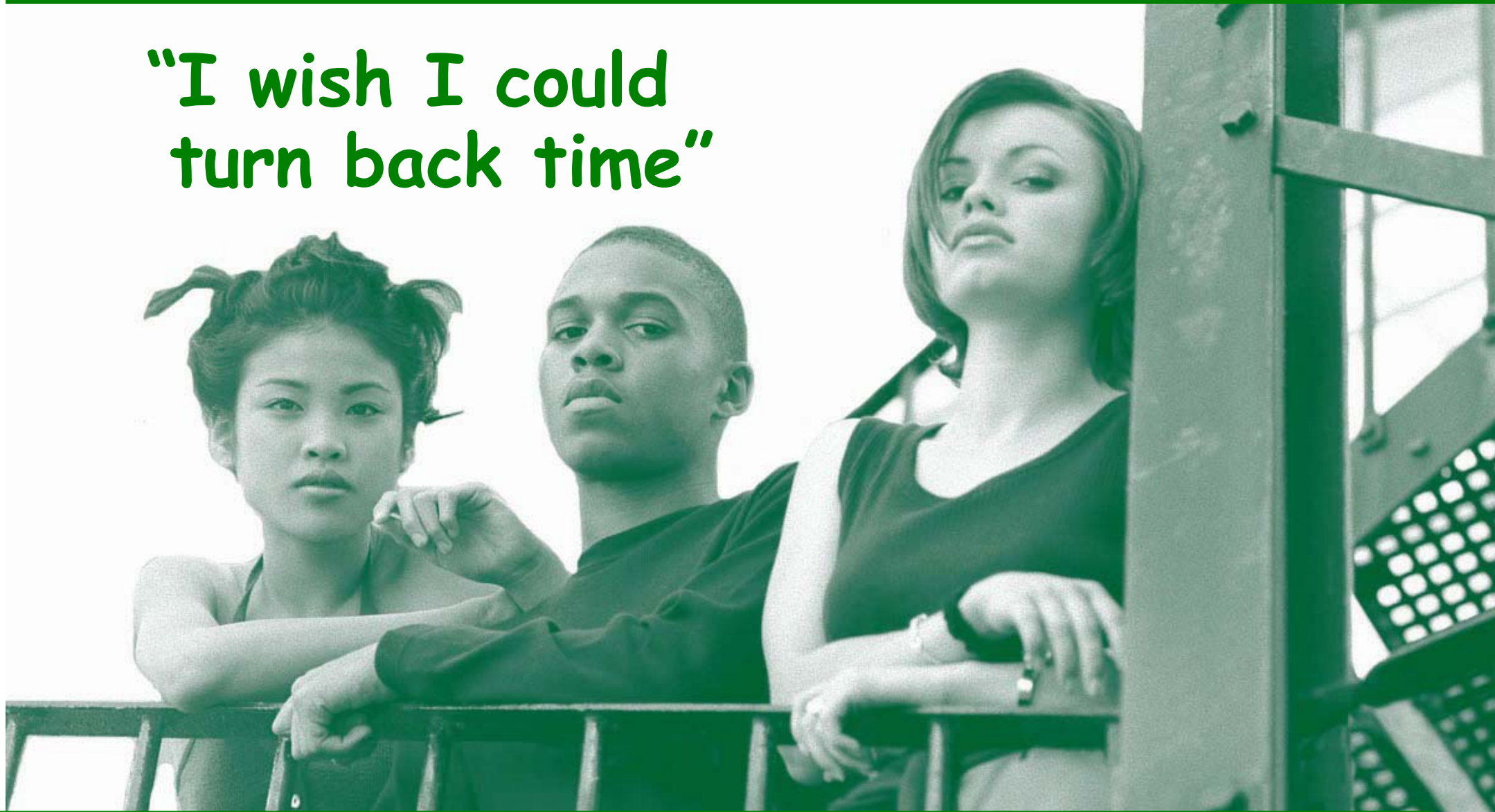


"I wish I could
turn back time"



Young People's Experiences of Life Before Secure Care and Views on Programmes of Intervention in Secure Care



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Who Cares? Scotland's BOSS team would like to thank all the young people who participated. Without their honest and frank recall of their experiences this report couldn't have been written.

We are grateful to the staff in the secure establishments who enabled us to carry out the consultations.

The author would like to thank the Young Person's Development Workers from the BOSS team for all their hard work and dedication.

AUTHORS

Lindsey Foreman, National Advocacy Manager - Secure Care, Who Cares? Scotland
Sharron McAllister, Young Persons' Development Worker, Who Cares? Scotland

January 2006

*'Secure is a place for people who
have done something bad
I'm not a bad person. All I did was run away
and then I had nowhere to stay
I now hope and pray that I get out of here*

*I don't deserve to be here with murderers and rapists
I hate to say this but I don't feel safe
especially in this place
I hope to be out soon
and not up in space'*

Poem by Young Person in Secure Care

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SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide stakeholders in secure care with an understanding of young people's views and experiences of life before entering secure care and of young people's views of programmes of intervention they undertook whilst in secure care.

Young people worked extremely hard to explain their pathways into secure care, their experiences of programmes and hopes and fears for the future. A number of key messages emerged from the discussions. These show how young people feel and how their views could be used to help prevent other young people following their path.

KEY MESSAGES

Within the Community:

- Young people in care, including those who don't or can't go to school due to exclusion and, for other reasons, still want to learn and should be involved in education.
- Disrupted lives can be a route to offending. Children and young people in local authority care need continuity and stability. They need one person, or just a few people, they can trust and rely on over time.
- To prevent other children and young people becoming involved in crime, young people in secure care have asked local authorities to design interventions that target the very young.
- Clean up deprived communities, where violence, drug dealing and crime are just part of everyday life, and improve poor living conditions.
- Young people are influenced a great deal by their friends, so find ways to make positive use of peer group pressure.

- Young people want to prevent offending, tackle drug and alcohol abuse, in particular, target hard drug dealers and suppliers and take drugs off the streets and out of schools and colleges.
- Provide more opportunities for sporting/leisure activities for young people.

Within the Children's Hearings and Youth Justice Systems:

- Pay particular attention to improving relations between the police and young people.
- Provide opportunities for improving police awareness regarding the issues which surround young people in care.
- Social workers should be visible, consistent and effective.
- Young people want to be heard and taken seriously at Children's Hearings.

In Secure Care:

- Make secure care safe for young people by tackling bullying and offending behaviour in the units.
- Secure unit rules and procedures should be clear and fair if they are to be understood by young people.
- To reduce the risk of re-offending, offending behaviour programmes and education must all be given priority for all young people.
- Young people in secure care should be much more connected to the outside world: families, carers, friends, social workers.
- All young people should become more involved in their care and/or action plan.
- Allow young people more one to one time with staff.

After Secure Care:

- To reduce the risk of re-offending, young people need effective aftercare and close support following their discharge from secure care.
- Young people need particular help to stay off drugs.
- Provide young people with practical help for independent living. 16 to 18 year olds leaving secure care need adequate benefits or wages to survive in the community.
- Help young people to prepare for, and to obtain, real jobs.

INTRODUCTION

In March 2003 Who Cares? Scotland received funding from the Scottish Executive Intensive Support Fund for a three year project, which aimed to achieve better outcomes for young people in secure accommodation. The main aim of the project is to engage and build relationships with young people in secure care, raising young people's self esteem through involvement. The project seeks to empower young people to speak out by carrying out consultations in a creative way, documenting their views and providing feedback to policy-makers and service providers.

One specific aim of the project was to informally consult with young people about their experiences of being in secure accommodation and in particular to hear their views on therapeutic programmes.

In order to achieve this aim, various forms of consultation were used to gather accurate information. This report provides feedback to service providers and the Scottish Executive on young people's views of services available to them in the community and their views and experiences of programmes of intervention they undertook in secure care.

This consultation was carried out by the 'Better Outcomes for Secure Services' project (BOSS), managed by Who Cares? Scotland. This report follows on from a previous consultation report '*Insecure*' which provided an overview of what life was like for young people in secure care.

Young people identified what they saw as problems for them, one of which was what life was like for them before entering secure care.

EXTERNAL CONTEXT

The pathway that a young person takes to become involved in crime and the length of time that they live this type of lifestyle vary for each individual. Many young people participate in criminal activity at some point in time.

However it is only a minority who go on to become chronic offenders. According to the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration's Annual Report 2003-04, there was a 13% rise in 2002/03 in the number of children referred on offence grounds. (1)

There have been a number of recent initiatives by the Scottish Executive to combat this rise in youth crime such as the Fast Track Children's Hearing pilot, National Standards for Scotland's Youth Justice Services and most recently, the Antisocial Behaviour etc. (Scotland) Act 2004.

'A considerable amount is already known about the characteristics of young people who offend and their families. Risk factors identified by the many studies in this area include:

- *Poor housing standards*
- *Drug/alcohol misuse by the young person or their family*
- *Low income*
- *Health, personality and behavioural problems*
- *Family breakdown*
- *Low educational achievement*
- *Socialising with offenders'. (2)*

The consultation explored young people's views about these factors, resulting in their providing ideas for potential solutions to problems commonly faced by young people who experience secure care.

AIM OF CONSULTATION

The purpose of the consultation was to develop an understanding of what life was like for young people prior to admission into secure care and of young people's views on programmes of intervention they were undertaking whilst in secure care. We also explored the planning and preparation young people experience to enable them to move out of secure care. Throughcare and Aftercare will be the subject of a separate report.

CONSULTATION PROCESS

Sample:

The opportunity to be involved in the consultation was offered to all young people in secure care during a year from December 2004 - December 2005. In total, 149 young people were involved over the twelve month consultation period. Young people from six secure accommodation units were involved in the consultation - Rossie Secure Accommodation Services [Rossie], The Elms, Howdenhall, St Mary's Kenmure [St Mary's], St Katherine's, and Kerelaw.

Method:

Within each unit, young people were invited to be part of a focus group and/or to participate in one to one interviews. Participants were briefed about the nature and purpose of the consultation and were asked to sign consent forms.

A variety of methods were used which included one to one interviews, focus groups and questionnaires.

Part one of the consultation involved young people being individually consulted using a 'pinball game'. This was a question and answer session incorporating a fun element. Young people were asked a selection of questions from a core of 28 questions with additional general knowledge supplements.

Part two used a questionnaire to seek the views of young people regarding programmes of intervention. The information gained from the questionnaire gave an overview of the reasons for admission, programmes young people were undertaking and contact with both internal and external specialist professionals.

A subsequent consultation was carried with 25 young people by using semi-structured interviews to look at effective practice in addressing offending behaviours.

REPORT

The findings from the consultation are structured into two sections corresponding to the sequence of events in young people's lives. 'Life before Secure Care' details young people's perspectives of their lives before entering secure care. 'Programmes of Intervention' describes their views and experiences of the programmes of intervention they undertook whilst in secure care. ('Planning and Preparation for leaving Secure Care' looking at the Throughcare and Aftercare Services available to young people planning to leave secure care will be the subject of a subsequent report).

Throughout the report the findings are linked to relevant research evidence and policy which often endorse what the young people discussed during the consultation. The consultation team has aimed to represent accurately what

young people reported. To this end, as much as space allows, their points are presented in their own words, without altering what was said.

The next part of the report sets out the conclusions, drawing out key messages from what young people said, followed by recommendations they asked us to take forward.

A 'young person' in the context of this report is between the ages of 11 and 17 years. Their views appear in indented ***bold italic*** script.

LIFE BEFORE SECURE CARE

"It's not just wot I do that makes me feel so bad

It's the person I've become

And the things I could have had

So now I'll have to try

And keep my head up high

And let all the problems just slip by

I don't enjoy wot I do and I know it's not me

So I have to stop it all

And try to be somebody

I know things will change

But it's all up to me

I feel I'm in a cage and want to be set free

So now I'll make the change but not just for me

For the people who cares most

My one and only family"

Poem by Young Person

LIFE BEFORE SECURE CARE

To find out more about the background to the young people's admission into secure care, we guided the consultation towards such topics as:

- what it was like for the young people growing up in their family and/or in care
- how they had found education
- what was their experiences of the hearing system and the police and their views of offending
- whether they had had involvement with drugs or alcohol before entering secure care.

Within these broad areas, young people explored their experience of and views on:

- education
- family
- offending
- experience with police
- growing up in care
- children's hearings and courts
- violence and bullying.

Young people were direct and thoughtful in their answers. They talked about the poverty they experienced at home, peer pressure in the community and their views of both their own and other young people's and adults' use of alcohol and drugs. They spoke frankly about their experiences of mainstream education and how they felt they were often stigmatised for being in care. They were open about why they chose to offend and how they often felt persecuted by the police.

EDUCATION

'They expect too much and it makes you feel stupid so you give up'

Many young people had had very limited contact with formal schooling. A small number had not attended school for large portions of their secondary education. An extremely common pattern seemed to be periods of frequent truanting and challenging behaviour particularly upon reaching secondary school age. It is interesting to note that no negative references were made to experiences at primary school. Involvement with crime and substance abuse had sometimes taken place in school itself. Young people felt they had been more interested in 'messaging about' than taking notice. They stated that they had 'better things to do' rather than attend school.

When asked about why there were difficulties in coping with mainstream schooling some young people told us that they found it difficult to cope with the large class sizes.

'If the classes weren't so big I could have learnt more'

'Too many people in class makes you cause trouble'

Young people stated they were unable to cope with the pressures of full time education and felt that truanting was the only option.

'I dogged school because it was rubbish, I didn't like the subjects at that time'

*'I dogged all the time, everyday, it was s***e, I didn't go since I was nine'*

Both Graham and Bowling (1995) and the Audit Commission report, 'Misspent Youth' (1996), demonstrate a link between regular truanting and school exclusion and involvement in offending (3).

It was apparent that, for some young people, involvement in substance misuse was also a factor in their reasons for truanting.

'Could not be bothered, rather be out getting buzz with all my pals'

'Just cos I was sick on solvents as well so I was just bunking off of school. We used to buzz in an outside toilet'

Asked if there were any teachers they had got on well with and were a positive influence, a small minority could

remember some teachers they liked. However, there were more instances where young people felt the opposite.

'I can't remember, no I just got suspended all the time'. [Facilitator: You didn't think you could talk to them?]. 'No, I didn't want to talk to them'

Young people were not optimistic about their educational outcomes. When asked to compare education in secure care to mainstream education in the community, most felt that education within secure care was a better experience.

'Smaller classes which is better because you get more time with the teacher if you don't understand'

'It's a lot different - better - computer games - woodwork, there's science - they have a swimming pool - a football park, all stuff like that'

FAMILY

'Mum and Dad tried everything; they knew there was something wrong'

Some young people were able to talk favourably about growing up in their family home. There were honest accounts of incidences of violence, substance misuse and absent parents.

'It was mental at home, loads of fighting'

'It was bad - my Ma was going out with this guy and he was battering her and me'

Separate studies by Farrington and Rutter et al have shown that characteristics of families (e.g. large family size and parental divorce) and parenting styles (e.g. poor supervision, abuse and neglect) consistently have been

central factors associated with the development of delinquent lifestyles. (4 and 5)

However, the majority of young people defended their upbringing and felt that their parents had tried to stop their delinquent behaviour. Their parents had tried to do all they could to keep them from following offending careers by encouraging them to remain in school and employing a range of disciplinary measures.

'Yes, try to talk to me but I didn't listen. They tried to keep me in but I just jumped out the window'

'Yes, my Mum and Dad tried to keep me out of trouble'. [Facilitator: What kind of things did they do to try and keep you out of a home?]. 'They took me to the police station when I was an absconder'

'Aye, they tried all sorts of things, different things, different new sports, different racings, going quad biking'. [Facilitator: Did you ever get kept in?]. 'No, that would make me worse I used to climb down the drainpipe'

Many young people felt that any intervention from their family would not have stopped their delinquent behaviours.

'Yes, all the time, they always spoke to me and told me if I kept getting into trouble I would get put in a home. I didn't believe her'

'Aye, sometimes my Ma put a lock on the door, you know how you get the wee snibs, I'd rip the windows open, she would hammer nails in the windows'.

[Facilitator: Was there anything else she did?]. *'Got me involved in social work and drug and alcohol workers they done everything but I didn't listen. I wish I did now'*

Young people were asked how easy it was to maintain contact with family when in secure care. Most young people said that it was easy, with phone calls and visits, but the major factor was the distance family had to travel.

'No, my mum can't come because it's too far away. It's not worth it for an hour'

'It's easy but not often, my Ma can only come up once a week'. [Facilitator: Is that all your Mum could manage?]. 'It's too far and she is always working as a midwife or something'

Who Cares? Scotland's report 'Lets Face It' identified the same issue for young people and stated that care providers should 'maximise family contact - appropriate to each individual, as stated in Article 9 of the UNCRC - separation from parents'. (6)

OFFENDING

'It's just what it's like where I live'

Young people talked openly about the communities where they lived and how they saw their neighbourhood context as a contributory factor in their offending. They described the lack of opportunities and facilities available to them and what could have helped prevent them offending.

'No youth clubs or anything like that'. [Facilitator. Do you think there is anything that would have helped?].

'Football club/team for people like us'

'If I had things to do - nothing to do where I live'

Young people also believed that peer pressure and friendship was another major factor.

'It just happened, it's just life, everybody fights, you canny be the odd one out, can you?'

'Because I hang about with older people, people at 19 and 20, I don't like hanging about with young ones'.

[Facilitator: So you reckon it's because you were hanging about with older people and stuff?]. *'Aye and then I started smoking drugs and then I got used to smoking and when I hardly had any money I went out to offend to get more'.* [Facilitator: When you say you smoked drugs, what was it you smoked - hash?]. *'Aye'*

'Through my friends and cousin, showing off basically'

The majority of young people consulted reported that drugs and alcohol were an influence on their offending behaviour.

'Yes, more likely to offend when take them'

'Yes, both'. [Facilitator: How would they influence you?].
'I would be violent and aggressive'

'I was addicted to drink and drugs' [Facilitator: Do you think it played a part in your offending?]. *Yes*. [Facilitator: What would be worst for you - drugs or alcohol?]. *'Drugs probably, drugs and alcohol it made you'*. [Facilitator: How do you think it made you?]. *'No-one knows what they are doing when they are full of it'*

Rutter, Giller & Hagell (1998) reviewed research and concluded that excessive alcohol use increased the likelihood of involvement in violent acts. (7)

A high number of young people linked their offending with seeking to finance their substance misuse.

'Need money for drugs'

'It was in the community - starting doing daft things like stealing phones, smash and grab from cars to buy more drugs'. [Facilitator: Was it because you were with certain people?]. *'Need money basically'*. [Facilitator: What were you spending it on?].
'Hash, motorbikes, cars, everything'

Graham and Bowling (1995) concluded that young people involved in drugs and alcohol are likely to 'become embedded in a criminal lifestyle from which it becomes increasingly difficult to disengage'. (8)

Asked if any adults tried to stop them and help them to think about what they were doing, most young people reported there *were* adults who had tried to help.

'Family, Mum and other family members'. [Facilitator: Any workers try to help you?]. 'Who Cares? I can't remember what day it was; they tried to give me advice, told me of consequences. Going over my actions and making me aware of what could happen'

'Plenty, my Mum, my family, friends, loads of people'. [Facilitator: What about your social worker]. 'No'

'Social workers and that - I.T. - addiction services but got bored and didn't go''

'Never saw my social worker, she never came to visit or phoned me. How's that meant to help me?'

All the young people consulted stated that they hadn't listened to the advice that adults had given them.

'No, never really listened'

'No, just did it anyway'

Many young people believed that parents and professionals could do little to combat their anti-social behaviour.

'No, they've tried but it's not worked. Includem tried but never listened to me they came when it wasn't my curfew time. I wanted to go out with my pals'

'I think they tried their best, I knew what could happen because it happened to my brother'

'I wish I could turn back the time to when I was younger. It's amazing how you change. It could have been different'

EXPERIENCES WITH POLICE

'Sometimes stopped for nothing'

When young people discussed their views of the police many felt they were victimised and, with just a few exceptions, the police were perceived negatively.

'Some are alright but others think you are wasting their time and they are nippy with you'. [Facilitator: When you say 'nippy', what do you mean?]. 'When they see you out in the street they'll just grab you and they'll say 'we've spent all night looking for you' and then you just get thrown in the back of a van'

'Where do I begin, it's their attitude. When I put my hood up and there's been anything happening about the streets, I've been picked up about five times and I wasn't even there'

Catan, L, Dennison, C and Coleman, J (1996) concluded that young people, generally, are critical of the police and their approach to communication. (9)

Young people felt that they were often labelled as troublemakers just because they were in care. Who Cares? Scotland's report 'Lets Face It' also highlights that one in four young people interviewed felt they were picked on and treated unfairly.

'Pick on you because you are in care'

*'My mates are all worse than me but because the police knew I was in care I get all the s**t'*

One or two young people gave examples of instances when the police had helped them.

'They have lifted me; I think they are good they helped me when I was in a situation'

'I've been charged before and some are alright and some aren't'. [Facilitator: What made the ones that are 'alright', 'alright?]. 'The ones that are alright are the ones that don't act wide'

However, the majority of young people did not have respect for the police and there were alleged instances of abuse of power.

'Always getting charged, No police are alright they are screws'

*'Scum'. [Facilitator: Could you tell me why you think that?]. 'They speak to you like s**t and lift you for nothing' 'Didn't bother me! Been right through the system'*

GROWING UP IN CARE

The majority of young people consulted had experienced being in the care system prior to their admission into secure care. Most struggled with being separated from family whilst being looked after and accommodated.

'Not very good, I don't see my Ma'

'Shocking cause I wanted to be with my family'

[Facilitator: Was there anything else that made it shocking?]. *'People tried to rule my life'*

A number of young people felt that their behaviour deteriorated once they were in the care system.

'It's not helped me one bit. I told them not to put me into this resi [residential] school with all Glasgow boys because I know it would make me worse. I only came into care for running away from my granny's but after that school I started stealing cars'

Young people also highlighted how they were placed by local authorities in numerous placements.

'It was alright but I got moved about quite a lot'.
[Facilitator: How many times did you move?]. *'Well, I've been in nine foster placements and one children's home and one residential school and one secure unit'*

Some young people were able to identify positive aspects of being in care.

'Okay'. [Facilitator: What's okay about it?]. 'You can go to swimming pools and gyms, just the same as outside only you don't have to pay for it'

'It's good'. [Facilitator: What's good about it?]. 'It's safe'

'It was like most things, it's different when you're first in, it's quite scary when you're first in when you're younger. But, as you get used to it, it becomes like a second house'

CHILDREN'S HEARINGS AND COURTS

'Don't listen to you, their boring and take too long'

The young people spoke negatively about their experiences of the Children's Hearings System where they felt they weren't listened to and described a power imbalance.

'I been in the system ... they don't give you a chance to have a say anything, they never listen to me. They listen to the social workers but they don't listen to other people'

'Panels - they don't listen enough to me only social work'

'Quite hard cause they don't know you that well and they make decisions'. [Facilitator: Did it make you feel uncomfortable?]. 'Aye'

*'Load of s**te - waste of time - they don't listen, they decide what happens'*

The young people who had experience of being in court found it intimidating.

'Court, I was in was scary because I wasn't used to it and everybody was shouting. My lawyer he helped me through it'

'You do the crime so expect the time'

'Don't think it is good - nothing to be proud of - if judge in bad mood because of something, could take it out on people'

Buttrum showed that *the courts are also required to recognise the enhanced potential for reintegration and rehabilitation, while protecting the juvenile's development and wellbeing (10)*

VIOLENCE AND BULLYING

'Yes - in my family - I hate my Dad now cos of it''

Most young people had experienced violence and bullying, particularly within the family home.

'Yes, all the time from a member of my family, it made me scared and I think it's why I'm here'

'A lot of violence in my family with my Dad battering my Mum, he hit me a couple of times, no much, I've always had that in my life. Even when my Mum split up from him the other guy he locked me in a cupboard when my Mum went to work then that finished when my Mum left him when she found out that then she went and had another boyfriend'

'He hit me with a belt and just always used to hit me so my Mum split up with him and now I've got my Dad. When I think about it, I want to forget but I can't. I want to get back at him. They've shown me a hard time so I want to show them a hard time'

West (1982) showed that having a parent with a criminal record increased the likelihood of involvement in delinquency amongst their sample of young men. (11)

Some young people were exposed to violence within the communities where they lived.

'I've been in gang fights with people from other areas, when I'm drunk I'm aggressive'

'Seen people fighting, getting stabbed full of the drink'

A number of the young people recalled how they were bullied at school which resulted in their using violence as a means of dealing with the situation.

'Yes, was bullied once but retaliated and sorted it out'

'Yes, in primary school, had a couple fights at school'

The young people were asked about their present situation in secure care - if bullying and violence was common practice.

'You get a slagging but that's normal'

'Well, no so much bullying but hitting people and that, if they don't make a name for themselves. I've done daft things and seen daft things'

'Yes, there is bullying here, I get bullied cos I'm cheeky'

The majority of young people felt there was a member of staff they could speak to if they were being bullied.

'Yes, anyone they all treat you the same'

'Yes, care staff'

The young people did believe that staff try to address bullying.

'Talk to people, speak to the bully and speak to the two of them'

'No make sure there is no bad patter going about and no horse play'

'Put people on programmes and keep those bullies away from you'

Standard 6 of the National Care Standards states that 'You feel safe and secure in all aspects of your stay in the care home, and in line with the care home policy, staff and children actively challenge and combat any form of bullying or discrimination from any child or member of staff. (12)

We asked young people about what would help reduce the amount of bullying within secure care.

'Stick up for yourself'

*'Put people in rooms; ground them, time-out in rooms.
Tell them off'*

The young people were more reactive in their ideas to the problem of bullying but did not highlight any preventative measures which they thought would help.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Lack of Choice

In reviewing their pathway into secure care young people placed considerable emphasis on lack of choice, peer pressure and adult responsibility. Most believed that they had had a choice not to offend but, due to where they lived and who were their friends, it was hard to say 'no'. They had nearly all received warnings from adults about getting into trouble.

'It just happened, it's just life, everybody fights, you canny be the odd one out, can you?'

Most young people felt that their parents had tried to keep them out of trouble.

'My parents tried to talk to me but I didn't listen. They tried to keep me in but I just jumped out the window'

Living in Circumstances of Poverty and Disadvantage

During our discussions with young people, it emerged that there was a common experience of living in areas characterised by drug abuse, high crime, poor housing, poverty and exposure to violence. Whilst young people acknowledged they had a choice in relation to being involved in anti-social behaviour, it was clear that many had to struggle to survive in difficult and disadvantaged situations.

'A lot of violence in my family with my Dad battering my Mum, he hit me a couple of times, I've always had that in my life'

Adequate Support Networks

When young people were asked to discuss their support networks, a high number of young people felt that they had been let down by adults at some time in their life.

'Maybe if I got more support from people. I went to social work to talk to them and ask for help but they told me to talk to my staff at the [residential] unit but I'd only been there one week or so'

The young people recognised it was better not to get involved in drugs, alcohol and offending but felt, with the lack of community activities, poor housing and peer pressure, it was too difficult to resist.

Drugs and Offending

Young people talked about the links between crime and drugs and how it was hard to break the cycle they were involved in.

'I was addicted to drink and drugs. No-one knows what they are doing when they are full of it!'

PROGRAMMES OF INTERVENTION

'When staff take an interest in you.....when they have got time for you.....when they encourage you..... they know what you like.....treat you as a person..... when they listen to you.....organise and join in with activities.....shares experiences with you.....respect you and talk nicely to you.....has a laugh with you.....is fair...can compromise with you and give you a choice.....reward you for something good.....they talk to you honestly.....do key work with you.....make your family and friends feel welcome.....they ask your opinion.....when you have something to work towards.....you know the consequences for stuff.....they trust you and they make you feel that they like you'

(Extracts from quotes from young people in secure care)

PROGRAMMES OF INTERVENTION

'Programs should have clear aims and content should be evidenced based, skills oriented, structured, multi modal and developmentally appropriate; delivery should be appropriately targeted, suit the learning styles of individual and adolescents, have integrity maintained and be of appropriate length and intensity'. (Hobbs & Hook, 2001)

Young people were asked to share their views and experiences regarding the programmes of intervention they were undertaking whilst in secure care. It was apparent from the young people's responses that most were taking part in programme work.

There were a variety of programmes available to young people in secure care in Scotland. We found secure units recognised that one programme did not necessarily 'fit all'.

Initial assessment and identifying the right programme for an individual young person was important so that the risk factors and problem behaviours specific to that individual could be addressed.

During the consultation period, 48 young people were asked to share their views regarding programmes of intervention in secure units.

Breakdown of the young people interviewed, age, gender, placing agent and reason young people gave for admission to secure care. Some young people gave more than one reason for their admission.

Profile of young people interviewed			Placing agent		Reason young people gave for admission		
Age	Boy	Girl	Children's Hearing	Court	Offending	Protection	Care
11	01		01			01	01
12							
13	03	04	04	03	04	03	
14	04	05	09		06	05	02
15	14	07	14	07	16	08	01
16	04	05	05	04	08	04	03
17	01		01		01		
Total	27	21	34	14	35	21	07

Below is the list of programmes young people said they were undertaking:

*'Keeping Safe
Conflict Resolution
Healthy Life Style
Cog[Cognitive] Skills*

*Hype
Junction
Anger Stuff
Drugs and Alcohol*

*Budgeting
Problem Solving
Anger Management
Relationships
Peer Pressure*

*Parenting
Offending behaviour
R and R2
Victim Empathy
Bullying'*

Young people residing in each secure establishment in Scotland have access to programmes of intervention. Young people need to know what programmes they are doing and the aims and purpose of these.

Accredited offending behaviour programmes designed to target criminogenic needs have been found to be effective when integrated into regimes as a whole. (13)

'It has been beneficial to me due to the programmes of intervention, cognitive skills, and violence reduction. It's gave me time to reflect on my behaviour'

Every effort should be made to reinforce the desired outcomes. The reward system should support this.

"We have a points system and every day after school we have a meeting and everybody knows what their points are and what they can do that night, sometimes it depends on what they have done the night before, like if you run away then you can't do some things for 24 hours but it is easy to work back up to the high level to get all your privileges"

However, it was concerning that almost one quarter of young people interviewed stated they were not undertaking any programme work. A small number gave as the reason that they had only recently been admitted. Some young people chose to give no response as to why they were not doing any programme work. Though, when prompted, some did talk about emotional literacy, anger management, relationship work they were doing but still didn't see any

link with day to day interactions. There was explanation of links between assessments and programme work. There was also no link made between programme work and the opportunity for learning to be reinforced in the unit. They were seen as totally different things. Young people were asked if attendance was mandatory or voluntary and what were the consequences of non-attendance. Most said nothing would happen if they did not attend. Others stated:

'The program is abandoned'
'You get punted'
'Head nipped for not sticking to agreement'
'Wreck [recreation] ban'
'Nothing, they would come back another time'
'Get punted'
'They make a new appointment'
'Put in your room'

A few young people felt they just went 'through the motions' of participating in programme work because they believed they had to in order to leave secure care.

'It does not help at all, people just agree with them and they take it all in. They do that just so they can get out. I believe because we are locked up and I think everyone else would agree they are afraid to open up in case they get kept in longer. That should not happen.'

Some young people were able to recognise the personal benefits of the programme work.

'Programmes do help, makes you think but when you get home it's the way it is'

'If I don't go I don't get the help'

A few young people were very sceptical regarding the effectiveness of programmes of intervention. They felt

that if they were to return to the same community setting they lived in prior to admission, it would be extremely difficult for them to change their behaviour.

'Nothing can help they don't know what it's like. You would have to change the whole of Glasgow, like all my pals and that'

EFFECTIVE PRACTICE IN ADDRESSING OFFENDING

Effective practice in secure accommodation can be broadly grouped into four categories (pro social modelling, education, assessments and programmes), although they work interchangeably. These categories can highlight what should happen to ensure young people are being positively influenced to change their offending behaviour and to target and meet the needs that brought about admission to secure care.

During interviews young people have clearly been able to identify what happens when they are encouraged to change their risk taking and offending behaviour. Much of this related to their daily experiences and interactions and their perceptions about how they are cared for and how they feel they should be cared for.

'The way they treat you, especially the way they talk to you, but no sarcastic. We should be treated the way staff are treated - they expect to be treated like royalty but sometimes they don't treat us the same. See, like.. they moan at us when we treat them wrong and they go on about how they are no here to be treated wrong - neither are we. There are some staff who are sarcastic but lots who do treat you nicely'

'When they speak to me nice I treat them nicer too. They are here to care for us and help and support us... That's their job'

There is evidence that secure units have the opportunity to use pro social modelling and positive reinforcement to make a contribution to behavioural change on a daily basis. Pro-social modelling is effective when appropriate behaviour (eg punctuality, taking responsibility, thinking of others and understanding their point of view etc) is tangibly rewarded in a consistent manner.

Adults model this behaviour (or others) in their everyday interactions with young people. From the language they use and how they convey respect (or not), to how they go about routines such as getting young people up and settling them at night, conveys a level of acceptable behaviour and ways of dealing with things.

'They will find things for you to do when you are bored and not let us all just sit about and get hyper and end up fighting and moaning all the time'

'Like the three that are on.... they trust us ... they trust us 150% and they give us respect and we give them respect and that's the way we want to be treated and they know that so they give us respect'

Young people stated that these basic ways of communicating respect and valuing young people help them feel safe and need to be in place before any further work such as education and programmes can be successful.

We spoke to young people about education, assessments and programme work. The general consensus was education was better than they had received in mainstream settings. The same qualities for staff still applied. A very small number of young people witnessed an overlap between education and care staff: this was linked to their common ability to understand the overall behaviour management system, which also had individual targets. Only three out of the 25 young people knew anything about assessments.

TRACKING AND MONITORING

Throughout the consultation, young people were offered the opportunity of being involved in other consultations by taking part in an exercise which would 'track' them on discharge to evaluate the effectiveness of the programme work they undertook in secure care. As a follow-on piece of work, the BOSS project plans to interview participants three months and again six months from discharge, with the purpose of evaluating outcomes for young people and gaining their views about programme content, impact and value.

Hobbs & Hook (2001) state that monitoring and evaluation should be conducted to establish the effectiveness of the program and identify features that are less effective so that they can be addressed in order for the intervention to be improved and replicated. (14)

CARE PLANS

Young people were asked a series of questions regarding their care plans. One asked what was a care plan and another stated that she didn't have one as she had just been admitted. Of the 48 young people consulted, seven did not have a care plan. This number increased substantially when young people were asked if they had seen their care plan.

Standard Four of the National Care Standards, Care Homes for Children and Young People, states: *'staff in the care home will help you to understand your Care Plan or personal plan and take part in reviewing it'. (15)*

The National Standards for Scotland's Youth Justice Services, Objective Five states that: *'an action plan detailing the objectives for the care of the young person*

while in secure, including educational provision and a health assessment, should be completed by secure staff, within ten days of their entry into the unit'. (16)

It is encouraging that nine young people had been given a copy of their care plan and it is hoped that, after service providers read this report, this number will increase.

Breakdown of young people's views about care plans.

Secure establishment	Have you got a care plan?		Have you seen it?		Have you got a copy?	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
The Elms	02	0	02	0	0	02
St Katherine's	05	01	03	03	0	06
Howdenhall	03	01	03	01	02	02
Rossie	12	0	07	05	0	12
St Mary's	12	05	09	08	07	10
Kerelaw	07	0	06	01	0	07
Total	41	07	30	18	09	39

Audit Scotland also found in the follow up study in 2003 to 'Dealing with Offending Young People' that 37% of children's files did not have a recognisable care plan. Care plans are required by statute, and action plans are a national standard.

Who Cares? Scotland endorses Audit Scotland's statement that: 'Councils should implement the statutory requirement to provide care plans for all children on supervision, review these at specified intervals, and maintain easily accessible records of care plan'. (17)

CONTACT WITH AND SUPPORT FROM STAFF

Young people discussed the roles that staff play and the contact they have with staff teams. There was an expectation that different personalities employ different methods and sometimes rules change with different shifts. To the young people consulted this was acceptable.

It appeared that the key component to boundary-setting lay in staff consistently giving an explanation to a young person for their decision-making (when it differed to 'what's normally done'), shaping it in unit rules and, when possible, individual targets. When this happened, it clearly had an impact on young people's expectations, and how they saw staff as having a role in influencing short and long-term cognitive and behavioural changes.

'I like all the staff and, aye, you do hate them at times because you think they are being too strict on you, but they are no - it's all about my behaviour. That's explained when they take you aside and talk to you and, when they talk about your targets for about half an hour, you know what the consequences will be. But, there are staff that stick to the rules, its rules, rules, rules and it's no one rule out of place. But there is staff that... well, we have got stupid rules in here, like you are not allowed to bring make-up down to the unit in case it goes missing or anything and you get staff that say no that's not allowed and go on and on, but there are staff that say - just go and put that in your room, we'll kid on I didn't see that'

[Facilitator: What do you prefer?].

'Both, well, I don't know. Well, if all the staff were slack then I don't think I would have come this far. I've totally changed. If you had met me a year ago, you wouldn't know me. I've really changed because of being in here - it's helped me and that's because of the staff and how they explain things like rules and consequences. When I go out now I can think about stuff that I would do with my pals but, now I know the consequences, it helps me not to do it, sometimes, because it is hard, but least I have got the choice now'

Another young person demonstrated that rule-changing did create difficulties, but these could be worked through if communicated and explained properly, and included listening to the young person's viewpoint.

'The rules change all the time. Different staff and different rules and when they are not clear...you're confused, but sometimes when you can compromise and they listen to your point of view and you can get a choice and a say, then it helps you understand them too and then you don't get all moany at them'

Even in times of crisis young people knew what they expected from staff but, more importantly, they again said they preferred when staff appreciated their opinion in these situations.

'Some people understand you better than others cause they listen to you and they know what helps you when you are angry and annoyed. They are honest and tell you like it is. They ask me what's helpful and what I prefer. When they do this I feel liked'

We asked the young people if they spent time on a one to one basis with staff to build a relationship, look at their behaviour and provide support.

"I've been getting trampoline lessons cause Sarah, the PE teacher, asked me what I liked and done before and, before, I could only straddle and jump about but now I can do forward flips and everything"

Ten young people said they had no one to one time with staff. Two chose not to answer. 36 young people said they did have time alone with staff but most felt it was not enough. One young person wrote:

'Staff only talk to you when you were sent upstairs'

We know from the views of young people in Who Cares? Scotland's Report 'Lets Face It' that support from staff is essential if their placement was to be a positive one. This goes a long way to building trusting relationships and again influencing risk taking and offending behaviour.

Young people were asked which specialist staff they were also working with and if they felt this contact helped them to address their emotional, behavioural and social problems. Young people reported they were working with:

<i>'Drug workers'</i>	<i>'Rep project'</i>
<i>'Programme workers'</i>	<i>'Junction'</i>
<i>'Psychologists'</i>	<i>'Includem worker'</i>
<i>'Rushes programme worker'</i>	<i>'LAC Nurse'</i>

However, there were ten young people who said they had no access to any specialist staff and the only people they had contact with were the care staff in the secure unit. Young people who did have additional supports felt it helped them to address their behaviour but some felt that it was difficult to apply what they had learned when they went on leave.

'It was all fine and well talking to staff but when you're on leave with your pals it's hard'

'It's the way it is. It's what people do. You mean what you say when talking to staff, then you leave and get mad with it, everyone does'

Some reported being wary about discussing their problems with specialist staff because they felt they did not really understand what it was like for them being a young person putting themselves or others at risk.

Young people felt they had little understanding of what it was like to be *'a teenager today'*.

'Some people understand, those posh people that tell you what you should do, they don't know what it's like'

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Complexity of Functions and Roles

Secure units have a complex role where staff are expected to fulfil a number of functions. There is a need for control where young people can experience clear boundaries and feel secure, for supportive relationships with staff, for consistency and stability, for safety (both in relation to self-harm and danger to the public) and for assessment to understand the presenting behaviours and plan for the future.

In addition, young people need to have the opportunity to undertake programme work which will encourage them to address the problems which brought them into secure care and to use a wide range of interventions on their return to their communities.

Varied Programme Delivery

Programmes of intervention were delivered in a variety of ways across the secure units in Scotland. Some had dedicated programme teams and others used members of care staff, both trained and untrained. Each unit had access to outside professionals who were also involved in addressing the presenting behaviours of young people.

It was therefore a matter of concern that, when we asked young people if they were undertaking any programmes work in secure care, although 38 said they were and were able to name the programmes, ten young people said they were not undertaking *any* programmes work.

Young People's Involvement in Care Planning

Understanding and involvement varied. It is imperative that each young person in secure care has a care plan, is fully involved in the process and is given a copy. It was a recommendation in the Learning with Care Inspection Report published in 2001 that '*local authorities should implement quality assurance procedures to ensure that statutory requirements are met effectively. Local authorities should ensure that all looked after children have care plans and placement agreements as specified in the legislation. (3.6-3.8, 9.18). (18)*

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Several themes emerged from the consultation.

More Opportunities and Choice

There was an expressed need for more opportunities and choice within local communities. Young people talked about wanting to be more involved in their community through youth clubs and sports. They felt that their antisocial behaviour might be reduced if there were more opportunities for youth participation.

Contact with Professional Adults

Young people wanted quality contact with adult professional. Young people consulted had social workers but felt this contact could be unsatisfactory and sporadic due to lack of visits from social workers.

The Scottish Executive should consider setting standards for the frequency of contact with children on supervision.

Young people also felt that, in secure care, staff should allocate more time to one to one work with young people. Young people really appreciated individual time with care staff as they felt it was supportive and the first step in developing a trusting relationship.

Difficulties with Family Contact

Young people talked a lot about family. Some spoke of close support from family members but many discussed violence, poverty and absent parents. Young people felt it was difficult when in secure care to maintain contact as

frequently as they would like because of distance and financial problems.

Contact has been an issue for young people in every consultation carried out by the BOSS project. A subsequent consultation has been completed which looked solely at this issue and the report summarising the findings will be available shortly.

Positives of Education in Secure Care

Young people spoke about their experience in mainstream education and, in some cases, how they felt stigmatised because they were living in a care setting. They all felt class sizes were too big and it was easier to truant than ask for help. Positively, young people felt they were receiving an education when in secure care because

teachers understood their problems and class sizes were smaller.

Decent Life Chances

Young people stated they wanted decent lives and decent futures for themselves - lives that did not involve crime or drugs. However, they felt that if they were to return to their communities, they did not hold out much hope of realising such aspirations. They hoped that their views, as expressed in the consultation, would be heard and their ideas for change taken seriously so that, on leaving secure care, they had a chance of succeeding when they returned home to reintegrate into their communities.

'I don't like the doors being locked especially as I've not broke the law or done anything wrong'

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Who Cares? Scotland National Office
5 Oswald Street, Glasgow G1 4QR
Tel: 0141 226 4441 Fax: 0141 226 4445
Website: whocaresscotland.org
E-mail: enquiries@whocaresscotland.org
Scottish Charity no SC026076

Dundee Office:
11 Castle Street, Dundee DD1 3AA
Tel: 01382 202888 Fax: 01382 202889

Edinburgh Office:
40 Shandwick Place, Edinburgh EH2 4RT
Tel: 0131 226 7403 Fax: 0131 226 3778 (BAAF Office)

Kilmarnock Office:
28-30 Grange Street, Kilmarnock KA1 2DD
Tel: 01563 573015
Fax: 01563 573122
