SHARING THE NORTHERN IRELAND EXPERIENCE

Paula Jack
Juvenile Justice
INTERNATIONAL GUIDANCE & STANDARDS

- The Basic Principles on the Use of Restorative Justice Programmes in Criminal Matters
- Article 40 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
- The UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice, “the Beijing Rules”, General Assembly resolution 40/33, 29 November 1985;
- Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment, General Assembly resolution 43/173, 9 December 1988;
- Guidelines for Action on Children in the Criminal Justice System, Economic and Social Council resolution 1997/30, 21 July 1997;
UNCRC GENERAL COMMENTS

• Guidance provided by the Committee on the Rights of the Child,

• General Comments:
  • No.10: Children’s rights in juvenile justice, adopted in 2007;

  • No. 12: The right of the child to be heard, adopted in 2009; and

  • No. 14: The right of the child to have his or her best interests taken as a primary consideration, adopted in 2013
THE LIMA DECLARATION ON RESTORATIVE JUVENILE JUSTICE 2009

• First World Congress on Restorative Juvenile Justice
• 1000 participants from 63 countries, representing governments, the judiciary, civil society, professionals working with children, the media, academia and UN agencies:

Restorative justice should be an integral part of the juvenile justice system and applicable in all stages of the juvenile justice process, either as an alternative measure or in addition to other measures.
THE NORTHERN IRELAND JOURNEY

1990s
- 1990s Groups organised meetings to discuss restorative approach to youth justice
- 1998 Good Friday Agreement – peace process in Northern Ireland

2000s
- 2002 The Justice (NI) Act 2002 introduced a range of innovative new measures for dealing with children who offend, the most significant being youth conferencing which is based upon inclusive restorative justice principles
- 2003 Pilot project for youth justice

Evaluation
- 2006 Queens University of Belfast evaluation
- 2011 Youth Justice Review – Northern Ireland
- 2015 Plans to update the legislation
LEGISLATION:
JUSTICE (NI) ACT 2002

• The Justice (NI) Act 2002 introduced a range of innovative new measures for dealing with children who offend, the most significant being **youth conferencing** which is based upon inclusive restorative justice principles

• Both as an **alternative** to prosecution or as a **court-ordered** process and allows children to take responsibility for their actions, gives victims an opportunity to say how they have been affected and results in an agreed plan based on restorative principles
ATTENDEES AT THE CONFERENCE

Who attends a youth conference

- The young person who admits to the offence
- Their responsible adult
- A police officer
- The victim
- Victim supporters
- Others who may be relevant to the meeting
- Facilitated by a trained Youth Conference Co-ordinator
CHALLENGES OF THE IMAGES PORTRAYED BY THE MEDIA IN NORTHERN IRELAND
A senior policeman has said young children were involved in rioting in north Belfast on Monday which he said was orchestrated by criminals – July 2009

Children’s role in Belfast flag riots ‘deeply worrying’ – January 2013

Children behind worst riots in Northern Ireland, says police chief – July 2010

Kids are enjoying the riots too much to stop, says cleric – January 2013

Children urged to join Belfast riots by texting – July 2009

‘Disney theme park for rioting’: Belfast leaders decry children’s zeal for fighting police 2010

MEDIA HEADLINES
WOODLANDS JUVENILE JUSTICE CENTRE

• Opened in January 2007 - for all of Northern Ireland; centre of excellence in secure care for 10-17 year olds

• Providing a safe, secure and caring environment;
• Tackling offending by delivering anti offending programmes and raising victim awareness;
• Addressing development, health, educational and recreational needs;
• Reducing risk to self and others
The total number of young people involved with Custodial Services (JJC) in 2013/14 was 196.

The total number of young people aged 10 to 17 in Northern Ireland on 30th June 2013 was 187,097. As such 1 in every 1,000 young people in Northern Ireland were involved with Custodial Services in 2013/14. This rate has been largely consistent over the last five years.

Young people aged 10 to 13 accounted for 3% of JJC transactions in 2013/14.

The number of individual young people involved with YJS has dropped to the lowest level in the last five years.

Over the five year period the largest majority of transactions were to Roman Catholic young people. This continues to be the case in 2013/14 with 57% of all transactions being to Roman Catholic young people.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Referrals to the YJS</th>
<th>Number of Individual Young People Involved</th>
<th>NI Population aged 10-17</th>
<th>Rate [per 1,000 aged 10 - 17]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009/10</td>
<td>1,927</td>
<td>1,229</td>
<td>197,816</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010/11</td>
<td>2,111</td>
<td>1,332</td>
<td>195,689</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011/12</td>
<td>1,843</td>
<td>1,120</td>
<td>193,023</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012/13</td>
<td>1,675</td>
<td>1,039</td>
<td>189,939</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013/14</td>
<td>1,846</td>
<td>977</td>
<td>187,097</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Total Referrals</td>
<td>Diversionary Youth Conference</td>
<td>Court Ordered Youth Con</td>
<td>Community Orders</td>
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<td>----------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009/10</td>
<td>1,927</td>
<td>949 (49%)</td>
<td>892 (46%)</td>
<td>86 (4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010/11</td>
<td>2,111</td>
<td>1,051 (50%)</td>
<td>960 (45%)</td>
<td>100 (5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011/12</td>
<td>1,843</td>
<td>1,006 (55%)</td>
<td>728 (40%)</td>
<td>106 (6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012/13</td>
<td>1,675</td>
<td>862 (51%)</td>
<td>694 (41%)</td>
<td>64 (4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013/14</td>
<td>1,846</td>
<td>868 (41%)</td>
<td>817 (44%)</td>
<td>69 (4%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STATISTICAL DATA

• Other referrals include Juvenile Justice Centre Orders (JJCO) where YJS are involved in supervising the community element, Reducing Offending Programme (ROP), voluntary referrals, bail support cases and work with probation.

• Males accounted for **over four-fifths** (83%) of YJS referrals in 2013/14. Despite the increase in referrals the proportion of males and females has remained consistent over the period with males accounting for between 81% and 83%.

• In 2013/14, just under a third of referrals (31%) were for young people aged 17 and over.

• Young people aged **10 to 13** accounted for 7% of referrals in 2013/14.

• In 2013/14, one-third (33%) of young people involved with YJS were Roman Catholic. A further 26% were Protestant, 31% were other religions, 1% had no religious belief and the remaining 9% were unknown.
THEN

NOW

PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE

DISTRICT ATTORNEYS' OFFICE

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