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Getting the 'Right' Youth Justice

...engaging with the findings of
the review of the Youth Justice
System in Northern Ireland

Keynote Address
Professor Lesley McAra,
University of Edinburgh, School of Law

Conference
REPORT

Keynote Address

Professor Lesley McAra, University of Edinburgh School of Law

Lesley McAra is the Professor of Penology and Dean of the School of Law at the University of Edinburgh. She is also Co-Director of the Edinburgh Study of Youth Transitions and Crime and Convenor of the Edinburgh Empirical Legal Research Network. Prior to joining the University in 1995, she was a Senior Research Officer within the Central Research Unit of the (then) Scottish Office where she was responsible for the development and management of a research programme evaluating social work criminal justice services

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“ Well, thank you very much for that kind introduction. And can I also thank the corporate of organisers for inviting me to give this speech. I have been very well looked after since I've come here and it's a great pleasure to be back in Belfast and to be back in Northern Ireland, I don't make the trip often enough. Well the title of my paper this afternoon is: Getting Youth Justice Right question mark; key messages from research. And in the paper I'm going to explore some of the challenges which I think Youth Justice professionals in Northern Ireland would face if they took forward the recommendations of this review. The review as a whole highlights attention which arguably besets all juvenile justices systems, particularly in a UK context, namely that they are required to fulfil two potentially competing objectives. Firstly, to help troubled young people to change, to develop, and overcome their problems, to provide a turning point in their lives. And secondly, to deliver a firm, prompt and appropriate response to youth offending. A response which represents some sort of symbolic denunciation of criminal behaviour and one which offers the best means of protecting the public, where necessary. Importantly, these competing objectives are also reflected in international conventions, we often look to the international conventions as a kind of touchstone for what we do, but they are themselves in conflict with each other. The Beijing rules, for example,

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exhort juvenile justice institutions to meet the needs of the child, protect his or her basic rights, at the same time as meeting the needs of society. According to the Beijing rules intervention should be both parsimonious and proportionate to the seriousness of the offence, as well as proportionate to the circumstances of the offender. And little guidance is given within the Beijing rules as to how these tension competing imperatives might in practice be reconciled, and such reconciliation is particularly problematic in the case of young people who seriously and persistently offend. Although they cause a threat to others, they themselves, as you all know, are fragile and vulnerable victims and in need of protection and support. Balancing the needs of such offenders with the needs of society as a consequence involves both moral and political choices. Drawing on the findings of the Edinburgh Study of Youth Transitions in Crime I'm going to argue that the report of the Youth Justice Review has made some of the right moral choices, the commitment to raising the age of criminal responsibility, and not high enough in my view and I'm in a minority there of two, because I think 18 is the correct age the emphasis placed on diversionary measures and the stated goal of using custody only as a measure of a very last resort. However, I would suggest that the review has made some rather timid political choices. In particular, the report states: "The best interests of the child should ...", and I have got it on the slide there, " ..become part of the principal aim of youth justice".

Our study in the Edinburgh study has strong evidence that public protection, justice for communities and appropriate redress for the victims of crime cannot be delivered unless the broader needs of young people are first addressed. Consequently the best interests of the child should be the central and the overriding aim of any juvenile justice system. Now in order to, the evidence base for this paper comes from the Edinburgh study and I'm going to begin the paper with a short overview of what that study is about. I'm then going to highlight 4 key challenges which are findings I think that are close to the review as they relate to the need for a holistic approach, that deeds are symptomatic of needs when dealing with young people, the challenges of the early identification about those children, and I'm going to look at policing in a slightly broader context, think about people's, young people's encounters with both police and the schools and how this helps to promote mutual respect and understanding. And then a fourth challenge is encouraging compliance of diversion when using custody as a last resort. I am going to conclude the paper with a review of the policy implications which I think flow from these challenges.

So on then to the Edinburgh study. For those of you who are not familiar with the study it's a longitudinal study of pathways into and out of offending for a cohort of around 4300 young people who started secondary school in 1998. And it aims to understand why some young people become heavily involved in crime and why most stop, general differences in offending. It also aims to look at the influence of a social and neighbourhood context on young people, the dynamics of the communities from which they come, and of impact of contact with

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agencies of control on subsequent behaviours. So looking at the impact of policing, looking at the impact of the courts, looking at the impact of the children's hearing system on young people. The target group of the study was all children then about aged 12 in Autumn 1998, we had a very good cooperation from the schools, we got all 23 mainstream schools, we got 9 out of 12 special schools which catered for children with behavioural or special needs relating to their health issues, and we also got independent sectors, called private sector schools, then we got 8 out of 14. The aim was to make the study as inclusive as possible. The response rates were uniformly high, we have a range of multiple sources about the cohort, and have self-questioned report questionnaires from age 12, and now up to 24 we have done a short followup. We have semistructured interviews with subsamples of the cohort at age 13 to 18 so we hear the voices of the children and get to hear their own narratives about their behaviour, as well as measuring it in the self-report questionnaire, and I think that combination of data is the strength of the study. We have schools, social worker, children's hearings records, we have got children's hearing records from birth to 18, we did a teacher questionnaire of child strengths and difficulties at one age, we actually have a parents' survey as well, we had a main care group observer at one point, we have Scottish criminal records and we have a geographic information system which looks at, has divided Edinburgh up into neighbourhoods and characterised them according to the police recorded crime from census data. So we have got a raft of information about these young people as we follow them through. So that's the study.

I now want to get on to my challenges. The need for holistic approach. Deeds are symptomatic of needs. Well, the study findings indicate there are strong and probably some causal relationships between violence and a range of vulnerabilities which we think run in both directions. And there's evidence for this, I'm going to look at violence in the cohort and look at some of the vulnerabilities associated with violence. And this slide here shows you, it's not very clear, but if you just look at the yellow line in the middle of this chart here. This shows you the prevalence of violence amongst the cohort of six study sweeps. And the measure I have got here includes robbery, assaults and go over six or more incidents to try and get some kind of measure of seriousness, and robbery and carrying a weapon, so it's just three different dimensions of violence there. As you can see from the slide here, the yellow line, the prevalence of violence actually is not that high, only 28% of the cohort ever admitted to one of more of these violent offences at age 14 which is the peak age of offending in our cohort, and has been replicated elsewhere, boys are significantly more likely to be involved in these behaviours, but failed to report these behaviours, than girls did. Now on this, and the following slide, it's difficult to see, but all you really need to be looking at is the pattern of the boxes in these particular charts. I have divided a cohort up into three groups based on self-reports aged 15, but it wouldn't matter what age I did this, at every single age you get the same pattern emerging. So I have got on the left hand side, the left boxes are non-offenders and the green

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columns are the boys and the red columns are the girls. In the middle I have got other offenders and on the right hand side I have got violent offenders. And as you will see on all measures offenders, all offenders exhibit a significantly higher level of vulnerability than non offenders and violent offenders are amongst the most vulnerable and victimized certainly in the cohort as a whole. And as I said this is replicated over every single study sweep and they have got every measure of vulnerability that we have. So if you look at this first slide here. Those reporting involvement in violent offending aged 15 were disproportionately more likely to suffer from a crime of victimization than other groups, they suffer from adult harassment, that they are measured here includes being followed by an adult on foot, in a car, or even in indecent exposure. Violent offenders suffered a disproportionately high level of bullying, and in terms of early sexualised behaviour, a disproportionately high number of them have experienced intercourse by age 14. Similarly those reporting involvement in violent offending aged 15 were disproportionately more likely to selfharm with cutting being the most common form. The vulnerability of violent offenders is further reinforced when we look at the prevalence and we narrow this down and look at the prevalence of suicidal and parasuicidal behaviour. Whilst such behaviour is not common amongst the cohort only 5% of those surveyed over six weeks reported, admitted that they had ever made a serious attempt to end their lives. The rates are very much higher amongst violent girls in particular than any other group: 16% of violent girls reported suicidal or parasuicidal attempts in respect of attempts to slit wrists, take overdoses or attempts to hang themselves. Disordered eating patterns were also much more common amongst the violent offender group and common amongst violent boys as well. Similarly violent offenders were significantly more likely to report a higher mean number of oppressive symptoms.

And finally violent offenders are significantly more likely to have a family crisis in the past year, to be excluded from school, to have free school meal entitlement, which is a proxy, not a brilliant, but a proxy measure of poverty, and also to come from neighbourhoods that were very deprived. Taken together these findings indicate that violent offenders are amongst the most victimized and vulnerable youngsters in our society and that violence itself is symptomatic of a broader spectrum of needs. It is strong support, I think, for a holistic approach to young people in trouble.

So if violence is so strongly associated with vulnerability and adversity is it easy then to pick out from an early age those who are most at risk and intervene then to diminish that risk? This takes me on then to the challenges of early targeted intervention. There are two dimensions our study would challenge some of the ideas that are now around on early targeted intervention. Firstly, difficulties in identifying these youngsters and, secondly, in emphasizing early intervention there is a danger, we think, that critical moments in the teenage years will get lost and that there are many things that happen to young people in the teenage years which will be overlooked if all the emphasis and resource is put into early intervention, the two key points I

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want to make.

So firstly, difficulties in identification. Now most youth justice workers believe that they know who the really bad offenders are, who the really difficult families are, who are the children who are most at risk from an early age. But our findings show that you don't. You absolutely don't. What you do is you have a clientele that you nurture and you bring on and you reproduce and you keep working with but there is a whole number of other people out there who are seriously and persistently offending, who are highly vulnerable, and who are completely under the radar of agencies. Now this slide here is part of the cohort of again a different wave, the right hand of the slide you have got those who selfreported violence at age 17 and 18. I have got in the middle chronic, violent offenders who are, those who reported violence at every single study sweep. And on the left hand side I have got a slightly broader measure of serious offending which covers other things, including things like arson and house breaking. And these are chronic, high level serious offenders, these are offenders who committed at least eleven serious offences over every single study sweep, because that's the most problematic, the most challenging group of youngsters in the cohort as a whole. And if you look at that these are the proportions who were never known to agencies so amongst the high level serious offenders 69% were never known to juvenile justice, 73% were never known to social work, and 84% of them had no convictions in the criminal just system by age 18. So there is actually a whole raft of unmet need out there that you don't know about.

But even amongst those who are known to the system at an early age not all of these will necessarily go on to become repeat offenders. In order to demonstrate this I want just to show you the results of trajectory analysis which I have got on this slide here. Now this form of analysis assigns individuals into groups on the basis of their probability of conviction, so these are the youngsters that you do know about. Now we found that were four groups in the cohort as a whole, there was a group, a very large group with no conviction, which runs along the bottom of the slide there, along the X axis, there was no conviction. We have two very small, early onset groups, one which goes on to become a chronic high level group, conviction group, and the other which evens off in the early teenage years, the yellow line there, and then stops once the young people get to age 22.

And finally, we have a later onset group, you have a green line on this slide here and this, those get, the probability of conviction starts to rise round about 14/15, it peaks round about age 20 and then diminishes thereafter. And what's interesting about this is if you take a snapshot of these groups at age 12, what you see is that the only ones that are on the radar are the yellow and the red groups here, the green group has not emerged at all. And you might be forgiven for thinking you were looking at behaviour at that age and seeing early behaviour is a good indicator of risk at a later age, you might be forgiven for thinking that the yellow group was the one that was going to be the most problematic, but of course it isn't, it's the red group that's

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the most problematic and the yellow group then rises at 15 and then exhibits a pattern of desistance. Similarly age 12, the yellow group exists, and you may think they may be more problematic, the green group is not even on the radar at this stage and then you put them in, they then become a more problematic group round about 17, 18, 19 than those youngsters who were earlier involved in the criminal justice system. So early identification is very difficult, very fraught, very difficult to identify from an early age with precision who are the ones who are actually going to turn out to be offenders.

Now, importantly, our concerns about the efficacy of targeted early intervention strategies is supported by other longitudinal studies. We are not a lone voice here. On this slide I have written what is the Dunedin study which is led by Terry Moffitt, and in testing whether the behavioural problems at age 3 and 5 predicted link to delinquency they found a very high false positive rate with predictability declining in the teenage years as other influences become more important. And the study concluded, and I quote: "That the usefulness of preschool behaviour predictors for selecting children for intensive, early intervention efforts may be limited at present". And that's something we need to think about. So rather than directing the gaze of criminal justice at the early preschool years the Edinburgh study findings strongly suggest that policy makers should focus more firmly on critical moments and key transitions in the early to mid teenage years. What these trajectories suggest is that between the ages of around 13 to 16 there are key critical junctures which shape subsequent conviction pathways, something is happening to both of the early onset groups which appears to result in an upward spiral for some and then an evening out and decline for others. Similarly this period also sees the emergence of the later onset group whose probability of conviction rises as the early onset desisters make a rapid descent.

So what contextual features then do differentiate these groups? Well this first set of comparisons relates to the early onset groups. Importantly at age 12 there were no differences between these groups in respect of almost all study measures. It was impossible to identify or to predict which of these youngsters was at risk of a chronic conviction pathway and which was most likely to be an early resister. But as you can see from the slide both groups, both of the groups were very vulnerable and very different from the remainder of the cohort, there were no differences between them, so they were equally socially deprived, they had a history of family disruption, they were involved in substance misuse to an equal extent, they spent most of the evenings out in the street hanging around, both had a similar number of friends who were involved in offending, both chronics, and there is similar histories of school exclusion and truancy, and they mirrored each other in terms of their contacts with juvenile justice. Importantly their selfreport of serious offending also mirrored each other. And this is a really important thing to reflect upon that the conviction pathways are completely different, but their selfreported offending mirrors each other so that they both rise and have a peak age of offending slightly later than the cohort of court age 15 and then it diminishes. So there's

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disjuncture between convictions and self-reported offending, and this again is some evidence that the criminal justice system and youth justice systems are in danger of reproducing the conditions of their own existence, yet pulling in a group of youngsters and sustaining contact with them, even though they are at serious offending, they have diminished in significance.

So what did then change? What could we find that differentiated this group, what did change for these groups over that 12 to 13, 14, 15 age group? Well three things changed. Three key things. These are the only three things that changed. Firstly, there was a significant increase in truancy amongst the chronic group going to the desisters, they had stabilized and then diminished. Secondly, the number of sessions of school excluded the chronics group, it rose dramatically over the age of 13 to 14, and then continued to rise at 15, whereas over the same time period for the desister group it diminished and then stabilized. And adversarial police contact also rose significantly for the chronics and it stabilized and then went down for the desisters. Now, importantly, the latter is not accounted for by differential involvement in serious offending as both chronics and desisters are indistinguishable in respect of their self-reported offending over the period from age 12 to 17.

So if we turn to the later onset group and compare them to the two early onset groups. Although there were some similarities between the groups at age 12 actually they were very very different in all sorts of ways, and I put the things in, what they were different, and that side is the right hand side of the slide. They were much less likely to be involved in serious offending at 12, they were from less deprived backgrounds, they were significantly less likely to take drugs, hang out in the street, less likely to truant, less likely to be excluded from school, they had very limited experience of the police and the childrens hearing system. So what changed for this group over that crucial 13, 14, 15 year old age span? Well a lot, a lot changed. The years before the onset of conviction were highly turbulent for this particular group. The white sections in this slide here are the factors from which the later onset group had in common with the early onset group at age 12, where they were similar, and all of these underwent further deterioration for the later onset group over the 13 to 15 year old period. The yellow section there are the factors which differentiated the early from the later onset groups at age 12 and all of these underwent significant deterioration for the later onset groups, so they became more like the early onsetters by age 15. And the pink section, well it is actually red here, which I don't think you can read very well, but these are actually the most important part of that slide. These are the factors which I have just noted are also key precursors to increased probability of conviction in the chronic group, these are also meant to increase probability of conviction amongst the later onset. Increased truancy from school, increased exclusion from school, and increased volume of adversarial police contact, the same dynamics.

So this takes me on then to third challenge. Policing to promote mutual respect and

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understanding, the need to tackle entrenched working cultures. Importantly our study findings show that school exclusion and the policing of young people are not neutral processes. Indeed they suggest that the working cultures of both of these institutions serve to label and stigmatise certain categories of young people, particularly boys from deprived backgrounds. Once labelled as a trouble maker the youngsters find it very hard to shrug off that label whether or not their offending or bad behaviour has diminished in seriousness or intensity. And in terms of labelling theory the label of trouble maker effectively becomes a master status of that youngster and they can not shrug that master status off. And to evidence this I just want to show you a couple of slides showing the results of multivariate analysis. The first one is about school exclusion at age 15. And this is a part of an analysis which is looking at what factors best predict school exclusion at age 15. Now, as one might expect, a high volume of bad behaviour in school is predicted, as you would expect, albeit its likelihood of exclusion. However even when this is controlled a previous form remains one of the most strong predictors of school exclusions. So those who were rated by teachers, those whom teachers had labelled as 'trouble maker' at age 13 were almost three times as likely to be excluded at age 15 as those who were equally badly behaved and had no such history, as were those who were excluded during primary education. So there is a kind of repeat cycle of exclusion and labelling that is going on within schools, school exclusion is not a neutral process.

If we look at this in relation to policing. The significance of previous form also shapes the police decisionmaking practices. This slide shows the factors which best predict the police warnings or charges in the mid teenage years and even when we control for involvement in serious offending and the volume of times the youngster comes to the attention of the police in the current year, youngsters who have previous form were over seven times more likely to be warned or charged than those who had no such history. So what we find is there is a repeat cycle of charges, of warnings and charges within the police, no matter whether or not youngsters' behaviour has improved, whether their serious offending has diminished in significance.

Now, the qualitative data from the side structural interviews that we held at age 13 and 18 show that youngsters were conscious of and expressed anxieties about these labelling processes. And at age 13, I have got some quotes from these youngsters here. Age 13, a number of boys and girls at school talk about the problems which they experienced in terms of identity management in the context of school, particularly as it related to their own or their families reputation. So here are some of the things that they said.

Boy: "Some teachers have got grudges against you. They don't like you because your family's been like that, they just think you're like that too".

So family reputation is problematic for that young man.

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"Every time you go near them ..." says a girl

".. you always think they're going to know who you are because you've done this.

Interviewer: Do you think they'd treat you differently? "Yes".

And there's another boy, and I think I like this one very much.

"They call me dumb and then I get full marks on a test and they still call me dumb. I'm just a wee bit more cocky and they get pee'd off with it. I've not been suspended from school once, I've had millions of detentions".

And in terms of policing the same things, youngsters pilot they way in which they get labelled too, they talk about the places where they hang out, they talk about family reputation and they talk about the way in which their appearance singles them out for police attention and serves to label them as potential trouble makers. The first one is about place, the labelling of a place, if you're in a place, in the wrong place then you're going to get in trouble.

"Well the police ..." says a boy aged 13,

".. tend to check up on us a lot, more than they should. They just check up on us and search people for no reason. They just drive in and look at who's there just because they think that (inaudible) in there".

The second quote is about family reputations. This is a boy aged 18:

"But if I do get stopped or anything like that sometimes my name, because like my dad and uncle have been in trouble and stuff like that so I can get a bit of hassle".

And this final one I absolutely love, this is the most perfect labelling quote ever and this is a quote about a young man talking about driving a car down one, a very very long road in Edinburgh.

"My friend had a car and we got pulled up at the top of the road, five minutes later we got pulled halfway down the road (and this is by a different set of police officers) five minutes later we got pulled at the bottom of the road by a further set of police officers, I think it's because we're young". **And then he quotes what he thinks the police are thinking:**

"They're young, they're wearing hats, they're in an old banging car, oh that car's stolen".

So there is a labelling process going on and labelling processes have negative effects. And this takes me on then to neatly the fourth and final challenge: Encouraging compliance with diversion while using custody as a last resort. Because labelling assists in contact damages and custodial measures, in particular, have the poorest outcomes. Our analysis indicates that outcomes for serious offenders who are drawn furthest into the system are far worse than for

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matched groups of serious offenders who either have no contact with agencies at all or who are dealt with more informally and diverted away from the system. And we've done this by using quasiexperimental analysis which is a very robust way of undertaking this analysis. Indeed our findings show that compulsory measures of care appear to inhibit the normal process of desistance that is evident from around age 14 in the cohort as a whole. Conversely, police warning, one off police warnings or charges but then no further action is associated with a significant reduction in serious offending one year later.

Diversion works. Now, I put a reference to the Huizinga research at the bottom of the slide because I want again, I want to indicate that the Edinburgh study is not a lone voice here. There is growing evidence from a range of longitudinal studies internationally that the greater the severity of the sanction the more damaging it is for the youngster. Huizinga and colleagues were based on data from two longitudinal projects, one is based in Germany and the other in the USA. And they found that arrests and sanction had only a limited impact on offending resulting for the most part in the maintenance or increases in the previous level of offending, with increases being most likely in the case of the individuals who were given the most severe sanctions. And the similarity between the sites in this study is particularly striking, even though a very different ethos as a youth justice system in Germany which is much more lenient and more focused on diversion, and from that of Denver which is much more punitive. Now compounding the damaging effect of system contact, we have also evidence that the most vulnerable and the most victimized young offenders who are known to the children's hearing system are propelled into the adult criminal justice system at a very early stage. And in Scotland, and this is one of our disgraces I think, that that generally happens at the age of 16. By age 22, 55% of children referred to the children's hearing system offence occurs and at least one criminal conviction in the adult system, and that's a conviction rate five times higher than from other people in the cohort. And 13% of them had experience of one period of detention, and that's the detention rate, 33 times higher than amongst other groups in the cohort. If we look in more detail at the factors which predict which particular children referred to the reporter on offence grounds were most at risk of making this transition. Being from a different school, by third year of secondary education one of the most powerful predictors. Having an early history of police warning and charges and being male. But what is particularly striking about this analysis is that volume of needs is also a key predictor of later criminal conviction. Children who would be assessed as the most needy in the children's hearings files were catapulted from one system to another with 1 in 4 of these children having a conviction in the adult system within a year of exiting the children's hearing system.

And to completely nail final facts. The deleterious effect of system contact, I just want to go through these findings and see, which I think are shocking. Of those that experienced residential care of any sort by their 16th birthday 77% of them had a criminal conviction by age 22 and 1 in 3 of them, 31%, 1 in 3 of them were imprisoned by age 22. Of those who had

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experience of imprisonment by age 18, 80% of them had a further criminal conviction by age 22 and 70% of them had a further period of imprisonment by age 22. What we're doing in Scotland, which is a benign system which has a wonderful ethos, is we are condemning some of our youngsters to serving a life sentence by installments.

So on this, some concluding thoughts. Given that our findings show that serious offending is linked to victimization, social adversity, given I think that early identification of risk, of at risk children, is very fraught with difficulty, given that there is a risk of creating a selffulfilling prophecy, given that critical moments in the teenage years are key to pathways of offending, and given that diversionary strategies are effective, given all of these things, I think this should be the central challenge for policy makers. How to develop a model of youth justice or juvenile justice which is both holistic in orientation with interventions proportionate to need, as well as one which offers, operates on the principle of maximum diversion. That is the key conundrum that policy makers should be facing. And these are some suggestions as to how this agenda might be taken forward.

In simple terms the core message from the Edinburgh study findings is that we need age graded services proportionate to need. So in terms of early years when there is early preventive work, because of the difficulties in identifying which specific individuals that will go on to become chronic serious offenders, and because of the dangers of labelling and stigmatizing families, which are very real, I would argue for a form of universal targeting providing support mechanisms for all children and families in areas in which there is concentration of poverty and concentration of practice which research has said is associated with offending risk. This should not be the province of criminal justice, it should be the province of health, it should be the province of the education, housing etc, etc, not criminal justice.

In terms of transitions into teenage years because such a high proportion of vulnerable, serious offenders are unknown to agencies our findings highlight the need for, the continued need for informal voluntary sector, outdoor, outdoor, outreach and open door services for vulnerable youngsters. Services need to go out and find these youngsters and help support them, not punish them. Such services have an absolutely crucial role to play in helping communities support some of our most damaged youngsters and in helping to diminish the levels of unrecorded violence and unreported violence and other forms of serious offending.

Secondly, there is a need to understand and respond better to critical moments in the early teenage years. A key critical moment is being excluded from school. So education is absolutely at the centre of this. Scottish current policy, current policy in Scotland does highlight educational inclusions of key target but generally speaking we need to be much more imaginative in the ways in which we retain challenging children within mainstream educational provision. Moreover, and this has already been said, as the gamekeepers to the care and

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justice systems currently, and as the principal agency which first encounters many problematic children the police have an absolutely crucial role to play in the delivery of justice for children. In particular there is the need to continue to develop policing strategies, offer swift firm but flexible response to youth offending, where one is meaningfully diversionary wherever possible and the police also need to address the pernicious consequences of entrenched working cultures.

Finally in this section for those offenders who do enter the youth justice moral system we would argue that intervention should be based on what Fergus McNeill has termed a desistance paradigm for offending of management. A desistance paradigm aims to help the child construct a non offender identity, to lose that master status of offender. It involves a close onetoone relationship with a key worker who acts as an advocate for that child and crucially it involves continuity in who that key worker is. Importantly for this work to be effective it has to be undertaken within a broader context of educational inclusion and meaningful economic opportunity. In terms of transition to early adulthood, on the right hand side of the slide, in addition to mechanisms through which young people gain access to further education, training or employment, there is a need to provide targeted and intensive support for those leaving the institutional care system and for those vulnerable offenders at the intersection between the youth and adult system. But having said all this I think there is a need for a bolder vision on the part of policy makers. A vision which makes social justice solution as the starting point for discussions on how to diminish youth crime. And I would offer this final model, which you probably can't see very well, to the arrows to construct, I'm not very good at power point and what colouring in was done here, and I borrowed this from Jonathan Brenner from Brenner Martins, as two people who were involved in polishing this. This model purports to show, according to Brenner Martin, the ecology of human development but I think it's one that we should transport into juvenile justice. As indicated on the slide here the child, you will see that the child, not an offender, the 'child' is placed at the heart of the model. It recognises the wellbeing of the child promoted by micro level factors linked to parental and peer socialisation processes. It is promoted by meso level factors, such as neighbourhood, schools and the parental work situation, but these meso level factors impact on the capacity of the micro level factors to fulfill their particular roles. Child wellbeing is also promoted by the micro level factors on the outside of this model and these are things like labour markets, family and child care policies, and these in turn impact on the efficacy, both meso and the micro level factors. This is a kind of nested model. If you all expect a system of juvenile justice to, one at the same time, prevent crime, protect the public, and secure the welfare of the child, then this model is where you need to start. Thank you very much. ””