detention and training order and the juvenile restraint, but I think we can challenge the reforms that are going on in the Prison Service and for the young offenders within the Prison Service, ensuring that some of the good standards that we are setting for the under 18’s should apply there.

Eileen Vizard: I work with sex offenders, and I am interested to know how you ensure that a specific proportion of the YOT budget goes to health issues. My experience with several YOTs around the country is that it is variable, due to budget considerations.

Joyce Moseley: The health side is extremely variable and we are monitoring that carefully. Local YOT staff have a responsibility to show to

health colleagues, that risk factors involved in the prevention of offending clearly include health aspects.

7. Enhancing Employment Opportunities for Young Offenders

Penny Robson, Chief Education Officer, Home Office

Young People and Crime

Offending amongst young people is widespread, and a substantial proportion of young people are actively engaged in committing a wide range of violent offences. Social policies designed to prevent the onset of offending among young people are likely to be the most effective. By the time young people become involved with the criminal justice system, they are likely to have committed a number of offences, and so policies also need to be aimed at crime reduction.

Home Office research evidence identified four factors as having a strong correlation with offending (Home Office Research Study 145, 1995): low parental supervision, truancy and exclusion from school, having friends and/or siblings who have been in trouble with the police, and poor family attachments.

The Home Office tries to take these into consideration. Many of the people targeted for education would not have come forward for education in the community; they would not be willing volunteers, and this also has to be borne in mind.

Employment

The link between employment and offending is well established. Several UK and US studies have shown that offenders are less likely to be re-convicted if they are in employment, than if they are unemployed. There is also evidence that improvements in literacy and numeracy are an essential aid to post-release employment (Home Office Research Study 187, 1998). A recent study in Canada has shown a substantial reduction in re-offending among those attending basic literacy and numeracy courses, with a major benefit seen as the help it provided in gaining and sustaining full-time employment.

The Basic Skills Agency definition of literacy is the ability to read, write and speak in English or in Welsh and to use numbers at a level to function and also to progress in society as a whole.

Key Statistics

The juvenile and young offender figures are bad. Sixty per cent of juveniles and young offenders have poor levels of reading, which means that they cannot function or progress. This compares to a national figure among society as a whole of 20 per cent.

Eighty-five per cent of the juvenile and young offender population, when they are screened on coming into prison, are below what is called 'functional writing'.

Seventy-five per cent of juvenile and young offenders are below that level for numeracy.

It is not surprising, therefore, that this particular group is targeted for basic skills work. This does not mean that everybody should be sitting in basic skills classes all day. Perhaps no-one should; basic skills learning should be made available in a variety of ways throughout the Prison Estate. But this does not constitute an apology for the emphasis on basic skills learning, which takes up only about a third of the Home Office education budget.

Education and Training

The aim of education in prisons for young people is: "to deliver an education programme which identifies the needs of individuals (and provides every young person involved in its activities with an individual timetable), and comprises nationally accredited courses which help prevent further offending by preparing each individual for a return

to education and/or training or employment on release” (PSO 4950 Regimes for Prisoners Under 18 Years Old). This does not always happen, but there are rigorous efforts to try to ensure that it does.

Each young (under 18) person’s education and employment needs, ability and potential must be formally assessed, taking into account any learning difficulties or special educational needs. A lot has been learnt from the Welfare to Work programmes, which were put in at the end of custody - absolutely not the right place for them. They were put in at the end of custody in order to be in partnership with the Employment Services and to enable people to access it when they move out.

From this experience have come many lessons about the sort of training and needs assessment that should take place. The vast majority of businesses who help young people, particularly juveniles, are moving towards making sure that takes place. There should be an assessment about needs and individual action plans.

Clear, rational, connected research, for example, needs to be undertaken to check levels and role of dyslexia. It is fairly easy to be anecdotal, but the Home Office is trying very hard to draw back and to look for genuine research evidence that makes a difference.

Education and training for young people in prison must be designed to address known criminogenic factors, including poor academic attainment, problem-solving skills, creative thinking skills, team working ability, attitude, behaviour and social skills, responsibility and self-esteem.

These are very similar to the competencies that are required to accredit key skills. Key skills are skills that employers have said they want in their employees. They came out of research done by the Deering Working Group, looking at the needs of employers in the late 1980s/early 1990s, and are increasingly being embedded in national vocational, and also in academic qualifications. A lot of work is being done with the Social Exclusion Unit to ensure that Home Office programmes match their requirements and their recommendations to overcome social exclusion. The Home Office is working with the Qualifications Curriculum Authority on a programme that will allow all the other people to graduate at 19, and that will require them to have a mixture of academic skills. Certainly the vast majority of young people in prisons are not unable; they are uneducated and

they have low self-esteem. Our responsibility is to infuse and to empower, and under the leadership of the Director General, the Home Office is increasingly looking at strategies to engage young people, not by sending them to education, but by persuading them that they want to be partners in learning. This is an important, underlying thread to the approach.

Each young person under 18 must spend at least 30 hours a week in purposeful activity, either education, training or work (meaningful work).

The vast majority of young people are very disengaged from the education process; they do not want to go to education and it is very important that these opportunities should be available, wherever possible through real work, because that is often where people want to be.

Developments that will enhance education for young offenders generally include:

- A broader model educational curriculum for juveniles to include an action plan and timetable for each juvenile based on an in-depth assessment.
- Work with the Basic Skills Agency to develop ways of delivering basic skills training to prisoners in PE and the workplace, to support Welfare to Work pilots, and to develop family literacy projects and prisoner literacy mentoring. Work is beginning on identifying how basic and key skills can be learned and accredited through Duke of Edinburgh Award Schemes.
- Teaching materials, developed by the Basic Skills Agency and PE advisers, to ensure that basic and key skills are integrated into sports training programmes. Every sports course within prisons will have key skills built into the planning and delivery of programmes and all prisoners will be able to participate.
- Work with specialist educational consultants on how best to screen prisoners for dyslexia and then how best to support prisoners with this learning need.

The Basic Skills Agency and PE Officers have worked to develop a strategy of teaching basic skills through PE. There is now at least one PE instructor in each prison, trained as a Basic Skills Support Tutor. They will give support where it is identified that it is needed.

Other schemes to develop Basic Skills Support in the workplace are under consideration. For

example, a project just about to start in Feltham Young Offenders Institution will look at developing Basic Skills learning through catering, and fast food equipment has been installed. This covers an area where people will want to find employment outside - such as with McDonalds or Burger King - and this can be used as an opportunity to also train people in basic skills.

Physical Education

This is an area where young people are often very willing to be engaged and a series of programmes is being delivered which actually focus on prisoners and help them to participate in a more responsible lifestyle when they leave.

A core physical education curriculum has been developed which is also accredited by the Open College Federation, so that when people go through that curriculum they can also gain an Open College accreditation, either at Level 1 or at Level 2, depending on how well they achieve.

The service is also working on a number of other key developments in physical education and these include expanding the role of PE in purposeful activity (the Open College Network). This includes ensuring that there is a Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme in each establishment holding juveniles and young offenders, but also that it is possible for those people to accredit their key skills at Level 1 or at Level 2 while being on the scheme.

The Home Office does not deliver education services but 'buys them in' from further education colleges. This has received a mixed response. Some further education colleges want to continue with the traditional, rather recreational, non-vocational, liberal arts curriculum, which has a role to play. However, it is not the only approach and it is heartening to see the number of arts organisations, for example, who are looking to refocus their work. As well as engaging prisoners in arts activities, they are also looking to address their communication needs. PE and the Arts are two very important personal development areas.

Careers Service

The Department for Education and Employment funds work in this area. In 1999 the Northumberland Evidence Company Ltd produced a report called Careers Service Work with 15-20 Year Olds in Prison Service Custody. This survey found that that careers advice within young offender institutions was patchy and inconsistent,

and it made a number of recommendations for improving links between the Careers Service and the Prison Service.

In 1999 the Careers Service launched two guides relating to work in prisons, one for the Prison Service and one for careers companies. They outline the aims and objectives of careers work in prisons (funded by the Department for Education and Employment for those up to 21).

Connexions

Following the announcement of the Connexions strategy in February 2000, an inter-departmental Connexions Service / Young Offender Working Group was set up with representatives from the Careers Service, Department for Education and Employment, Employment Service, the Prison Service, the Youth Justice Board and OFSTED. It will support not only the introduction to Connexions but how the Connexions service will be managed in prisons.

The Group is a development of the Careers Service Work with Young Offenders Working Group. It will determine the relationship between the Connexions Service and the Youth Justice system, including prisons, and will advise on both the Connexions strategy and its interface with young people involved in the Youth Justice system, and advising on Careers Service work with young offenders.

Questions and Answers

Mary de Tute: A root cause of the problem seems to revolve around learning difficulties. There are some highly effective Kinesiology programmes now available that could help solve so many of these problems, including self-esteem. Prisons in the USA are starting to introduce these programmes, enabling these particular prisoners to learn to read and write and get work.

Penny Robson: I am happy to learn from anybody; we would love to hear about it.

Trevor Jones: The Department for Education and Employment are bringing in citizenship as a subject for the curriculum in 2002. Do you think there is anything that could be done with that inside and outside the prisons?

Penny Robson: We have a group working with the Institute for Citizenship looking at this. We are anticipating bringing citizenship into the core curriculum.

8. People As Human Beings First

Neil Wragg and Nathan, Youth at Risk

The 'lost boys'

Since Youth at Risk began in 1992, 500 or so of some of this country's most problematic teenagers, together with about 10,000 adults, of whom 5000 are youth professionals, have taken part in the programme.

Young men under 24 years of age, though, are statistically most likely to be prolific offenders in today's society. By relating to them as human beings, not as issues, we have a much bigger chance of improving their quality of life and that of the community in which they live.

- 30 per cent of robberies in London in 2000 will be of mobile phones. The young people who commit these offences will have 'robbery' as a criminal conviction - for stealing a mobile phone. Not that stealing is not an offence, but to most people 'robbery' suggests someone going into a bank with a gun! Nevertheless, the same word appears on these young men's rap sheets.
- One in 10 young men under 24 now has a criminal record. In some areas it is much higher, as much as one in five.
- There are approximately 10,000 young people under 21 sitting in Young Offenders Institutions. The sad thing is, that 80 per cent of them will re-offend within two years. Even sadder, that statistic has not significantly changed in the last 20 years.

There is a crisis, with young males disconnected from mainstream society. There are many ways of dealing with this. At present they are being blamed, punished, treated as outcasts and excluded from society. All the evidence shows that this does not work, since we are only treating the symptoms and not the cause. What, fundamentally, is the cause of young people being involved in crime? Crime is related to behaviour. If a young person commits a crime it does not necessarily mean the person is bad, it means they have done something bad.

The Experience of Youth at Risk

Essentially Youth at Risk looks at the problem the other way around. It asks, who the person is, who the person really wants to become and what is causing them to react as they do, because it is a reaction. What is the fundamental cause for their bad behaviour? Why are they disconnected from

society? Nathan will answer some of these questions from his personal experience as a young man who has grown up in High Wycombe and who came to Youth at Risk.

Youth at Risk has worked in some pretty disadvantaged communities. Probably one of the most problematic is the Republican area of West Belfast where an English organisation can, de facto, cause some suspicion. Youth at Risk ran a programme, where the community, police, social services, probation, and other agencies in the community identified 75 young people who had been through every programme that they could find. Some had been in prison, some were on probation, most of them had been shot in the knees, and some punished even more severely. This had not stopped them. Even when some of the young people were shot, their peers continued to increase their crime output. Of the 75 people working with Youth at Risk, 35 came through satisfactorily. Importantly, Youth at Risk also trained 150 adults from that same community. All the work was based on the question, "What does it mean to be a human being?"

The British Government, as well as many global organisations, are all looking for ways to create 'joined up' societies, a 'joined up' public sector. They seek ways to promote co-operation - departments in government working together, government working with the private sector, and, on the ground, probation officers and social workers, working with the public. These initiatives eventually come down to one human being working with another human being. Out of this grows respect, and with respect and appreciation, people are better able to work together. It is as simple as that. The answer is neither policies nor papers, it

is creating relationships and clear strategies on the ground. Also, it is ensuring that people in the community know how they fit into the society that we are all trying to build. That is the lesson of West Belfast.

Quality of Life

Oxford University evaluated the Youth at Risk programme in West Belfast. It demonstrated a drop in recidivism among the young people who worked within the programme. However, recidivism is not itself the main point. The important thing is the quality of life of young people in today's society. What matters, is the ability of young people to reach their full potential and to find engaging work, employment or education, and to feel that they are contributing. Fundamentally that is what young people also want. They do not want to be dictated to or to be instructed in moral education. They want to have a stake in, and become a part of your network and the people that you know. They need to create relationships that allow them into the networks and the lifestyles that they themselves want to emulate.

Youth at Risk spends a great deal of time working with the private sector, with good partners like, for example, Marconi, British Aerospace, or ICL. Youth at Risk trains their staff in the methodology, and creates a common language among the staff, so that the staff can become coaches for young people in the community. Today, there are 28 million people in employment. It is important to harness their energy to tackle the one of the biggest challenges in society: the 'lost boys' that comprise these young men under 24.

Nathan's Experience

Nathan is 16 years old. He has completed a Youth at Risk programme and can talk from personal experience:

"Before I came on the programme, I was mixed up with gangs, crime, drugs and violence. I had this phone call from Youth at Risk. I didn't know about them, so I thought, 'Yea, I'll go along and see what it's like and mess about a bit'. I messed about for three months and then I thought, 'What am I doing? They're trying to help me'. So I went and they actually helped me quite a lot.

Before the programme I was in and out of school. I got suspended for fighting and possession of cannabis, abuse of teachers and

things like that. I didn't really want to learn; I just wanted to get out of the whole lot of it. The reason I started getting involved with drugs and things like that was that it got me respect and I thought I knew where I could find it. Doing everything that I wanted to do — that was it. I didn't really care for authorities and things like that.

My relationship with the family was terrible because my Mum and Dad were more concerned with my brothers. From a young age my brothers bullied me. I was the baby and I started fighting back and it got worse and I did just what I wanted to do.

I discovered quite a lot about myself on the programme. When I first started I wasn't really bothered. I thought it was a five-minute thing and that would be it. I started messing around a bit and before I wouldn't speak openly about anything; I'd keep it to myself and let it out in other ways like violence. Then one day I just thought I might as well do it; they are there to help me. They helped me and I help them.

I discovered about respect. I discovered I didn't have to do the things that I was doing to get it. I was playing the fool a lot when really I wanted to be like the good guy who was doing bad things to get good things out of it. I wasn't bothered about anything else apart from doing what I wanted to do. Now I've changed because of Youth at Risk.

I got a coach named Heather Lewis. At first we didn't get along because she was like, weird. She wore weird clothes and she seemed a person who wasn't frightened to do what she wanted. I thought, 'No, she's crazy!'. Then we started to get along and every time we spoke I'd tell her a little bit about me and then she'd tell me a little bit about her. Now we get on perfect, we know everything about each other. It's just like brother and sister really.

After the programme, I went for a job at a car mechanic place. I've been arrested several times for car theft and the manager said to me, 'Sorry, we can't employ you because we can't trust you because you've got a conviction for crimes with cars and vehicles'. I felt really, really small. I thought the world had just swallowed me, and I thought, 'Well, if he said no, then how am I going to get a job?' I felt really terrible about the things I did. I decided to change.

I'd just like to say that because people do crime, it does not necessarily mean that they are a criminal, a junkie or whatever.

They are just doing it for several things, like attention. They don't feel respect. They are doing it because they want to do it, because they have got nothing else to do.

Everyone is equal really. Everyone has got a reason to do something and people are just choosing the wrong thing to do just to get what they want: attention and stuff like that."

The Message

If we relate to people as junkies, as criminals, as bad people – all we are doing is confirming that. If you relate to people as an issue, they will become the issue. We have to relate to them as human beings. This is not to say that we do not have to have a judicial system, that young people do not have to go to court, and do not need to be judged. They do need to be responsible for their actions, but the more we relate to them as issues the more issues they will become.

Questions and Answers

June Kane: I work on a European and International level and in theory, a French 20 year-old should not be much different from a British 20 year-old or a German 20 year-old. And yet all over Europe in the football season we hear: "the British are coming, the British are coming". If it is just a matter of personal responsibility and treating people as human beings, then British football hooliganism, for example, should not be so feared. But there appears to be something different in Britain.

Neil Wragg: I agree, and we have practical experiences in Holland and in Sweden. I feel that, by saying "the English are coming, they are bad, they are nasty hooligans ", you set up a consciousness in both the football fans and the people in the city they are visiting. If you are told continually that you are a thug and a hooligan, and you walk into a hostile environment, then, I'm afraid, some people tend to behave as expected.

We have also worked in Australia and in various communities across America, and have seen young people from all of those programmes and they are essentially the same human beings. However, I think that there is something missing in British culture, which is a lack of a 'right of passage' for young men. In some ways society has moved on in its attitude and relationship to young females

and we are seeing that in batterings in school. Young men, however, appear to have no strong male leadership with whom they can identify. When I look at the possible role models in this country, there appears to be a great deal of hypocrisy and a lack of integrity. For example, many football "superstars" seem unable to handle their money and fame and their resulting bad behaviour is copied by many young people. There is a lack of leadership, there is a lack of inclusion and cohesiveness.

Sarah Wilson: I agree that part of the problem relates to certain definitions of successful masculinity. They tend to be action-based and defined often in opposition to any forms of academic success or training. I have been trying to instigate consultations with the police concerning disaffected young people, and I am told that without the permission of their parents I cannot talk to them directly. Contact is ruled out. What guidance can you give me on that?

Neil Wragg: You can certainly come and talk to our young people on any of our programmes. They love to meet people and to explain how it is for them.

Sarah Wilson: Finally, to Nathan: during your difficult time, what was your experience of the police at that time?

Nathan: My experience with the police has not always been perfect, but they have had me in a couple of times. What really gets me is, if you do one crime like a burglary, car theft or mugging, then if anything goes down in that area they come straight to you, wherever you are. They don't believe a word you say and with that you are guilty until proven, where it should be proven until guilty. If you send a gang of white boys down the street like a big shopping centre, they will get stopped and asked. If you send a gang of black boys, Asian boys down the shopping centre, they'll be stopped and searched and they will give the police harassment because they think the police are there just for them. If they said to them, no, this is what is happening, we want to split you up but instead they give them grief, the police give grief back. If the police understood more about what they were doing, what they were saying and the way they act around certain people, they would get further than they do now.

Janet Newman: I know, if I were you I would have exactly the same feelings about the police, but believe me, a great deal of good work is done by our police and it is done very quietly.

Neil Wragg: If I gave the impression that I have anything but a total appreciation and respect for the police, then I am sorry, since I know how committed they are to communities. We all need strong policing to enforce the law. Young people, in particular, need clear boundaries, otherwise they become confused. However, the ability of the police to show real leadership has been stifled with bureaucracy and with too much emphasis on targets, budgets and administration. Police officers are much less effective, if they are tied up in administration.

Rev. Hereward-Rothwell: Who do we as males in this society look up to and how has that so shifted that, the role model has become negative? In a recent conversation with Gerry Rawlings, the President of Ghana, we were talking about criminality and the very high incidence of West African inmates in British prisons. He asked, “Who are the elders in your society? Who has that role of being wise, honourable, and critically on your side?” I cannot think of anyone that I would hold

in that particular regard in this society. If I cannot, it must be desperately difficult for Nathan and his peer group.

Secondly, Nathan said that he could not get a job as a motor mechanic. We ought to be ashamed of ourselves, all of us, for not providing opportunities for youngsters to work. Joining established companies is not necessarily the only route either. For instance, Clacton had a very high incidence of car crime. We bought a row of semi-derelict garages and equipped them with semi-derelict motorbike mending and car wrecking equipment, which was at least eighth hand! Out of those nine garages grew a programme for young people that cut car crime in that town by 80 per cent. Young people who were fascinated by motors were building careers instead of death. They were building knowledge instead of crime statistics, and out of it, too, they were building friendships with the structures, where before there had been only enmity.

9. A Probation Perspective

John Harding, Chief Probation Officer, Inner London Probation Service

In *Death of a Salesman*, Willy Lowman looks at a young man and says, “that man needs attention”. This is a kind of motto for anyone involved in social services or probation or voluntary organisations that meet or work with young people. No service can work alone, but must form working partnerships with other agencies to ensure success. But the proposed Connexions service linked to the multi-disciplinary YOT's will be a big step forward in our work.

There is a quote worth remembering: “*As soon as they hear prison, they don't want you... they don't want to know. You're in a no win situation*”. This is from a young man from Feltham trying to find a job. (Home Office Publication: *Tell Them So They Listen*, Research Study 201).

There are many things that rivet the attention around this issue: In a report published in 1999, (Demos, *Destination Unknown* 1999), there is the riveting statistic that 24,000 young people between the ages of 16 and 24 are not in work, not in full-time education or training, and not claiming unemployment benefit. That means one in every 10 16-24 year olds. Of these, 131,000 or 21 per cent of 16-17 year-olds, the status zero group, are not in work and not in training and not receiving benefit.

Of the 18 to 24 year olds off register:

- 272,000 or 55 per cent are mothers and carers;
- 125,000 or 25 per cent are ‘hidden unemployed’
- 65,000 or 13 per cent are ‘missing’
- 32,000 or 6 per cent are marginal learners.

Focus Groups

The Probation Service in England and Wales is particularly concerned with two sets of age groups:

First, the 16 to 18's, managed by the multi-disciplinary YOT (police, probation, social workers, education, health); second, the 18 to 24s, solely managed by the Probation Service. Young people in prison, of course, fall under the Prison Service. They do that work in conjunction with

the TFEB, the department of the Home Office and the relevant central government departments. And there are many voluntary organisations.

The multi-disciplinary YOTs are responsible for both community penalties and also for prison licences. The Probation Service with complementary partnership services by the independent sector manages this young adult group, both in respect of community penalties and prison licence.

What do these young people look like as an age group? William Shakespeare's Shepherd in A Winter's Tale got it just about right:

"I would that there was no age between sixteen and three and twenty, or that youth would sleep out the rest, for there is nothing in the between but getting wenches with child, wronging the ancients, stealing and fighting."

What of today? Nick Davies, a journalist and feature writer for The Guardian, has described today's young people in a way familiar to a probation officer or a YOT member. Here he is writing about young people in care and coming out of care (Nick Davies, The Dark Heart of Britain, 1997):

"They have been subject to another experience, far more powerful, far more widespread, an experience that damaged them beyond repair, long before they needed the care of the Local Authority, long before the ambulance at the bottom of the cliff. They grew up in a world of chaos and violence, which comes seeping through the detail of all of their stories of home — slappings, leatherings, rows late at night, knives, bottles, broken windows, shattered homes, evictions from houses, exclusions from school, people going into hospital, people going into prison, people going into care."

Every social worker, every probation officer, every voluntary organisation worker identifies with this very powerful description. Here it was Nottingham that Davies was describing, but it could have been Bradford, Leeds, London, anywhere.

Victims and Perpetrators

Some very worrying indicators:

- Young people between 16 and 24 are most likely to be victims of crime for any particular age group;
- Three per cent of offenders in this age group are responsible for 25 per cent of violent crimes and 20 per cent of burglaries;

- According to the Metropolitan Police, 40 per cent of street robberies are committed by children who truant or have been excluded from school;
- Half of all prisoners under 18 have been in care;
- Two-thirds of them have no qualifications;
- Two-thirds are unemployed at time of conviction;
- Almost a quarter are fathers or expectant fathers;
- Over half have a diagnosable mental disorder;
- One quarter have a drink or drug problem;
- One in ten admits to self-harm.

What Can Be Done and by Whom?

There are a number of interesting initiatives that need to be cross-related to those statutory agencies responsible for the supervision, care and control of young offenders, and assisted by the voluntary and commercial sector in terms of opportunities for training and employment.

In April 2001, the Government will launch the Connexions service with the central aim of offering help in educational and vocational terms to 13 to 19 year-olds. The service will be socially inclusive, and will end much of the current institutional fragmentation by providing diversity and choice of providers. It will use financial incentives to reduce the risk that young people do not drop out of learning between the ages of 16 and 18, and will include an education maintenance allowance. As an incentive to ensure that young people do not drop out of learning between the ages of 16 and 18 and will include an educational maintenance allowance. As an incentive to ensure that young people carry on into work, the new service will not only ensure that education is paid for on a full and part-time basis, but also offer to vulnerable young people access to accommodation and other forms of support.

Connexions provides pathways to graduation, including:

- General education, based on full-time study in school or college,
- High quality vocational education with a stronger educational component based in college or workplace.,
- Building on the right to time off to allow study with an employer group.

The Connexion service will have links with Youth Offending Teams . Under new guidelines the YOTs will have to provide:

- A mandatory baseline assessment of offenders' needs and produce a plan by the supervising officer on how these should be met;
- Provide a personal adviser for each offender, to help devise a suitable education training package as part of community supervision or a placement in education/skills training at the end of a juvenile's detention and training order/young offender institution sentence.
- These educational arrangements should dovetail with the piloted National Youth Justice Board intensive supervision plans for the most at risk offenders to give them what they need to break through their offending behaviour.

With regards to Young Offenders Institutions (YOIs), there is an expectation that:

- Under 16s will have at least 30 hours of education and personal development each week;
- 16 and 17 year-olds will have a similar requirement expressed in a variable portfolio of work;
- Explicit targets will be set by the YOI Governor;
- A personal adviser from Connexions and the YOT supervisor will work with the offender and resident staff during the period of sentence so that offenders are prepared for resettlement.

More Work to be Done

There will also be a need to:

- Provide vulnerable young offenders with access to child and adolescent mental health services and to drug and alcohol treatment agencies. At the moment there are still inconsistencies in the delivery of such services.
- Develop a comprehensive pathway plan for care leavers, co-ordinating help with accommodation, education and employment and financial support. There are expectations about local authorities having discretionary funding, not just up to the 18th birthday, but up to the 21st birthday, because the problems are just as likely to last beyond 18 as past 16.

The Probation Service and 18 to 21 Year-olds

There are a number of needs relating to young offenders between 18 and 21 or over. It is important to link unemployed offenders with New Deal, Welfare to Work programmes, and/or provide personal advisers both within the community and as part of a prison resettlement plan. Probation

Officers have a key role in developing links with prisons and young offender institutions to ensure that young offenders on release have an employment, training and education plan, as an essential component of resettlement.

Some Issues for Over 18s

While the educational needs of the under 18's in custody will become a key priority for prison the secure estate staff, the needs of the 18 to 21 year olds, who constitute 10 per cent of the prison population — 8,000 young people in all, could be marginalised under new arrangements. With the dismantling of Young Offender Institutions for those offenders under 18, they will no longer have the benefit of an age specific regime, which is focused on their development needs. There is a danger, unless countered by carefully designed programmes for the young adult offenders needs in terms of education and vocational skills training being submerged by the dominant presence of the adult older population in prison.

Good Practice Programmes for Young Offenders

The Social Exclusion Unit of the Cabinet Office recently published a policy action report on young people, reviewing programmes for 16 to 24 year olds in England and Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland. There are lessons in common from the best programmes which should command our attention:

- Focus on young people and their perspective, including the most marginalised.
- Identify risk and protective factors, including what gets them into trouble and what helps them stop.
- Pursue 'joined up' approaches that are truly cross cutting, so that central government departments talk to each other and that this follows through to the local level.
- Be planned, focused and persistent with early intervention, intensive action at key points, sustained follow-through and ways back for those who have gone off track.
- Use local knowledge to target action and monitor success.
- Design innovative programmes that are proactive, making good use of non-professional resources.
- Do not forget good planning and training.

Are Employers Willing to Take On Ex-offenders?

In 1998, the Inner London Probation Service in conjunction with the London Action Trust undertook a survey of employers' attitudes to employing offenders. In all, 81 employers were interviewed; 13 from the public sector and 68 from the private sector. The banner headlines were as follows:

- Employers underestimated the 18 to 30 year olds in the population who were offenders.
- 77 per cent of respondents had an equal opportunity policy, but only 10 per cent of those policies made reference to offenders.
- 63 per cent of the companies involved in this survey have found out subsequent to appointment that an employee had a criminal record.
- Of those companies that requested details of previous convictions, nearly 68 per cent knowingly employed offenders.
- The age of the offender was the least significant factor in recruitment, while the nature of the offence was the most important factor.
- When recruiting ex-offenders, employers were least anxious that the offender would prove difficult to manage, and most anxious about whether the offender would offend again against the company.
- Nearly 62 per cent of employers said that they wanted to have further contact with the Probation Service, and wanted further contact about the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, and the proposed Criminal Records Check as part of the Police Act 1997.

A number of employers suggested to the authors of this report that what we needed was a 'brokerage service' that 'made offenders more job ready' to meet the needs and circumstances of employers.

Questions and Answers

Susanna Cheal: The Who Cares Trust, works to improve care for children and young people. We have found that many children, even those who enjoyed school and had good foster parents support, were progressively failing, often for reasons

unrelated to their potential. I am concerned particularly about the incidence of dyslexia and how we are failing to deal with it at the correct time. It is too late to be carrying out first assessments at 13. We should be having much earlier assessments, allowing relevant risk factors to be linked to offender's behaviour at a much earlier age.

John Harding: I would totally agree with that.

Eileen Vizard: Our work with young offenders under 10 also confirms that, long before they commit an offence, these children usually have a very fat file, involving Health, Social Services and others. Forty per cent of the young boys who socially offend have a learning disability; 43 per cent are excluded from school; 2,000 of them have a major psychiatric disorder. Why, when these major emotional problems can be demonstrated so clearly, can we not provide preventive, consistent, coherent services before age 10, the age of criminal responsibility in this country?

Joyce Mosely: From the point of view of the Youth Justice Board, we are aware that more needs to be done for the under 10s, and certainly strong representation is needed. I am fairly hopeful that the Comprehensive Spending Review will see some improvements in the focus on that age group.

Neil Wragg: I have recently observed that my seven year old daughter, with a weakness in maths, knows the names of 150 Pokemon characters, together with their sequence of powers and treatments that make them stronger. It is an incredibly complex matrix that requires an intricate memory for detailed knowledge. At school, many children, who have indifferent SATs results, seem to be inspired by these Pokemon characters. If the business sector can produce Pokemon, and other games, that inspire kids to learn incredibly complex things, why cannot such inspiration be a part of our education system? Where are the leaders in education that can inspire such learning?

10. Getting a Head Start

Gill Henson of SOVA

SOVA – formerly the Society of Voluntary Associates — is an organisation that trains and employs volunteers, and supports and befriends offenders. ‘Voluntary associates’ is the name that historically the Probation Services have given to their volunteers. SOVA works much more widely than that now, although still with the Probation Services as well.

SOVA works at all points of the criminal justice system from bail support schemes to working in prisons, with Probation Services, with prisoners released after serving less than 12 months. Since 1997, the work has diversified to take on caring work, mentoring work with New Deal. SOVA has the contract for mentoring the New Deal clients reform in Wales. A new initiative has just been started called ‘Dependency to Work’, which is London-based and SRB-funded. It looks at employment and other issues for offenders who have alcohol or drug and mental health problems. In all this work and diversity, SOVA uses professional staff to recruit, carefully select and train volunteers who are responsible for much of the service delivery.

A Success Story

“Once upon a time, there was a Home Secretary called Michael Howard, and this Home Secretary thought that American-style ‘boot camps’ were probably a very good idea. At the same time, however, there was a prison governor, of an open Young Offenders Institution in Cheshire: YOI Thorn Cross. He did not, as some did, just put his head in his hands at the thought of boot camps, but recognised the opportunity to turn the idea into something really imaginative and purposeful. SOVA was lucky that this imagination encompassed the determination to use the strengths of the voluntary sector alongside the strengths and the skills of the Prison and Probation Services.

After a lot of planning and negotiation, the High Intensity Unit (HIT) was born at Thorn Cross, and subsequently it bore fruit in the Headstart project.

The HIT is based at Thorn Cross Unit 5. The young offenders there are recruited from various lock-up prisons to participate in the HIT. The young offender has to have at least six months of his

sentence left. The training programme lasts 25 weeks and is split into five phases of five weeks:

The Phases of HIT

In Phase 1, the young offender is introduced to the unit and staff, targets and objectives are set and tailored to the individual’s needs, and basic assessments are made, for example relating to education, PE and social skills.

In Phase 2, the Working Together Phase, there is an introduction of the Offending Behaviour Programmes. The young offender is matched with a volunteer mentor, who starts visiting him. The volunteer comes from the inmate’s home area and will offer help and support through to Phase 5. This is one of the keys of success of this programme, and is vital to resettlement.

Phases 3 and 4 are for strengthening the contact and preparation for release.

In Phase 5, the young offender may see his Probation Officer, and will meet with his volunteer mentor. This is the unique part: during the last five weeks of his stay at Thorn Cross, the young man will live and work in his own geographical area, travelling from Thorn Cross on Monday and returning on Friday afternoon.

The volunteer mentor will complete a diary sheet that will come back to SOVA and there is feedback from employers on placements as well. Communication is key to this programme. All probation officers receive copies of the paperwork.

There is no doubt that the HIT unit is intensive and demanding. The young men start their day early in the morning with military style drill. They are required to keep themselves and their possessions in military style neatness. Nevertheless, the majority of their very structured day is devoted to education, training, career planning and group work on offending behaviour. In fact, the offending

behaviour groups are run in Phases 2 and 4, and in Phase 4 they are much more demanding, and the young men must take responsibility for their actions.

The young men are genuinely, and rightly, proud of their achievements. Over the last three completed intakes onto the HIT (to June 2000), the average for those going out to permanent jobs was 78 per cent. This is typical of the results in general.

Giving Birth to Headstart

Headstart is the son or daughter of the HIT unit. There are two groups of people common to both HIT and Headstart, and without whose input neither programme could succeed. The first group is the volunteers. SOVA's experience, not just at Thom Cross, shows that the provision of a stable and reliable relationship, provided by someone who gives their time freely, has a real impact on boosting the self-esteem and willingness to succeed for offenders, and perhaps particularly for young men.

The other group is, of course, employers offering placement and permanent work for young men on the HIT and on day release, and sometimes, permanent employment for young men on Headstart. In mid-2000, for example, two projects in Cheshire have a list of nearly 200 employers. This is extraordinary, especially when considering that the young men on HIT can come from any area of the country. This list has been put together by a combination of local employers invited in to Thom Cross, capitalising on local contacts with other branches, and volunteers researching in their own areas. Also, by no means least in terms of effort, SOVA staff, both telephone and write to hundreds of employers, using a range of local directories. It is important, at the outset, to be clear with employers how the process works, our expectations of them, what assurances they can receive.

Headstart. The success of HIT suggested that an employment and training programme should be offered to the general population of the prison. Therefore, Thorn Cross in partnership with SOVA, applied to the European Social Fund to provide the money for Headstart. The Headstart programme was funded from January 1999, and is thus three years younger than the HIT Unit.

The programme is offered to all inmates in the general population. Although they are not obliged to take it up, some 90 per cent do so. Following a detailed educational and vocational needs assessment by interview, a key action plan is drawn up. Its aim is to identify and manage the needs of the individual, to increase employability, aid rehabilitation and complement the sentence plan. Among other things, it looks at barriers to employment, and the people and agencies who might contribute to overcoming them. Multi-agency co-operation is clearly vital.

The result should be successful rehabilitation or resettlement.

On this programme, as well as on HIT, it is vital that the inmates know what is, or is not on offer, and what expectations Headstart staff will have of them. All inmates are given a leaflet when they are referred to the programme

Signs of Success

Between April 1999 and April 2000, 440 young men at Thorn Cross were referred to the Headstart programme and opted to take part. Of those, 72 entered full-time employment on release and 63 entered New Deal - an outcome of 30 per cent employment-related successes. This may seem a low figure compared with the 78 per cent from HIT, but the general population is somewhat more itinerant, includes the juvenile unit and some young men more appropriately referred on to other provision such as education. Overall, recognising the particular problems of this group, 30 per cent is a figure to be proud of.

Clearly there are huge benefits arising from both HIT and Headstart. The obvious and direct benefit is to the young men resettled in a purposeful way, and certainly in a way which gives them a much better chance of not re-offending, that is, by having a job. The other, and perhaps not so obvious benefit, is that the work brings the community as volunteers and as employers into the prison, where they 'pick up these young men and carry them home', and this benefits everyone.

The level of co-operation between the voluntary and statutory services at Thorn Cross is extraordinary and could be replicated elsewhere. At Thorn Cross the young men hold their heads up. And that matters.

11. The Employment and Training of Children with Criminal Records

Beverley Thompson, NACRO

NACRO has been running employment, training and education initiatives since the 1970s. The centres have provided employment, training and work experience for ex-offenders, long-term unemployed people, and others who need extra support to take on and complete a training course or find employment. These programmes cater for more than 13,000 people a year.

In March 1999, NACRO launched a campaign called Going Straight to Work. A group of leading employers was brought together to spearhead a drive to eliminate unfair discrimination against ex-offenders in the job market — not only in the interests of justice but also in the interests of business.

Eliminating Discrimination

There are compelling reasons why employers should seek to eliminate unfair discrimination against ex-offenders:

First, such discrimination is unjust. The individual has already been punished for the crime. It is wrong that they should face further punishment by being refused employment. This does not mean that employers should ignore a criminal record where the type of offence is relevant to the particular job. Second, ex-offenders who cannot get a job are much more likely to re-offend. Not only does this affect everyone in the community who becomes a victim of crime, including employers and their families, their staff. It affects businesses in particular: employers' premises are disproportionately likely to be the targets of burglary; the retail trade suffers significant losses from shop theft; and both service industries and businesses are often on the receiving end of cheque book and credit card fraud.

Third, many ex-offenders have abilities, which can make them useful employees. By discriminating against them, employers deprive themselves of these qualities and may as a result employ less able non-offenders.

NACRO also took part in the campaign as an employer, working with two prisons who each day enabled individuals on placement to undertake a range of duties. A number were successful in gaining employment with NACRO. Those who

attend the scheme leave with a reference, or are able to provide NACRO as a referee for applications.

A survey of 69 employers in the London area, carried out in 1997 for Focus Central London and the London TEC Council, found that less than half (46 per cent) would offer a job to a young person with a criminal record. In comparison, 47 per cent would offer a job to a homeless young person, 71 per cent to a young person who had no qualifications, and 93 per cent to an unemployed young person. The survey stated:

“A number of employers expressed doubts about offering a job to some young people. These employers were asked whether they would be more likely to employ such a young person if their abilities and qualities were assured by an independent organisation such as the TEC or a private training provider. The results show that this assurance would encourage many people to take on such a young person, with the exception of those who had a criminal record, where most employers still state that they would not want to offer a job”.

More than 94 per cent of employers surveyed also did not include ex-offenders in their equal opportunities policy. An ex-prisoner told NACRO:

“I filled in several application forms and realised very quickly that I wasn't getting interviews for jobs I'm more than capable of doing. They were basic jobs, jobs I assumed no one else would want — crappy hours, crappy shifts. You'd be looking at loading lorries, working nights, packing, sorting. I thought, I can't go on like this, the only way forward for me is to lie on application forms. So that's what I started doing. I applied for several jobs and all of a sudden I was getting short-listed very quickly. And subsequently I got a job”.

Employment as Prevention

Ex-offenders who find and keep a job are much less likely to commit further crimes. According to the seminal long-term Cambridge Study of Delinquent Development, offending is about three times more frequent for unemployed young men as it is for those with work. Follow-up surveys of released prisoners have found that those who remain unemployed are twice as likely to re-offend as those who find jobs.

This strong association between unemployment and re-offending has been recognised by both Conservative and Labour Home Secretaries. Douglas Hurd told the Confederation of British Industry in 1988:

“A suitable ex-offender employed today may be one crime prevented tomorrow”. In July 1997, Jack Straw told the House of Commons: “A job is the best hope that any ex-offender can get to avoid returning to crime.”

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 provides that offenders applying for jobs do not have to disclose convictions, which have become spent. However, prison sentences of more than six months do not become spent for ten years; sentences of over 2 ½ years can never become spent; some types of employment are not covered by the Act; and many employers and offenders are unaware of the provisions of the Act.

NACRO provides a resettlement helpline service and receives more than 200 calls and letters every week. The majority, relate to finding somewhere to live, followed by assistance on disclosing convictions. Many individuals who contact NACRO have lost jobs once employers have become aware of previous convictions. There was a particularly distressing case of a young woman doing a good job, packing in one of the large supermarkets. Her line manager was so pleased with her that he offered her some managerial training. However, an individual shopper recognised her, reported her to the manager and she was escorted off the premises. Although she had been doing a very good job, she had not declared her convictions.

The Police Act 1997

There are a number of fears that have been expressed that unfair discrimination against ex-offenders could increase when the provisions

of the Police Act 1997 are implemented. This provides for three types of criminal record check on job applicants: the first is criminal conviction certificates, which is a list of a person's unspent convictions available to the individual on payment of a fee. Employers may require applicants to produce this as part of the recruitment process.

The second is criminal record certificates, a full criminal record check including both spent and unspent convictions, which will be available to employers in areas such as work with children or other vulnerable groups. It is available to employers in the health service, banking field and other financial services. The third is enhanced criminal record certificates, which, in addition to information about convictions, also include relevant non-conviction information held by the police. This will be available to employers for employees or volunteers who have regular unsupervised access to children and young people under 18. It will also be available for those applying for gaming licences, lottery, betting and the such-like.

While NACRO supports the proposals for the latter two types of certificates, there is concern about the possible effect of the criminal conviction certificates, if employers routinely request these and then play safe by not employing anyone with a criminal record.

While there is a lot of information about the long-term unemployment of ex-offenders, this perhaps understates the problem. Many of those who have been out of work for shorter periods are 16 and 17 year-olds who have not been in the labour market for long enough to experience lengthy periods of unemployment.

What Works

There are a number of initiatives around the Prison Service, supported by the Home Office, in terms of the 'What Works' agenda. The agenda is very much a numbers game and, in fact, some of the quality measures that need to be backed up outside prison are less well funded. But it also means that young people are very much left to their own devices on whether or not the community-based services are there for them. The example has been given of Education Action Zones. Young people involved in these have been excluded from education, sometimes from very early on, and this is particularly the case for young black men. It is

important to remember the double disadvantage that young black men face: they have been excluded from school early, they are more likely to be drawn into the Criminal Justice system. Although the Home Office and Prison Service initiatives are commendable, they are not supported by the appropriate level of services needed in the community.

NACRO is piloting a scheme at Portland, a young offender institution on the coast in Dorset, working with juveniles. What has been distressing is how far their backgrounds have been shattered from a very, very early point in their lives. Excluded from school, in the care setting, in a young offenders institution, they therefore come out with nothing, nothing at all. NACRO has been working with the YOT and it is fair to say that the YOT staff are also finding it very, very difficult to get their heads around the level of intensive support that is required for these young people.

The back-up services have to be contracted outside regular hours, because the crises in a young person's life do not fit into office hours. Their parents are also deeply grateful to have anybody who can come and help them. Those young people who have got themselves onto a training scheme or have found a part-time job, cannot get a bank account or insurance. As young people without a job, they can't get a house. Without a house, they can't get employment. The availability of accommodation for them that is affordable is very much outside their thinking. Every young person wants the three-bedroom flat in a nice area with a garden, but the reality is there are not very many of those for anybody and certainly for young people there are even fewer.

The housing part of the equation in terms of resettlement, needs to have some common sense brought into it. Perhaps first, it is important to look again at the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act. It seems a complete nonsense that a 2½ year sentence can never ever be spent, and yet the majority of sentences are 4 years. NACRO is ready to cooperate with others to make changes.

Questions and Answers

Bevil Williams: What Works: what a wonderful title for any sort of initiative. It requires a little more imagination and courage from governments,

regional and local authorities, to look at something that may be a little bit more risky and creative. However, with support, we can actually find a more imaginative way for schools and others to work together in ways that actually work.

Beverley Thompson: This is really important, for far too long individuals have been doing their own thing. The children-based charities quite rightly focus on children and issues like abuse or education, but these are the very same children that I am working with. We need to work together to share experiences and get the policies right in the first place. The other important thing is to involve the young people, since far too often adults think they know what is best for young people. Young people are very, very capable of creating something that is meaningful to them.

Elizabeth Haslam: I would like to see the agencies really working together to educate the public, because while the public is braying for blood, the politicians will follow.

Richard White: I wonder to what extent young people want us to be involved, even when they say they do. I work with a lot of young children and much of the time they just don't want you around, they want to do their own thing. They do not want some of the things that people have been suggesting today. They just want to be part of their own peer group.

June Kane: If you talk to MTV, and to computer games people, they want to get involved with us. Often they aren't involved because we just don't think of including them. You do not have to drag them in, they can choose whether to respond to an invitation or not.

Beverley Thompson: There is a difference between saying to young people, "Right, this is what we want you to be involved in", and saying, "Right you all know the problems around X, how do you want to deal with this?" We need to give them their own decision-making structures, which we are prepared to accept. Quite often they come up with ideas that do not fit in our own time scales or our own level of understanding. We need to allow them the creativity to make those decisions and then we should look at how we can make those decisions become a reality for those young people.

12. Issues that Arose in Discussion:

12.1 The Training of Prison Officers:

Elizabeth Haslam: The proper training of prison staff, not just officers but also governors, is very important.

June Kane: From a European perspective, many of the young people being dealt with by the UK system, over the next 10 years will not necessarily be British children who have gone through the system. The borders of Europe are open and increasingly young people are coming to England as asylum seekers, or as refugees, legal or otherwise. These young people have not been through any of the intervention and prevention mechanisms discussed. So the police and the prison personnel might well be the first contact that they have with our structures and systems. So what happens in the prisons is vitally important. Prison officers must have proper training to help prevent youngsters from re-offending.

Joyce Moseley: The Youth Justice Board has set up a training programme for all prison officers in the juvenile estate in conjunction with YOT staff. It has not worked everywhere, but where it has worked, it has been really invigorating.

Sir David Ramsbotham: In prisons, I expect to find that every single person has been trained and does not start work until they have been selected and trained appropriately for working with young people. However, this does not happen. If you are involving the Prison Service, you must involve the officers in every aspect of what the young person is doing and share it with them, because they can develop a key relationship. This influence is very important, so training must be an integral part of recruitment and selection, otherwise you will have the wrong people in the wrong place and this can be damaging.

Juliet Lyon: We have had an opportunity to work on the management training programmes at the Prisons Service College. As yet, they do not have a programme which really focuses on leadership and what it means to run a very large institution with young people in it. It is vital that Governors should also be trained specifically for the job of looking after our most vulnerable and volatile children.

12.2 The Role of New Technology:

June Kane: We should not be asking why can children learn from Pokemon, and not from schools? Pokemon is part of our children's schooling. Eighty per cent of what young children learn comes from the Net, computer games, radio,

posters, music videos etc. We should be involving in this debate those intelligent, creative 20 year olds, who produce these technologies, since they are part of the youth culture with which we are trying to get to grips. Somehow we have failed to pull them into the debate.

Susanna Cheal: It is true, children actually inhabit a parallel world to ours, linked to the new technology, which we do not fully understand. Hardly anyone has yet examined the social benefits that it can deliver. Through the internet, we could bring children in care a much better access to education, the national curriculum, employment, health information, laws, etc. within a safe environment. If we really focused on the child's forward looking point of view, as opposed to the adults backward looking view, I think we would really make progress.

Neil Wragg: Information Technology provides phenomenal opportunities, and it is growing extremely fast. Internet chat rooms have made communication instantaneous. However, information is so easily available to young people that they are not able, necessarily to comprehend its full implications on their lives. Communication through the Internet removes the need for human relationships, and young people can lack the necessary skills to communicate their needs and say, "Help, I need your support."

12.3 Early Intervention:

Eileen Vizard: The majority of the young offenders with whom I work have a severe conduct disorder that starts about 7 or 8 years old. There are key indicators to offending behaviour, which includes a lack of interest in other people, a lack of empathy for victims, and little remorse if they hurt other people. So, I would not like us to think that education, with or without this technology, is the answer. What these young offenders lack is learning, in their early years, about relating to other people, and that there are consequences for other people if they do something wrong. They need to develop a moral sense.

Gaby Shenton: When Kidscape helps parents of children who are bullies, or being badly bullied, we often see parents who don't know how to deal with it. For me it is an issue of how many parents can we help. We have one of the highest rates of teenage pregnancy in Europe. If we can work on parenting skills before people become parents, by including it in the school curriculum, this will be the correct starting point.

12.4 Funding and Access to It:

Bevil Williams: Often we develop necessary and innovative services through volunteers. However, the moment that there is enough evidence to justify government funding, then we go back to the tried and failed systems of placing that funding in local authorities or maybe the school. Surely there must be a more imaginative way and creative way of using government funds through organisations who are working more closely “at the coal face”, such as Youth at Risk, and others. There must be a way of building the capacity of these organisations to use government funds directly, so that more funding gets directly to the end beneficiaries.

12.5. The Convention On The Rights Of The Child

A number of agencies have been working hard on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, including curriculum development and citizenship. Government has been urged to make the Convention part of the National Curriculum and Citizenship, or at least that it should be part of the initial teacher guidance. This has failed. Schools, both adults and children, should be made aware of their obligations under Article 42 of the Convention. This would go some way towards helping the situation. I sincerely believe that if you give young people responsibility and respect and treat them like civilised human beings, they are more likely to behave like them.

13. The Way Forward: Overview and Recommendations

Lord Laming

The quality of the conference discussions make it impossible for me to do them real justice, but it is worthwhile highlighting some of the more important themes.

13.1. People as Individuals

We all wish to be respected, to be valued and treated as individuals. Young people are no different, and we should not lump them into categories about which general assumptions are made. Many young people feel that they do not matter as individuals, nor feel that their views are important. Two or three times today it was stated, that if you cast young people in a certain mould, they would live up to that expectation.

We must consult and establish communication with them as individuals, if we are to help them make a difference to their lives. This is vital if we do not wish to live in a society, which alienates a large number of young people who are an essential part of our future. As Beverley Thompson said, this consultation should not consist simply of a questionnaire, drawn up by us, with instructions on how to respond. We must explain what the issues are and discuss them with youngsters in partnership, and eliminate the impression that we know best.

13.2. Early Support

With all young people, the point was well made about the need to identify at a much earlier stage, those exhibiting disturbed behaviour. Such

identification must include ways of providing some kind of remedial help, not only for the young person, but very often for their parents as well. Many of us, at some time, have worked with young people, where it has proved extremely difficult to cope with their challenging behaviour. That is when we all need that extra special help to cope. Parents often find themselves very isolated when constantly faced with the anti-social behaviour of their child. What they really need, is someone to provide help and guidance at an early stage.

13.3. Custodial Help

Much has been said about young people in custody, and how we often reinforce those messages such as lack of respect, lack of dignity and even lack of safety, together with our failure to provide effective remedial education in its broadest sense. Young people need educating to accept individual responsibility, to learn the disciplines of work, to learn about relating to people within groups, and developing social skills. In addition the need for this kind of support to continue into the community, as effective re-settlement programmes, was well presented.

Everyone keenly supported the work that has been undertaken by Youth at Risk, by SOVA and by

NACRO, both with those young people in Young Offending Institutions and also those now in the community. The very positive contribution now being made by the Youth Justice Board, bringing together multi-disciplinary teams, seems to provide a basis for some very constructive and creative work. Young people in danger of being taken into custody, or being released from custody, very often have needs that cover the whole range of social spectrum, such as housing, health, particularly mental health needs, training and employment. Those from an ethnic minority can have particular problems, shown by their over representation in the care system, as well as in the criminal system. Ways must be found within Youth Justice, of forming multi-disciplinary teams who see young people as a whole, and to remove the need for them to be shunted between different agencies which duplicate the painful and humiliating process of assessments with total strangers.

13.4. Training and Employment

We have heard how some employers have gone out of their way to give ex-offenders the chance of a fresh start. Many of these employers generally have good experiences, providing that the young person has been given the correct preparation, help and support. If you put a young person, with limited work experience into a work environment, without proper preparation for the job, then it is easy to blame the person the first time something goes wrong. The humiliation of being sacked can be

very traumatic and often leads to even worse self-esteem, and all the problems that this brings.

We must recognise the need to help young people overcome the difficulties associated with their bad start in life, especially if they have a criminal record. If we do not produce effective re-settlement programmes, society will be poorer in every respect - poorer because young people are not fulfilling their true potential and poorer because young people will be increasingly alienated, resulting in even more anti-social behaviour. Young people, often through a series of rather petty offences, can easily spend their lives in prison. It is a great pity that their lives can be so ruined in this way, because as a society we have failed to help them overcome their difficulties at a much younger age. So helping employers understand that we can all work in partnership is an idea that we should embrace.

We have heard a mixture of rather disturbing, sometimes very depressing information that has rightly shocked and disturbed us all. However, there has equally been some encouraging news about some extremely good programmes that appear to be working. Perhaps the Youth Justice Board is one of an increasing number of bodies that will help us all to benefit from the collective experience of these innovative, practical projects, encouraging their wider application across the country.

14. Acknowledgements from Lady Haslam

May I offer my thanks, on behalf of my Chairman, and fellow Trustees, to the speakers and to Trevor de Tute, for all their hard work in making this conference so worthwhile.

I would like to give my personal thanks to Coutts Bank and Priory Hospital Services, for financial help with this conference, and to the Inner London Probation Service, who looked after us so well.

Special thanks must also go to Dr. Robert Ogden, a generous supporter of our Foundation. As Vice President of the Northern Racing College, he has pledged the college to talk to young offenders about the possibility of their going to the college, to receive a proper education, discipline and perhaps a job for life. In addition, he has endowed the Ogden Scholarships for South and West Yorkshire. These scholarships give financial help to children from poorer homes, enabling and encouraging them to further education and university. In the first year at college they receive £500, and in the second year £1,000, and if they go on to university, they receive £2,000. Could a similar scheme be developed for young offenders, to top up their government grants?

Finally, my deepest thanks go to Lord Laming, who interrupted a heavy schedule of work to chair this conference. We are indebted to him.

15. Summary of Conference Recommendations

The Child at Home and in School

- At an early age, citizenship and good parenting to be reinforced through school
- Ensure that all children complete full schooling
- Facilitate sensitive, early intervention, by trained inter-agency professionals such as New Start, New Deal, YOTs etc, and accredited non-governmental organisations, to help and support vulnerable families
- Examine all alternatives to custody, including community service and other new initiatives.

The Child on Admission to Prison

- Explain prison rules and regulations at the very beginning
- Send a photo and background information on the child to the Missing Persons' Helpline
- Nominate a mentor who can befriend the child and provide support during and after sentencing
- Make a prompt assessment of needs, including educational, social, health and mental health needs.

The Child in Detention

- Provide a positive, structured routine tailored to the child's individual needs and interests
- Ensure that an environment of 'respect for all' is developed
- Implement a pro-active non-bullying system
- Provide access to new Connexions Service of DfEE, for continued education and skills development, including Open University courses
- Urge offenders to take responsibility for their crimes and to help their victims
- Provide access early and regularly to a professional careers officer, with relevant training arranged
- Provide and promote self-development courses to develop self-esteem and good citizen skills
- Encourage outside agencies to work in prisons, teaching skills for future employment
- Promote the maintenance or re-establishment of family ties where possible
- Ensure structured preparation for release, involving Youth Offending Teams, the Probation Service and others
- Establish a 'state registered' structure for prison staff, with pay that reflects qualifications and expertise.

The Child on Release

- Make it possible to apply to the courts for immediate expunging of criminal records
- Continue to provide access to sound help and guidance on training and employment
- Ensure Youth Offending Teams and the Probation Service provide access to good, safe accommodation
- Make realistic financial allowances available and ensure that Local Authorities under new legislation [Children (Leaving Care) Bill] adequately support ex-care leavers
- Ensure normal access to bank accounts
- Provide a mentor to continue to support and encourage the person up to the age of 21
- Give prompt information on support agencies such as NACRO, SOVA, the Who Cares Trust
- Make available all essential information for living in society, both before and after release
- Provide particular support to young parents and drug users.

DELEGATES - page 1

Marjorie Arnell	Secretary to Lord Haslam
Susanna Cheal OBE	Director, The Who Cares? Trust
Lord Desai	Professor of Economics, London School of Economics
Gordon D'Silva	Chief Executive, Training for Life
Mary de Tute	Co-ordinator of conference proceedings Michael Sieff Foundation
Trevor de Tute	Administrator, Michael Sieff Foundation
John S. Downs	Managing Director, Cosmo Leisure Group
Barbara Easam	Lawyer, Public Policy Department, NSPCC
Dr. Alan Gilmour CBE CVO	Trustee Emeritus, Michael Sieff Foundation
Patricia Haikin	Training For Living
Sue Hamilton	Chief Executive, Bryn Melyn Community
Dr. Mary Harris	Director, BG Foundation, BG Group
Peter Harris	Trustee, Michael Sieff Foundation Formerly Official Solicitor to Supreme Court
Lady Elizabeth Haslam	Founder and Trustee, Michael Sieff Foundation
The Lord Haslam	Chairman, Michael Sieff Foundation
The Rev. Dr. M.J. Hereward-Rothwell	Member of Guildford Diocesan Department of Social Responsibility
Jane Hingston	Assistant Banking Ombudsman
Rupert Hughes CBE	Trustee, Michael Sieff Foundation
Claire Irwin	National Personnel Dept., Unilever
Dr. June Kane	Communication Strategy & Child Rights Consultant, Geneva
Terry Lee	Director of Services, Priory Services for Young People
Sir James Lester	Consultant to Priory Healthcare former MP and Government Minister
Ruth Lewis	Senior Manager, Community Relations, British Airways
Edna Llewelyn	Previously lecturer in Health Visiting
Juliet Lyon	Director, Prison Reform Trust

DELEGATES - page 2

Linda Mason	DfEE, New Deal for Young People
Brigadier I.D. McGill CBE	Commander, Initial Training Group HQ, British Army
Deryk Mead	Chief Executive, NCH Action for Children
Charles Miller Smith	Chairman ICI
Dick Monk OBE QPM	Trustee, Michael Sieff Foundation formerly Assist. Inspector of Constabulary
Robert Ogden CBE LLD	Chairman & Chief Executive, Robert Ogden Group
David Pinder	D.G. Curriculum Development Council for Education in World Citizenship
David Reardon	Social Exclusion Unit, Cabinet Office
Gabby Rowberry	Director, Curriculum Resources Council for Education in World Citizenship
Gaby Shenton	Assistant Director, Kidscape
Daniel Sieff	Student of Politics
Barry Snelgrove	Assistant Chief Probation Officer Inner London Probation Service
Ian Street	Bank Manager, Coutts & Co
Santosh Theper	Project Development Manager, Charity Logistics
Dr. Eileen Vizard	Trustee, Michael Sieff Foundation and Director, The Young Abusers Project
Jim Wade	Senior Research Fellow, University of York
Angela Warby	Assistant Personnel Manager, CWS Retailing
Richard White	Trustee, Michael Sieff Foundation, & Solicitor specialising in Child Law
Bevil Williams	Regional Manager, Charity Logistics
Sarah Wilson	Independent member, West Yorkshire Police Authority
Sarah Williams	Free lance consultant in UK and Internationally
Terry Windle	Director of Operations, Oldham NHS Trust
Norman Woodhouse	Public Relations Consultant
Mary Wyman	Assistant Chief Probation Officer Inner London Probation Service