

Youth Justice Strategy Implementation Statement for 2022

1. Background to Youth Justice Strategy 2021-2027

Developed under the guidance of an expert Steering Group which had been in place since early 2019, the Youth Justice Strategy 2021 – 2027 was published in April of 2021. The creation of the Strategy was informed by detailed consultation with key agencies and stakeholders and also reflects feedback from a public consultation process.

This Implementation Statement offers updates on the progress made in carrying forward the many Objectives and Key Actions set out in the Strategy during 2022, as well as concentrating on a number of Priority Areas which are referenced in Appendix 3 of the Strategy. It also builds on the updates set out in previous Implementation Statement for 2021.

2. Governance, Oversight and Consultation

Strategic Objective 1.1

As set out in Appendix 2 of the Youth Justice Strategy, dedicated Governance, Oversight and Consultative structures were consolidated during 2022 to support and guide the implementation of the strategy.

The Youth Justice Governance and Strategy Group (YJGSG) and the Youth Justice Oversight Group (YJOG) operate to coordinate work across Departments and key agencies involved in the delivery of the Strategy. There were five meetings of each of these groups in 2022.

Topics discussed in the context of the Youth Justice Strategy included:

- Relationships Workers and young people.
- Criminal network disruption (Greentown Project).
- Developments on Collaborative Commissioning.
- National Parenting Model (Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth).
- Review of Out-of-School Provision (Department of Education)./Intervention Research - the importance of relationships within Youth Justice
- REPPP (Research Evidence into Policy, Programmes and Practice) all island research services - 'Stable Lives Safer Streets'.
- Training for youth justice front-line professionals.
- Youth Joint Agency Response to Crime (Y-JARC) Evaluation.
- Social Inclusion, Community Activation Programme 2018 -2023.
- Children in Detention – Oberstown child-centred operating framework.

- Management of young adults in the prison system.

A new Youth Justice Advisory Group (YJAG) chaired by Minister of State James Browne T.D. was established in 2021 to maintain a strong stakeholder input in relation to implementation of the Strategy and they met once again in November 2022. Issues under discussion by the group include:

- Approaches to collaborative services and wrap-around supports, including for children with multiple needs including
 - Engaging with “Hard-to-reach” children and specialised supports.
 - Parent/family support.
 - Travellers and other minority communities/groups.
 - Disability – accessibility of services and supports.
 - Children in Care .
 - Children on the fringes – with a potential but unquantified risk in relation to criminal activity.
- Disability and Neuro-Diversity.
- Case Management - Minimum intervention and minimising delay.
- Transitions to adulthood.
- Education and alternative education/training.
- Access to appropriate accommodation.
- Listening to the Voice of the Child / Young Person.
- Covid-19 impact.
- Court Processes.

The North/South Youth Justice Project Advisory Group met twice in 2022 in Belfast and Dublin respectively. Discussions were held on a number of topics including:

- Implementation of the Youth Justice Strategy 2021-2027.
- Youth Justice research plans through the Shared Island Initiative.
- Joint Inspection report on Woodlands Juvenile Justice Centre (NI).
- Strategic Framework for Youth Justice (NI) primarily focussed on creating links between the Youth Justice system and other public services whereby the Youth Justice system treats children as children first and offenders second, making it a social welfare approach as well as a justice approach.
- Stable Lives Safer Streets whereby REPPP/ University of Limerick (UL) have developed an all island policy led research hub of excellence in youth justice. The hub is a collaboration between UL, Queens University and the Centre for Effective Services.
- Developing Effective Relationships Between Youth Justice Workers and Young People.
- Covid pandemic responses.

Some of the major developments undertaken by the Department of Justice and the Youth Strategy Governance, Oversight and Consultative structures in 2022 included:

- Preparation for four new Youth Diversion Projects (YDPs) – action 2.9.2, *“Expand the existing network to achieve full availability of youth diversion projects throughout the State within 2 years”*. Throughout 2022, REPPP examined the national geographical spread of YDPs and determined the 6 locations which warranted creation of new YDPs while expanding the boundaries of some existing YDPs for wider coverage. In June 2023 new YDPs were announced in South Monaghan, Claremorris and district, South and East Wicklow and West County Cork. 2 further locations (Thurles and surrounding towns in North Tipperary and East Clare) are currently being examined. These new YDPs have a wider mandate than previously established YDPs and will now:
 - undertake early intervention work with younger children who are identified as being on a trajectory to later involvement in crime and anti-social behaviour;
 - provide family support for the families of participants;
 - support schools to retain YDP participants in the education system; and
 - work with harder-to-reach young people on an outreach basis.
- During 2022 the Department and REPPP also examined with other Departments and agencies the trialling of a collaborative approach to commissioning of relevant services. The intention is to agree an approach to joint commissioning of relevant services in a number of pilot areas, on the basis of an agreed assessment of local needs, an agreed framework for allocation of central funding to meet those needs and an agreed set of mutual agreements at local level to deliver services in a cohesive and integrated way. This approach aims to enhance communication and collaboration between agencies based on principles of the best interest of children and young people. This will be based on the “no wrong door” principle, which aims to emphasise a child-centred wrap-around service. The 2 final YDPs necessary for full national coverage will be delivered through this initiative.
- An evaluation of the YDPs was commissioned in 2022 and published in June 2023 concluding that YDPs are performing well in many areas that are known to impact positively on reducing crime and reoffending. The report noted the very positive work ongoing in the YDPs already, including the strong governance and high levels of engagement from participants and their families. Several areas for improvement were also identified, including better availability of YDPs at weekends, and maximising the use of administrative data and other research to inform services.
- A 18-24 Diversion Proposal Public Policy submission call – action 2.6.3 *“We will examine that necessary steps to establish a diversion process for those aged 18-24, aligned with the development of the Health Diversion approach and relevant*

community supports (see 2.9.5) and with due regard to issues concerning categories of offences, any legal constraints and with a view to developing initial pilot approaches”.

- A discussion document for public consultation on diversion paths for young adults aged 18-24 was published on the 9th of November 2022. The Department of Justice were seeking opinions on appropriate diversion processes for young adults ages 18-24 who come into contact with the criminal justice system. The submissions closed on 17th January 2023. The Department of Justice received in 8 written submissions and 62 responses to the survey that was made available. The Department is progressing the initiative through 2 further public policy consultation forums in November 2023 with policy proposals to be brought forward in 2024.
- Children Act review – action 1.7.3 *“We will carry out a detailed stakeholder consultation process to help refine the legislative reforms for the Children Act”*. The Act focusses on the treatment of children aged between 12 and 18, with a view to diverting them away from crime and, as far as possible, from the Criminal Justice System. This created a shift away from the focus of retribution and deterrence and adopted more into a rehabilitative and welfare based system. Through 2022 and 2023 the Department drafted a comprehensive review of the Children Act to determine which, if any, provisions of the Children Act have not operated in the manner as intended by the legislators. Some of these amendments are being incorporated into the Child Care (Amendment) Bill 2023 while others are to be further discussed through the Youth Strategy Governance, Oversight and Consultative structures.
- The Garda Youth Diversion Projects Annual Conference returned to an in-person format in 2022 and was hosted by the Department of Justice in the Croke Park Conference Centre on 9 November. The full-day event was very well attended with delegates including youth justice workers and members of An Garda Síochána as well as guests speakers, panellists, moderators, members of the event planning team and other relevant members of staff at the Department of Justice.
- First and foremost, the conference offered delegates an opportunity to meet face-to-face at a large scale event and collectively consider their own experience of implementing the 2021-2027 Youth Justice Policy for the first time since its launch in April 2021. The conference also provided delegates with an opportunity to consider the approach and priorities set out by Minister of State for Law Reform, James Browne T.D. in his keynote address and by Deaglán Ó Briain, Criminal Justice Policy (Community Safety), Department of Justice in his own presentation. In addition, the conference allowed delegates to update their knowledge of the work undertaken by the REPPP project at the University of Limerick and the Best Practice Development

Team (BPDT) as well as to engage with and benefit from the expertise of invited moderators, panellists and guest speakers including. The conference also featured a series of showcase presentations prepared by three very different projects: CABLE YDP (Co. Louth), Treo Nua YDP (Co. Galway) and PORT YDP (Co. Laois).

3. REPPP (Research Evidence into Policy Programmes and Practice)

Strategic Objective 1.2

Last year, an enhanced research partnership between the Department of Justice and the University of Limerick (REPPP) was established to ensure the strong emphasis placed on evidence-informed development of Youth Justice programmes in the Strategy was reinforced in practice. Since then, the REPPP Team has continued to support a number of innovative and internationally recognised projects as part of an impressive work programme, with their main areas of focus being on conducting action-research and providing consistent support to projects, such as the Greentown research initiative and multiple pilot projects. Many new projects have been undertaken by REPPP in 2022, which are outlined in greater detail below.

REPPP Advisory Group

The REPPP Advisory Group met once in 2022 on 15th December. During the course of the meeting, Dr. Seán Redmond and Dr. Walter Forrest presented a Progress Report for 2022 and REPPP's Next Phase Plan, respectively. It was agreed that two further meeting dates would be set for 2023.

Local Leadership Programme (renamed from Executive Leadership Programme)

Grappling with 'Wicked' problems and complex harms

As described in the Implementation Statement for 2021, the ultimate goal of this initiative is to enhance the capacity of professionals working in, managing, funding, or supporting public purpose organisations to better understand and tackle complex social problems in their areas of work. First piloted in Dublin's North East Inner City in 2019, a further five programmes were introduced in Limerick City and County, Kerry, Dublin South Central, Cork and Limerick & Galway, with a seventh introduced in Balbriggan in 2022. Each programme has continued to address the following distinct issues unique to the young people resident in these areas within the last year:

- **Dublin, North East Inner City (NEIC)** – Stopping open drug dealing in a specific location; improving the effectiveness of community leadership; improving working relationships between the statutory sector and community and voluntary bodies.
- **Limerick City and County in association with Limerick Children and Young People’s Services Committee (CYPSC)** - Addressing the educational impacts of school refusal and reduced timetables; dealing with the effects of excessive staff turnover in child and family services; encouraging innovation and flexibility in professional life; reducing developmental delay in children in their formative years in homeless accommodation.
- **Kerry in association with the Kerry Diocesan Youth Services and Kerry CYPSC (Ongoing)** - Enhancing rural connectivity in South West Kerry. This group is currently exploring the concept of ‘no wrong door’, as outlined in the Youth Justice Strategy, to support young people and families to access appropriate services; reducing Information Technology Poverty for older people in South Kerry. A working group developed a proposal which promotes the Department of Justice’s Youth Justice Strategy’s Strategic Objective 2.1 by developing effective practice in collaborative service delivery and exploring new pilot approaches in conjunction with UL REPPP; strengthening connections between professionals in South West Kerry. This group aims to extend and expand integrated working in South West Co. Kerry.
- **Dublin South Central in association with Dublin City Council and the Building Community Resilience initiative** – Development of integrated responses to criminal networks throughout Dublin South Central.
- **Cork in association with Cork Aftercare Services and Cork CYPSC (Ongoing)** – Improvement of services for those leaving aftercare services in Cork.
- **Balbriggan** – Deepening understanding of and responding to issues between young black Irish people and An Garda Síochána.

2022 also saw the development of operational manuals for these programmes to facilitate the standardisation of delivery across the country and enable sharing of them with other agencies for educational purposes.

4. Youth Diversion Project Development

Strategic Objectives 2.8 and 2.9

The 106 Youth Diversion Projects currently funded by the Department of Justice are the primary service through which vulnerable young people in communities across the State can avail of the services and supports they need to facilitate their rehabilitation. The important role they play in the successful delivery of the strategy, therefore, cannot be overlooked.

In 2021, the allocation of an additional €6.7m in Exchequer funding for youth justice services for 2022 allowed the Department of Justice to substantially enhance the services provided by and undertake expansion of the geographical coverage of the Projects. This process of enhancement and expansion is still ongoing. [Further information to be included].

Additionally, in 2022, 16 local services were enlisted on a 2-year trial basis to synthesise the learning from the international evidence review on effective relationship building with practice wisdom and craft knowledge of front-line workers. It is hoped that this research will be used to further scale out development initiatives for YDPs in the future.

Additional Specialised Programmes

- **Greentown** - The Greentown Initiative, first established in 2021 with the support of the Department of Justice and An Garda Síochána, aims to provide support to children, families and communities around the country that are most likely to be targeted and impacted by crime networks. In 2022-2023, three of the four intervention pillars at the centre of this approach- intensive family programmes, community efficacy, and pro-social opportunities- were consolidated with the input of the local advisory committees involved in the Initiative. Additionally, an online expert workshop in relation to drug debt and intimidation was completed and discussions began regarding the possibility of investing further resources into network disruption.
- **Bail Supervision Scheme** - This scheme seeks to make the internationally recognised approach to achieving bail compliance available to young people through a single consolidated service. In 2022, the scheme was scaled out from its initial pilot in Dublin to Limerick and Cork. Governance, guidance and support infrastructure was established in each location. It is expected that an evaluation of the scheme's impact is due to take place in mid-2024, following 12 months of full operation of each of the services.
- **Data study progress** - In an effort to make better use of the administrative data at the Department of Justice's Data Hub's disposal, discussions were held between REPPP and the Department in 2022 to negotiate the sharing of annual plans and reports from Youth Diversion Projects. Ongoing discussions are still taking place regarding securing PULSE data to gauge the effectiveness of Youth Justice interventions. Two new 'Twinsight' assessments in Whitetown and Yellowtown, as well as an additional request from Cherry Orchard, would also benefit from the use of this data. REPPP's current plan is to develop coding to allow for the efficient mining of data once it has been appropriately curated.
- **Educational achievements** - Over the course of 2021 and 2022, 18 Youth Justice workers enrolled in Masters degrees that have been designed specifically to align with the key objectives in Youth Justice Strategy 2021 – 2027 and widen their professional knowledge-base.

New Projects

- **Limerick City Project, ‘No Wrong Door’** - Work commenced in collaboration with the Department of Justice in 2022 to conceptualise how research could support the YJ Strategy objectives of successfully adopting a ‘No Wrong Door’ approach for young people with complex needs within and outside the Youth Justice system. At the end of 2022, Limerick City was the first partner to engage in the Joint Commissioning exercise, with the project due to continue into 2023.
- **Implementation of the YJ Strategy 2021-2027** - An interim implementation study to gauge the degree to which the Youth Justice strategy has landed in local communities was agreed with key stakeholders, including the Department of Justice.
- **International Illicit Networks Conference** – In July of 2022, REPPP hosted a Department of Justice-sponsored international conference, bringing together leading scientists engaged in research focusing on illicit networks such as organised crime and terrorism, to great success.
- **HEA North/South ‘Stable Lives Safer Streets’ Research Initiative** - Researchers from REPPP, Queens University Belfast, The Centre for Effective Services and the North South Research Programme are collaborating to deliver the following six work packages (WPs) as part of this initiative:
 - WP1: Project Management
 - WP2: Consolidating existing research on Youth Justice
 - WP3: Responding to emerging Policy Priorities
 - WP4: Developing a pragmatic self-report standardised Measurement Tool
 - WP5: Translation and implementation of evidence informed policy into practice
 - WP6: Develop a Multi-stakeholder Implementation Model (CES)

5. Youth Justice Strategy – Ongoing Service Development Objectives

In the second year of implementation of the Strategy, the work of important existing programmes continued. These are covered by the Ongoing Service Development Objectives which are listed on page 43 of the Strategy and relate primarily to the work of An Garda Síochána, the Probation Service, and the operation of Oberstown Children Detention Campus. Information on the ongoing implementation of these Objectives is given below.

Garda Youth Diversion Programme – Development and Practice (3 Objectives)

2.4.1 - *An Garda Síochána will mandate a strong central resource within An Garda Síochána, to:*

- a) Oversee the operation of the Garda Diversion Programme*
- b) design Garda policies and procedures for Diversion of children and young people from offending*
- c) inform Garda practice and procedures to incentivise, as far as possible, positive interaction between Gardaí and young people*
- d) drive the design of Garda training and best practices, on age appropriate interaction with children and young people, including the use of general policing powers, and with regard to disadvantage and diversity issues people, including in relation to Schools Programmes and Community Policing generally.*
- e) guide the ongoing development of community initiatives such as the Garda Schools Programmes and Community Policing generally.*

2.5.1 - *An Garda Síochána will implement the recommendations arising from the 2019 Garda Youth Referral Examination Report, and equip the Garda National Bureau of Youth Diversion to ensure:*

- a) efficient decision making on cases referred to it*
- b) ready access to specialist legal or other professional resources*
- c) access to appropriate IT or other technical supports*
- d) consistent application of decision making policies*
- e) transparent decision making and communication with those who are the subject of referral for Diversion.*

2.7.1 - *Ensure centralised Garda oversight of cases and that all appropriate actions are taken to a conclusion, in line with procedures, including implementation of the recommendations from the 2019 Garda Youth Referral Examination Report.*

Implementation by An Garda Síochána in 2022

Dedicated governance structures are in place for the operation of the Garda National Youth Diversion Bureau (GNYDB) and activity under the Diversion Programme is detailed in the reports of the Monitoring Committee appointed under Section 44 of the Children Act 2001.

The GNYDB provides a central office which considers the applicability of Diversion measures for all youth crime incidents, operating in accordance with Part 4 of the Children Act 2001.

Decisions on whether or not to admit a child or young person to the Diversion Programme are made by the Director, who is a Superintendent within the GNYDB. Almost 16,000 crime incidents were processed by the GNYDB in 2022.

Implementation of Objectives 2.4.1, 2.5.1 and 2.7.1 is supported by practice guidelines developed by the GYDB which cover various aspects of the assessment, monitoring and processing of cases which are referred for consideration for admission to the Diversion Programme, as well as key functions such as the administration of cautions and supervision by Juvenile Liaison Officers.

A range of initiatives by the GNYDB were conducted and continued in 2022 including:

- A Juvenile Liaison Officer Training Conference was held on 16th and 17th May 2022. This conference brought together Juvenile Liaison Officers (JLOs) from around the country as well as staff from the GNYDB to discuss and work on a range of topics. Presentations were delivered on emerging areas and guest speakers also covered a range of subjects.
- An Garda Síochána Analysis Service has worked with University of Limerick to examine five crime networks in local communities across Ireland and has been foundational in terms of evidence base for the Greentown Programme. A national survey of Juvenile Liaison Officers published by the University of Limerick has been important in understanding the size of the problem of young people's involvement in serious and organised crime activity. An Garda Síochána Analysis Service provides localised PULSE data to each Youth Diversion Project in 105 communities across Ireland to assist with programme planning.
- GNYDB continued to promote the Diversion Programme throughout the organisation by undertaking the following activities in 2022;
 - Two training seminars were delivered in July and September 2022 to Performance Accountability Framework (PAF) administrators on their role in the referral process to 145 members and staff. GNYDB worked with Garda Information Services Centre (GISC) to develop these training seminars for PAF administrators.
 - Continue to engage with the Garda College to deliver presentations to newly promoted Sergeants and Inspectors on their role in the Diversion Programme. Presentations were delivered to 560 newly promoted Sergeants and Inspectors in 2022.
 - Training was provided by Garda National Youth Diversion Bureau to all newly appointed Garda Juvenile Liaison Officers in September 2022.
 - Restorative Justice and Mediation Skills training was provided by Garda National Youth Diversion Bureau to all newly appointed Garda Juvenile Liaison Officers.
- GNYDB is working to increase the use of Restorative Justice and involve the victim as part of the caution process under the Diversion Programme. There were 568 Restorative Cautions in 2022, which is 37% higher than the number of Restorative

Cautions reported in 2021 (416). The upward trend is expected to continue in 2023 with rollout of refresher training for JLO's and vacancies being filled.

- The Garda National Youth Bureau worked closely with the Department of Justice supporting the work of Research Matters Ltd who have conducted an evaluation of Youth Diversion Projects. Garda National Youth Diversion Bureau supported this evaluation by working closely with the evaluation team, facilitating engagement by way of interviews and surveys from Garda Juvenile Liaison Officers, Garda Chairpersons of Youth Diversion Projects and interviews with Garda National Youth Diversion personnel.
- GNYDB continued to contribute to the Youth Justice Strategy 2021 – 2027 during 2022, focusing on actions requiring engagement from An Garda Síochána at all levels. The GNYDB is represented at the Youth Justice Governance and Strategy Group and Youth Justice Oversight Group.
- The Garda Youth Diversion Bureau supported the development of the Department of Justice's National Youth Diversion Projects Conference at both the planning and facilitating stages. The conference took place at Croke Park in November 2022. The Director of the Diversion Programme facilitated in a panel discussion on the day, and Bureau personnel moderated for the guest speaker, as well as the content development in planning stage.
- Garda National Youth Diversion Bureau worked closely with the Department of Justice, community-based organisations and Garda management locally in the development and expansion of the Youth Diversion Project network across the regions, supporting the Department of Justice's targets within the Youth Justice Strategy of full Youth Diversion Projects coverage by the end of 2023.
- A review and publication of new Operational Requirements for Youth Diversion Projects - to take account of developments in YDPs as a consequence of Department of Justice investment in-line with commitments in the Youth Justice Strategy 2021-2027, will be completed and include guidance on:
 - Early Intervention;
 - Hard to Reach Young People;
 - Family Support, and;
 - Together Stronger workshops focused on guidelines for effective partnership between Garda Juvenile Liaison Officers and Youth Diversion Projects. These workshops were delivered by Garda National Youth Diversion Bureau, and the Youth Diversion Projects Research and Development Team.
- Garda National Youth Diversion Bureau and Youth Diversion Projects Best Research and Development Team developed support for YDP Community Based Organisation Representatives (CBORs) and Garda Committee Chairpersons in 2022, which relates to the operations of the YDP Project Committee.
- An Garda Síochána continues to implement recommendations from the 2019 Garda Youth Referral Examination Report and meet service development objectives to

support efficient and transparent decision-making with regard to the Youth Diversion Programme, and further develop community initiatives to encourage positive interaction between Gardaí and young people.

Probation Service Support for Young People

1.9.3 - *We will continue to support and resource the deployment of suitably qualified Probation Officers to engage effectively with children and young people before the courts, and those under Probation Service Orders in Oberstown and in the community.*

Probation Service

The Probation Service works within the framework of the Youth Justice Strategy 2021- 2027 to maximise opportunities to promote positive behavioural change through the development and delivery of opportunities for vulnerable children at risk or already engaged in the Criminal Justice System.

Young Person Probation Funded Projects (YPP) is an Operational Region of the Probation Service with a national footprint, established to fulfil the statutory obligation of the Children's Act 2001, and in particular the 10 community sanctions set out in the legislation. The YPP Region is resourced by four dedicated YPP teams, located in areas identified as best supporting the demands and needs for our work with children – Dublin North, Dublin South, Limerick/Clare and Cork. Additionally, each of the community-based teams across the country have a dedicated Probation Officer focusing on young persons as part of the overall team workload. YPP work with circa 500 children and young people on an annual basis.

Continuous professional development and professional staff supervision are central to supporting Probation Officers discharge their duties and overall governance of the work.

Probation Service YPP Core work - Assessment and Supervision of children and young people

The work of YPP generally comes through the Children Court (District Court level). In recent years, there has been an increase in young people before the Circuit and Criminal Courts.

Once referrals are received from the Courts, the Probation Officer builds a relationship with the child and with their family/ primary caregivers. The Probation Officer consults with other key agencies including the child's education provider and, where relevant, Tusla. A comprehensive assessment of needs, risks and social context is completed and returned to the court with recommendations made around how needs might be met and risks addressed. If the court deem it appropriate and depending on the sanction imposed, the Probation officer may be assigned a supervisory role with the young person.

The Probation Officers role will be to develop, with the young person, an intervention and support plan targeting the areas of offending related to the charges and work with the young person, his family and wider network to ensuring desistance from further offending behaviour.

Addiction Support and mental health services

Probation Officers use a child-centred approach, focusing on the ability of the child to change and to make better choices. The Probation Officer analyses the child's offending behaviour in the context of their offending, while identifying risk factors for further offending by applying the Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI). This is a specific tool, used across the Youth Justice system, to assess risk, needs and gauge appropriate levels of intervention.

In keeping with the ethos of the Children Act 2001, every child/young person that the Probation Service work with is afforded the opportunity for engagement at the lowest level of intervention possible to keep them and the community safe. Probation Officers supervise young people as directed by the courts, including making referrals to appropriate services to help address their risks and needs.

2022 Activity

In 2022,

- 702 court referrals were made to the Probation Service for young people.
- 665 detailed Pre-sanction Reports were prepared by the Probation Service for the courts.
- 645 young people were supervised by the Probation Service in the community.

Probation Service support for Diversion measures

The Probation Service supports young persons and their families in their own communities, whilst at the same time holding them to account to accept responsibility for their offending behaviour and the consequences of it. The Service funds sixteen Community Based Organisations (Budget €5 million) that work directly with young people. Probation Officers make direct referrals to these Community Based Organisations (CBO's) and services include education and training, respite, counselling, mentoring and outdoor pursuits. Annually, approximately 400 young people avail of support from Probation Funded CBO's.

The Probation Service has strong links with the Garda Youth Diversion Programme, working closely with Juvenile Liaison Officers and Garda Youth Crime Case Managers. Probation Officers have ongoing engagement with Youth Diversion Projects funded by the Department of Justice. A number of Probation Service funded CBO's and YDP's work collaboratively, at times accepting referrals from one to the other, on a case by case basis, where it is the view that the needs of a particular service user may be more appropriately met by the alternate project.

The Probation Service assisted the expansion of the Bail Supervision Scheme to Limerick and Cork and make direct referrals or can recommend other agencies make referrals to Bail Supervision, where appropriate.

Detention and support post-release

As part of its work, the Service provides an in-reach service to Oberstown Children Detention Campus two days per week. This Probation staff member co-facilitates offence-focused programmes with young people in detention as well as completing individual work with children in Detention.

The Probation Service and Oberstown have an agreed protocol, specific to Probation Officers and staff in Oberstown to ensure the effective management and through care of children and young persons.

Probation staff attend organised Placement Planning meetings at Oberstown Children Detention Campus throughout the young person's detention there. Probation Officers support each young person's return to the community in a planned, safe and, where possible, seamless manner. The young person's progress is reviewed on an ongoing basis while in detention and a final review is conducted prior to release. Together, the Probation Officer and Oberstown identify any suitable services required for young people returning to the community, make referrals, and address any other outstanding matters. The Probation Officer progresses areas of responsibility assigned to the Probation Service as well as engaging with the family and community supports, as appropriate and necessary.

Additionally, in line with the ethos of the Children Act 2001, Oberstown and Probation Service proactively identify any young people in detention who may benefit from an early return to the community. A number of young people benefited from early return in 2022.

YPP Specialist Support:

Work with young people who have sexually harmed: Currently, four Probation Officers are seconded one day per week to work with National Inter Agency Prevention Programme

(NIAPP). These Probation Officers' co-facilitate treatment programmes with NIAPP for young people who have exhibited sexually harmful behaviour or sexually offended.

Restorative Conferencing: In instances where the Court orders a Restorative Conference, a restorative approach or where there is a restorative element to the case report, the Probation Officer usually develops a bespoke plan with the child, family and relevant parties. The progress/outcome is reported to the court in the Pre-sanction Report and recommendations can be made to the court, if appropriate.

Family Conferencing: YPP facilitated a number of Family Conferences in 2022. A Family Conference is a court ordered meeting with the child charged with the offence, members of the child's family, the victim(s) and other relevant people. This meeting aims to develop a plan to assist the child to acknowledge responsibility, address any harm caused and engage in positive behaviour in the future. The plan, if agreed by the Court, is supervised by the Probation Service.

Training for Youth Diversion Projects

1.9.4 - *We will continue to support the provision of training for Youth Justice Workers to support them to engage effectively with the children and young people they work with.*

A number of training sessions were facilitated by the YDP Best Practice Development Team (BPDT) and the REPPP Action Research Project for the benefit of Youth Justice Workers in 2022.

BPDT Training

The BPDT is composed of four experienced Youth Justice Workers (YJWs) drawn from various community-based organisations (CBOs) who work collectively to support staff in the nationwide network of Youth Diversion Projects. The following training was provided by the BPDT in 2022:

Restorative Practices

- Seven YDP Restorative Practice trainings (three and a half days per training) took place with 90 practitioners being trained.
- Six YDP Refresher workshops for those trained in 2021 (one day) took place with 50 practitioners attending.

YLS/CMI 2.0 (Risk Assessment Tool)

- Five YLS screening version trainings (half day) took place with 63 practitioners attending.
- There were five YLS/CMI 2.0 trainings (three half days) with 38 practitioners attending.
- There were twelve communities of practice held in April and May with 120 practitioners attending.

Community Based Organisation Representatives (CBOR) and YDP Chairperson Consultations

- Two workshops (two hours) took place with 6 chairpersons and 7 CBORs attending.

Outcomes-focused planning design

- Four workshops (1 day) took place with 54 practitioners attending.

Exploring anger

- Five workshops (one day) took place with 77 practitioners attending.

Motivational Interviewing

- Two introduction level (two day) training sessions took place with 24 practitioners attending.
- Two Intermediate level (two day) training sessions took place with 24 practitioners attending.
- Two Skills development (one day) training sessions took place with 20 practitioners attending.
- One day training was provided for 5 practitioners who have joined the MI Support/Training Team.

Early Intervention

- Workshops and consultations took place with youth justice practitioners to develop the Early Intervention Guidelines.

Together Stronger (for YJWs and Garda Juvenile Liaison Officers – JLOs)

- Four half-day workshops took place with twenty projects: 45 youth justice practitioners and 20 JLOs attending.

Planning for Success

- Three workshops took place to support projects to prepare for the completion of the YDP Annual plan with 34 practitioners attending.

Detention – DCEDIY/Oberstown

2.11.2 - We will continue to build on the existing Oberstown Children’s Rights Framework to describe for each individual case, intended outcomes, the services/support required to help achieve those outcomes and the methodology for measuring what is achieved, from a period in Detention and from Post-Detention support.

Actions taken in 2022:

The Children’s Rights Policy Framework (incorporating the Rules) is now embedded in the organisation and the HIQA have carried out two inspections against the Framework. The inspection process has galvanised the rights aspect of detention and the Case Management System (CMS) is tracking the outcome for each young person which supports both their reintegration into their communities and assists in their transition to the adult prison system. The delivery of the Framework is through the Care, Education, Health & Wellbeing, Offending Behaviour and Preparation for Leaving (CEHOP) Model of care, which is in use on-Campus.

2.13.1 – In relation to transitions from Oberstown to the prison system, we will build on existing procedures and practices and assess any gaps, including with regard to appropriate continuity of work done in Oberstown, and develop appropriate recommendations and measures to address these.

Actions taken in 2021:

The transition to adult prisons currently forms part of the Placement Planning Process involving young people in consultation with their keyworker and an external partner, Solas. This multi-disciplinary approach highlights the journey of the young person while in Oberstown with a view to continuing this in the prison service. Close liaisons have been formed with both Governors and Assistant Governors within the prisons to ensure there are smooth transition from Oberstown to the prison system. This is in relation to education, personal development programmes, vocational qualification and all other relevant information. All young people transitioning to the prison service are engaged with by a member of the staff (usually at a Governor level) prior to the move where a two-way conversation takes place to inform the young person of what to expect, what is expected of them and to ensure that there is continuity of programme where possible. Prison service staff have been on site in Oberstown to observe the operation and have incorporated the learnings to assist young people during transition smoothly.