



Assessing the needs of sentenced children in the Youth Justice System Technical Note

2019/20

England and Wales

Introduction

This document provides background information on the experimental statistics presented in the publication 'Assessing the needs of sentenced children in the Youth Justice System' and is intended to be used as a guide to interpretation, methodology and publication definitions.

Key areas covered within this document are:

- 1) High-level overview of AssetPlus.
- 2) AssetPlus data fields used in the release their definition, strengths and limitations.
- 3) Calculations underlying the accompanying tables.
- 4) Glossary of main terms.
- 5) The Youth Justice Board's plans for future publications from AssetPlus data.

AssetPlus – an overview

AssetPlus is an assessment and planning interventions framework developed by the Youth Justice Board (YJB) to replace Asset and its associated tools. AssetPlus was designed to provide a holistic endto-end assessment and intervention plan, allowing one record to follow a child throughout their time in the Youth Justice System.

AssetPlus focuses on professional judgement of practitioners and enables the development of betterfocused intervention plans to improve outcomes for children. The information records practitioner assessments through multi-staged interaction with children and the underlying data provide a systematic descriptive resource.

As AssetPlus is an operational assessment tool, the data is not recorded for the specific purpose of statistical or internal performance reporting. Caution should therefore be exercised when interpreting figures from the data, given the type of data and the purpose for which it is collected.

AssetPlus fields used in 'Assessing the needs of sentenced children in the Youth Justice System'

The Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB) obtains a subset of AssetPlus data which is captured within the Case Management Systems used by Youth Offending Teams (YOTs).

The fields in this publication focus on the high-level Concerns, Care Status, Safety and Wellbeing, Risk of Serious Harm to children and Desistance Factor categories. YOT practitioners are able to record significantly more detailed information within assessments either in further explorative fields or free text which are not available to the YJB and therefore not presented in this publication.

Strengths and limitations

These experimental statistics represent high-level information and show areas of particular concern with children over the year ending March 2020. Within the release data are available different sentence types and demographics as well as across the different concerns. These differences can also be compared for England and Wales.

The data underlying this release does not include the more specific, low-level details underlying the concerns. For example, with the substance misuse concern, it is not possible to tell whether the concern relates to tobacco use or class A drugs etc. Caution should therefore be taken to avoid overinterpreting the validity of the figures appearing in the accompanying tables.

Calculations used in the publication

This data is from the assessment of a child that is closest to the date of their sentencing outcome and this captures only those who had an assessment completed. Within the publication, statements of the form 'X% of children assessed' refers to those who were assessed using AssetPlus within 30 days either side of their sentencing date.

This publication focusses on children assessed who had an outcome between 1st April 2019 and 31st March 2020. Because a single outcome can have multiple stages of an assessment attached to it, this release focusses on the closest assessment up to 30 days before or after the outcome. A small proportion of the assessment dates will be as early as 2nd March 2019 and as late as 30th April 2020. Not all sentences had an assessment within this 30-day period and therefore have not been included.

Practice around when AssetPlus assessments are carried out varies across different YOTs. Some teams carry out assessments on all outcomes including youth cautions and court sentences without YOT intervention, while others only carry out assessments on sentenced outcomes with YOT intervention. As such, the data in this publication focuses on assessments linked to Referral Orders, Reparation Orders, Youth Rehabilitation Orders and custodial sentences. These data are presented by sentence type, ethnicity, gender and age at outcome.

AssetPlus is a flexible, practitioner assessment and planning tool designed to facilitate the best outcomes for children who come into contact with YOTs and YOT practitioners. There is flexibility within the tool to allow practitioners to systematically assess children across multiple stages given operational and situational differences between YOTs.

Concerns

Concern types refer to factors that practitioners judge to be affecting the child. The types of concerns cover their wellbeing (e.g. Mental Health, Physical Health and Safety and Wellbeing), how they relate to other people (e.g. Significant Relationships and Relations to Others), social factors and issues at home (e.g. Accommodation, Local Issues, Learning & Education, Training and Employment, Parenting or Family Behaviour) or their own behaviours (Substance Misuse, Offence Justification or Attitudes to Offending).

The available values in the Concerns data are 'Yes', 'No' and 'Yet to Clarify'. Data on some variables in some assessments has not been completed and show as Withheld or Blanks. The data are presented as the number of 'Yes' values as a proportion of the total assessments.

The number and proportion these comprise are available in the accompanying Supplementary Tables for each concern.

Care Status

The factors around care status look at the child's current and previous care history (e.g. whether they are subject to a care order or child protection plan, whether they have siblings in care or are remanded to local authority accommodation or youth detention accommodation).

With the exception of Eligible Child where the available values are 'Yes', 'No' and 'Yet to Clarify', the available values for the variables in the Care Status data are 'Currently', 'Previously', 'Never' and 'Yet to Clarify'. Data on some variables in some assessments has not been completed and show as blanks or Withheld.

The data are presented as the number of 'Currently' values as a proportion of the total assessments and the number of 'Yes' values as a proportion of the total assessments for the Eligible Child variable.

The number and proportion these comprise are available in the accompanying Supplementary Tables for each Care Status type.

Safety & Wellbeing and Risk of Serious Harm

The practitioner assessed ratings for Risk of Serious Harm look at the imminence and likelihood of death or serious personal injury whether physical or psychological and the ratings for Safety and Wellbeing look at the risk that a child's safety and well-being is now or in the future potentially compromised through his or her own behaviour, personal circumstances or because of the acts or omissions of others.

These concerns and ratings are based on practitioners' judgements and therefore are an indirect measure of children's needs.

Factors For and Against Desistance Categories

The AssetPlus desistance table is designed to support focus within intervention planning on addressing the child's needs and behaviours. Factors against desistance look at issues that may be a barrier to stop a child offending while factors for desistance look at issues which may play a positive role in stopping a child offending. These factors are unique to each child but fit into the broad categories presented in the publication. These are rated based on how much the practitioner assesses the factor plays a role in desistance.

AssetPlus fields in 'Assessing the needs of sentenced children in the Youth Justice System' publication by available value

Concerns

Field	Available value	Field	Available value
Accommodation	Yes No Yet to Clarify	Parenting	Yes No Yet to Clarify
Care History	Yes No Yet to Clarify	Physical Health	Yes No Yet to Clarify
Family Behaviour	Yes No Yet to Clarify	Relations to Others	Yes No Yet to Clarify
Learning and ETE	Yes No Yet to Clarify	Risk to Others	Yes No Yet to Clarify
Lifestyle	Yes No Yet to Clarify	Safety and Wellbeing	Yes No Yet to Clarify
Local Issues	Yes No Yet to Clarify	Significant Relationships	Yes No Yet to Clarify
Mental Health	Yes No Yet to Clarify	Speech, Language and Communication	Yes No Yet to Clarify
Offence Justification	Yes No Yet to Clarify	Substance Misuse	Yes No Yet to Clarify
Offences Attitudes	Yes No Yet to Clarify	YP as Parent	Yes No Yet to Clarify
Other Behaviour	Yes No Yet to Clarify		

Care History

Field	Available value	Field	Available value
Eligible Child	Yes No Yet to Clarify	Relevant child	Currently Previously Never Yet to Clarify
Child in need	Currently Previously Never Yet to Clarify	Remand to LAA	Currently Previously Never Yet to Clarify
Child protection plan	Currently Previously Never Yet to Clarify	Remand to YDA	Currently Previously Never Yet to Clarify
Care order	Currently Previously Never Yet to Clarify	Siblings in care	Currently Previously Never Yet to Clarify

Safety & Wellbeing and Risk of Serious Harm

Field	Available value	Field	Available value
Safety and Wellbeing Rating	Low Medium High Very High	Risk of Serious Harm Rating	Low Medium High Very High

Categories for Factors for and Against Desistance

Field	Available value	Field	Available value
Engagement Participation	Strong	Physical Health Development	Strong
	Moderate		Moderate
	Potential		Potential
	Weak		Weak
	Strong	Self Identity	Strong
Family and Wider Networks	Moderate		Moderate
Fairing and whiter Networks	Potential	Sen identity	Potential
	Weak		Weak
	Strong		Strong
Learning, Education, Training	Moderate	Resilience Goals	Moderate
and Employment	Potential	Resilience Goals	Potential
	Weak		Weak
	Strong		Strong
Living Arrangements, Housing	Moderate	C. halance Billion	Moderate
and Financial Considerations	Potential	Substance Misuse	Potential
	Weak		Weak
	Strong		Strong
	Moderate	Attitudes Offending Behaviours	Moderate
Parenting Care Supervision	Potential		Potential
	Weak		Weak
-	Strong	How the Young Person Relates to Others	Strong
	Moderate		Moderate
Thinking Behaviour	Potential		Potential
	Weak		Weak
	Strong		Strong
	Moderate	Speech, Language, Communication and Neuro Disability	Moderate
Care History	Potential		Potential
	Weak		Weak
	Strong		Strong
Emotional Development and	Moderate		Moderate
Mental Health	Potential	Social Community Neighbourhood	Potential
	Weak		Weak
Features of Lifestyle	Strong		Strong
	Moderate	YP as Parent	Moderate
	Potential		Potential
	Weak		Weak

Glossary

Concern types

	Concerns about the child's current
Accommodation	accommodation situation - This is pre-
	populated and locked as it is taken from
	information within the full Asset Plus.
Care History	Concerns around the child's care history.
	Concerns about behaviours/situations within
Family Behaviour	the family which may impact on the child's
	safety and wellbeing.
Learning and ETE	Concerns related to the child's education,
	training or employment.
Lifestyle	Concerns about how the child spends his/her
Lifestyle	time and/or other addictive behaviours.
	Concerns about the child being adversely
Local Issues	affected by specific local tensions, pressures
	or issues.
Mental Health	Concerns about the child's mental health.
	Concerns about the way that the child has
Offence Justification	tried to justify his/her offending.
	Concerns around the child's broader attitudes
	about his/her offending, including their
	attitude toward the victim(s); and how he/she
Attitudes to Offending	feels about their actions, proud, ashamed etc.
	The parental attitude to their child's
	behaviour should also be considered.
Other Behaviour	Other behaviours of particular concern
	Concerns about the ability of the
Parenting	parents/carers to care for and supervise the
	child appropriately.
	Concerns around the child's physical health for
	example having a diagnosed physical health
	condition, experiencing current physical
Physical Health	health symptoms, currently taking prescribed
	medication for a physical illness, health being
	put at risk through his/her own behaviour?
Relations to Others	Concerns around significant problems in the
	way the child relates to others.
Risk to Others	Concerns around the child's risk to others.
	Concerns about behaviours/situations within
Safety and Wellbeing	the family which may impact on the child's
	safety and wellbeing.
Significant Relationships	Concerns about the child's significant
	relationships.
Speech, Language and Communication	Concerns around the child's speech, language
	and communication.
Substance Misuse	Concern's around the child's use of alcohol,
	tobacco or drugs.
	Child's parental status - This is a drop down
YP as Parent	box, which will generate additional questions
	depending on the practitioner's answer.
	depending on the practitioner's answer.

Care Status

	A Child in Need is defined as a child who is
	unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable
Child in need	level of health or development, or whose
	health and development is likely to be
	significantly or further impaired, without the
	provision of services.
	A child protection plan is a plan drawn up by
	the local authority. It sets out how the child
Child protection plan	can be kept safe, how things can be made
	better for the family and what support they
	will need.
	An eligible child is one aged 16 or 17, who has
	been looked after by a local authority for a
	period (prescribed under the regulations as 13
Eligible child	weeks), or periods amounting in all to that
	period, which began after he/she reached 14
	years of age and ended after he/she reached
	the age of 16. Only applies to England.
	Is the child subject to a care order (s.31
Care order	Children Act 1989) or has the child been
	subject to a care order (s.31 Children Act
	1989) previously?
	A relevant child is a child who is not being
	looked after by any local authority, but was,
Relevant child	before last ceasing to be looked after, an
	eligible child, and is aged 16 or 17. Only
	applies to England.
	Is the child remanded to Local Authority
Remand to LAA	accommodation or has the child been
	remanded to Local Authority accommodation
	previously?
	Is the child remanded to youth detention
Remand to YDA	accommodation or has the child been
	remanded to youth detention accommodation
	previously?
Siblings in care	Any Children's Services involvement with the
	child's siblings.

Risk of Serious Harm and Safety and Wellbeing

	Risk of Serious Harm is the imminence and
Risk of Serious Harm	likelihood of death or serious personal injury
Risk of Serious Harm	whether physical or psychological. This is
	rated as Low, Medium, High and Very High.
	Safety and Wellbeing is defined as the risk
	that a young person's safety and well-being is
	now or in the future potentially compromised
Safety and Wellbeing	through his or her own behaviour, personal
	circumstances or because of the acts or
	omissions of others. This is rated as Low,
	Medium, High and Very High.

Categories for Factors For and Against Desistance

Engagement Participation	Factors around whether the child is engaging
	with the YOT. If so is this a factor for desistance
	and if not it is this a factor against desistance?
Family and Wider Networks	Factors around whether the child's family or
	peers are having a negative or positive
	influence on them
Learning, Education, Training and Employment	Factors around learning, education, training,
	education and employment of the child
Living Arrangements, Housing and Financial	Factors around the child's living arrangements
Considerations	and financial situation
Parenting Care Supervision	Factors around the child's parents or carers
Thinking Behaviour	Factors around whether thinking behaviour
	promote desistance or contribute to offending
Care History	Factors around the care history of the child
Emotional Development and Mental Health	Factors around the emotional development and
·	mental health of the child
Features of Lifestyle	Factors around features of lifestyle such as
	addiction, gambling and misuse of technology
Physical Health Development	Features around the child's physical health
	development
Self Identity	Factors around whether the child has a pro
	social identity or pro offending identity
Resilience Goals	Factors around the resilience of the child
Substance Misuse	Factors around whether substance misuse
Attitudes Offending Behaviours	Factors around whether the child's attitude to
	offending and other behaviours will promote
	desistance or contribute to further offending
How Young Person Relates to Others	Factors around the way the child relates to
	others
Speech, Language, Communication, Neuro	Factors around speech, language,
Disability	communication and neuro disability
Social Community Neighbourhood	Factors around the child's wider community
	and neighbourhood
Young Person as Parent	Factors affecting the child if they're a parent

Future publication of AssetPlus data

The YJB Information and Analysis Team plan to include AssetPlus data in the next Youth Justice Statistics publication in January 2022.

Given user feedback, the YJB information and Analysis Team may also consider publishing further experimental AssetPlus statistics.