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Multi-agency Children and Young People's Partnership Panel supporting youth crime reduction work in Hackney: London Borough of Hackney

Area: Hackney

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Brief description

This case study focuses on how the Children and Young People's Partnership Panel (CYPP Panel) in Hackney is particularly successful in providing multi-agency collaboration for cases where young people are identified with peripheral gang involvement or are showing early signs of sexual exploitation.

Overview – the provider's message



'Cases reviewed at the CYPP Panel involve young people at risk (of for example gang-related activity or sexual exploitation), and in these cases situations are often fluid with circumstances changing quickly. The multi-agency CYPP Panel ensures that relevant information can be shared efficiently and that the appropriate threshold of support can be offered to these cases.'

***Florence Kroll, Assistant Director,
Young Hackney***

The good practice in detail

Background

The Children and Young People’s Partnership Panel brings together senior professionals across statutory and voluntary agencies to coordinate the delivery of services in complex and difficult cases involving children and young people aged 6 to19 years, where children and families require coordinated packages of support, but are below the threshold for children’s social care services.

The panel is designed to:

- prioritise the needs of the child within a multi-agency, systemic discussion and subsequent response
- examine the circumstances of the child or young person; their presenting difficulties; the previous and current interventions and the success or otherwise of these interventions
- problem-solve possible solutions taking into account safeguarding issues and the young person’s emotional health and well-being
- refer to the most appropriate service(s) with their commitment that integrated work will be undertaken
- determine which agency will take the lead in supporting the young person and be responsible for appointing the lead professional who will broker appropriate services as needed and form the team alongside the family
- review the plan and actions to determine effectiveness and where appropriate, suggest alternative strategies
- ensure complex cases maintain a high profile and deliver a response firmly rooted in the evidence base relevant to each individual child’s experience
- identify any overlaps and gaps in services.

Over the last three years, youth crime in Hackney has reduced significantly; the oversight and resource allocation offered by the CYPP Panel are important contributors to this reduction.

London Borough of Hackney: first time entrants to youth justice system	
2008-09	358
2009-10	244
2010-11	176
2011-12	172

The CYPP Panel process

In Hackney, all youth offending service responsibilities and duties detailed under the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act and subsequent relevant legislation are held by Young Hackney. The service also provides a dynamic and responsive offer that works to support young people at risk of crime, young people who need additional support with a wide range of issues, or to overcome barriers or access opportunities. The CYPP Panel has a crucial role in allocating support for these non-statutory cases. The CYPP Panel has been operational in its current format since April 2010 and is chaired by the local authority Assistant Director for Young Hackney. The weekly panel considers the most complex cases where children and their

families require coordinated support to prevent them from reaching statutory thresholds for social care or youth justice intervention. Senior professionals representing (but not limited to) children’s social care, police, housing, Hackney Learning Trust, health, and child and adolescent mental health services sit on the panel and consider cases presented to them ensuring that an appropriate package of support is offered to the family.

Any agency can refer a case to the Panel, as well as internal staff within children’s social care services and Young Hackney. Following a referral the Partnership Triage unit conduct background checks and researches information on children and young people from a range of sources to determine which agencies (if any) are already involved. Each week designated

‘The importance of us developing a culture that effectively supports the process is probably the most important challenge that we have taken away.’
Representative, neighbouring local authority

staff from the Partnership Triage unit meet with the Assistant Director of Young Hackney for a half hour pre-panel briefing, to offer insight following these multi-agency checks.

At each panel meeting, a representative from the referring agency is in attendance to offer insight on each new case, and advocate on behalf of the children and family where possible.

To maintain oversight and encourage responsibility and accountability for action, cases that have been allocated through the panel are reviewed at regular intervals to discuss early engagement, plans for support and any evidence of progress. Cases will return to the panel until the Assistant Director feels sufficient demonstrable improvements have been made; cases can be recalled at any time for further oversight. Cases also need to be returned to the panel before closing due to non-engagement.

Hackney is a densely populated inner city borough within London and violent and gang related crime has a high profile. The last six years have seen significant reductions in crime levels. However, the activities of the few are disproportionately represented. As part of the wide package of support offered to young people displaying signs of sexual exploitation or gang involvement, Young Hackney commissions specialist provision. Firstly, the Integrated Gangs Intervention Project (IGIP), a co-located multi-agency team, instrumental in reducing gun and knife crime in the borough; secondly, NIA (formerly Hackney Women’s Aid) and Safer London Foundation, who work with young women affiliated with gangs who are at risk of sexual exploitation and violence.

Referrals to the agencies NIA, Safer London Foundation and IGIP are allocated through the CYPP Panel to ensure that specialist provision is not flooded with cases where early intervention would be more appropriate. Staff from the three projects attend the panel and in cases where a referral is not suitable, the expertise from these professionals can be effectively shared and recorded.

The CYPP Panel has been instrumental in identifying appropriate support for young people early and diverting them from risky behavior which would potentially lead to criminal activity.

‘It seems a very efficient way of allocating cases. Everyone gets to hear concerns from the agency.’

Feedback

An internal survey was carried out in 2012 in order to gain feedback from referring agencies to the CYPP Panel. Results were encouraging: 85% of survey respondents agreed that the CYPP Panel supports closer agency working and information sharing across agencies and 70% felt that the panel reduced duplication of work.

Many respondents credited the overall style and processes of the panel as highly efficient.

In addition to the survey, representatives from a neighbouring local authority have offered feedback following a visit to the CYPP Panel:

'Alongside the thorough and effective "process" support, we were very impressed by the leadership of the meeting, the quality of discussions (and brevity!), the respectful challenging and support of colleagues in the room, and the focus always on ensuring the best outcomes for the children and young people under consideration. The importance of us developing a culture that effectively supports the process is probably the most important challenge that we have taken away.'

Offering support to young people at risk of gang involvement/sexual exploitation

Case study 'O':

This case was referred to children's social care (CSC) services by Homerton University Hospital following O's presentation at A&E with knife wounds to the forehead and hand. He claimed this had happened at a bus stop by an unknown man. The case was investigated by the CSC First Response Team and a decision was made for no further action as there were no child protection concerns. Such cases in Hackney are sent to the Partnership Triage unit to research and consider an alternative referral route where appropriate. Partnership Triage then received a police notification report for the case which detailed that O had been attacked by a neighbour in response to his anti-social behaviour on their estate. The notification report noted that this attack was 'frenzied' and the suspect had been arrested and charged as there was CCTV evidence.

Partnership Triage also discovered that O had an extensive offending history, including seven arrests within one year and four convictions. They also noticed regular temporary exclusions from school. As a result of Partnership Triage investigation, O's case was taken to the CYPP Panel and after liaison with Integrated Gangs Intervention Project, who in turn had more information about O, the case was allocated to Young Hackney's gang unit for intensive support and surveillance. Since this allocation, O has not offended and continues to be monitored and supported.

Over the two-year period, the CYPP Panel has been operational the number of new referrals has increased year on year. Meanwhile, the length of time cases stay 'open' to the CYPP Panel has decreased, indicating that the allocation of resources is accurate and oversight

offered by the Chair and team is effective in supporting the reduction of risk for young people.

	Total new referrals to CYPP Panel	Average weeks a case stays open to CYPP Panel
June 2010	21	11
June 2011	26	7
June 2012	35	3

As highlighted in the 2012 survey:

- “ Cases can be referred quickly; likewise once at panel, advice/support is given efficiently ”

Provider background



The London Borough of **Hackney** is situated in the east of inner city London. Approximately 64,000 children and young people under the age of 20 years live in **Hackney**, representing 28% of the total population.

Over 70% of children and young people aged less than 20 years belong to minority ethnic backgrounds. Hackney is richly diverse with significant numbers of Asian, Black African, Black Caribbean, Black British, Turkish, Kurdish and

Charedi Jewish children. Over 180 languages are spoken in the borough.

Hackney is ranked the second most deprived area in England and it is estimated that 44% of children in Hackney are living in poverty. This is the third highest rate in London.

In 2012, Hackney was one of London's six host Olympic and Paralympic boroughs; one third of the Olympic Park is in Hackney.

Are you thinking of putting these ideas into practice; or already doing something similar that could help other providers; or just interested? We'd welcome your views and ideas. Get in touch [here](#).

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