

The role of the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB) in preventing child sexual exploitation and harmful sexual behaviour

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Background

The report, [“If it’s not better it’s not the end”](#) published in March 2015 by the Office of the Children's Commissioner for England identified the work needed to try to stop child sexual exploitation since their inquiry in 2011/13.

In the same month, the Home Office published a policy paper that set out [how the government is dealing with child sexual exploitation](#) in response to the failures identified by Professor Alexis Jay and Louise Casey in their recent reviews into child sexual exploitation in Rotherham.

Research shows that links can exist between those children, who have been victims and survivors of sexual abuse or exploitation, and incidents of their offending behaviour.

The YJB has always actively supported work to identify and prevent child sexual exploitation resulting from harmful sexual behaviour by adults or by other young people.

Examples of our most recent work in this area

2014

- in partnership with the Home Office, the YJB delivered awareness and training events on girls and sexual exploitation
- a bespoke 'working with girls self-assessment toolkit ' developed and published for use by all youth offending teams (YOTs)
- a new 'Youth Justice Interactive Learning Space' (YJILS) training module developed specifically on working with girls and sexual exploitation
- in partnership with the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) the YJB designed and delivered five regional events in London, Bristol, Manchester, Leeds and Birmingham to help frontline staff identify and tackle problematic sexual behaviour
- contributed to a cross-government 'gap analysis', led by the Ministry of Justice, which looked at systems for preventing sexual abuse in government institutions.

2015

- all YJB staff are trained on child protection issues
- developed guidance with the Home Office on the forthcoming new 'Sexual Harm Prevention Orders' (SHPO) and 'Sexual Risk Orders' (SRO)
- the SHPO can be made by a court for an individual who has been convicted or cautioned for a relevant offence and who poses a risk of sexual harm to the public in the UK or children or vulnerable adults abroad. The SRO can

similarly be made for an individual who has committed an act of a sexual nature and who, as a result, poses a risk of sexual harm to the public in the UK or children or vulnerable adults abroad.

Forthcoming later this year

- Asset Plus, the new YOT assessment framework, includes improved identification of risks of sexual exploitation or past abuse in the lives of children and young people; and will signpost practitioners to appropriate further assessment and support

The risk factors used in Asset Plus have been informed by the work of the Children's Commissioner Inquiry into 'Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups

Asset Plus will be rolled out to all YOTs across England and Wales during 2015-16. It will then be rolled out in the secure estate for children and young people

- The YJB will be contributing to forthcoming cross-government work to deliver on the recommendations set out in the recent report - 'Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation' - published by the Cabinet Office in March 2015.

For more information, please contact [Bill Kerlake](#), Safeguarding & Child Protection Manager.