



Youth Justice Agency

An Ghníomhaireacht um Cheartas i leith an Aosa Óig

Agentrie fur Young-Yins Fang'It wi tha Laa

A GUIDE TO THE YOUTH JUSTICE AGENCY

**MAKING COMMUNITIES SAFER BY HELPING
CHILDREN TO STOP OFFENDING**

What is the Youth Justice Agency?



The Youth Justice Agency works with children and young people aged 10 and up to their 18th birthday, who have offended or are at serious risk of offending.

The Agency has a 'Children First' approach to our work with children and young people.

Our services to young people and families are delivered:

Within the community via area teams throughout Northern Ireland.

Within Woodlands Juvenile Justice Centre to those remanded or sentenced to custody.

We deliver a range of services, often in partnership with others, to:



Address the needs of children and young people to help them tackle their offending behaviours.

Divert children and young people from crime.

Support children and young people to make amends for the harm caused by their behaviour and actions.

Assist children and young people's integration into the community.



Meet the needs of the victims of crime.

What do we do?

We are responsible for the supervision of:

- Youth Conference Orders and Plans
- Attendance Centre Orders
- Community Responsibility Orders
- Reparation Orders
- Juvenile Justice Centre Orders (in partnership with the Probation Board for Northern Ireland)

We provide a secure environment for those young people remanded or sentenced to custody in Woodlands Juvenile Justice Centre. This includes supervision and support both during and after their period of detention.

We also..

Deliver Earlier Stage Diversion (ESD) services to children and the families of children involved in the early stages of minor offending in order to divert them from the formal justice system.

We identify children through Multi-Agency Children's Diversion Forums (CDFs), which can then coordinate the delivery of appropriate services to meet their needs and prevent further offending. We deliver a number of direct referral schemes from the police, including the Community Resolution Notice (CRN), Sexting and Vaping Referral Schemes, which provide one-off awareness raising sessions to children and their parents/carers.

Provide an Enhanced Case Management Programme, for those young people whose needs are complex and who might seriously or persistently offend.

Provide Bail Information, Support and Supervision for young people at risk of being remanded in custody.

YJA Children First Practice Principles

We ensure that the rights of children are respected and that children are treated as children.

We deliver services in a child-friendly and child-appropriate manner.

We recognise, build on and celebrate children's positive behaviours, their strengths, resilience and their positive contribution to society.

We consider the needs and developmental stage of children.

We consider, assess and address the broader context and underlying causes of offending by children.

We recognise the responsibility of society and adults to help children to avoid conflict with the law.

We promote Earlier Stage Diversion in maximising opportunities for prevention and diversion ensuring the minimal necessary intervention.

Who do we work with?

- Education Authority
- Health and Social Care Trusts
- Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service
- Northern Ireland Judiciary (District Judges, Magistrates' Courts)
- Police Service of Northern Ireland
- Public Prosecution Service Northern Ireland
- Probation Board Northern Ireland (PBNI)
- Victims and local communities
- The community and voluntary sector
- Anyone relevant to the life of the child.

We are committed to helping reduce the number of young people entering the youth justice system by working in close partnership with other organisations and bodies.

How do we work?

Restorative principles underpin all our work. Children are encouraged to make amends for the harm caused by their offending behaviour. We use restorative processes to “restore” children, families and victims and to promote the inclusive reintegration of children within their communities and wider society.

We deliver a range of services to young people both entering and leaving custody in Woodlands Juvenile Justice Centre, often with partner agencies and relevant others as appropriate. We also work directly with Northern Ireland Prison Service colleagues in Hydebank Wood College, as required, in relation to young people who have reached the age of 18, are known to us, and who have been remanded or sentenced to custody there.

We are currently represented on a number of multi-agency bodies, including the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership, Policing and Community Safety Partnerships, Reducing Offending Partnership and the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland.

Building purposeful relationships with young people, families and communities remains at the core of what we do. By working from a strengths-focused approach by exploring what the young person is good at and what they want to achieve in life, as well as exploring the issues behind their negative behaviours - allows for the development of opportunities to move towards more positive and sustainable change.

Through family work, family members are encouraged to resolve their own difficulties with appropriate support and guidance.

We work with parents, carers and families in different ways including:

- Meetings involving all family members attending together;
- Meetings involving parents/carers only;
- Meetings involving groups of parents.

We will work with families in a way that best suits their needs.

We will work with individuals and organisations that can help make communities safer by helping young people to stop offending. We also offer local volunteering opportunities within each of our area teams.



Coleraine

Northern Area Team

Foyle

Ballymena

Western Area Team

Belfast Area Team

Woodlands JJC

Belfast

Newtownards

Eastern Area Team

Dungannon

Enniskillen

Banbridge

Southern Area Team

Downpatrick



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Trauma
Informed
Practice

Adverse
Childhood
Experiences

This leaflet was created in
consultation with children
and young people in YJA