

Sunderland Youth Offending Service

Newsletter: Issue 8 / January 2006

Welcome to the 8th edition of the YOS newsletter...

... for staff, colleagues and service users, to keep you in touch with what is happening in the Service. Your contributions to future newsletters would be very welcome. Details of how to contact us are on the back page. We hope you enjoy this edition.

In this edition we report on:

- Youth Justice Board visit
- Tackle It celebration event
- Staff Team Building Day
- Volunteer Referral Order Panel Members
- National Anti-Social Behaviour Conference

Happy New Year for 2006

We would like to wish all our staff, partners and stakeholders a happy new year. This first new year edition of the Youth Offending Service partnership newsletter is an opportunity to celebrate the successes of 2005 and look forward to the challenges of 2006. The newsletter highlights further successes in awards for innovation and quality of service with the YJB Communicating Youth Justice, the Community Care and the Quality Awards, which builds on a number of prestigious awards earlier in the year.

Our volunteers and service users have also been on a winning streak with three of our volunteers short-listed for Volunteer of the Year Awards and a service user winning the SAFC Top Scorer Award. 2005 also saw Sunderland YOS top the national performance tables for Youth Offending Teams in England and Wales and a visit from Rosemary Harthill on 5th December 2005 gave young people and parents an opportunity to talk to the Youth Justice Board directly about the quality of the services they have received.



YOS Christmas Partnership Event

It was a pleasure to celebrate our achievements with a Christmas lunch with our professional colleagues from a range of disciplines and agencies and look forward to 2006. The Year of 2006 will bring new things to the YOS, particularly as the service aligns with the developing Integrated Children's Service, whilst simultaneously responding to the rapid pace of change which continues to dominate the criminal justice arena. In 2006 we will continue our commitment to achieving genuine outcomes for children, young people and their families.

We hope you enjoy reading this newsletter which wraps up the year of 2005. We wish you a very happy new year for 2006 and look forward to receiving your contributions to future editions of this newsletter.

Community Care Award Winner

The success of Sunderland Youth Offending Service's Tackle It programme was recognised with a prestigious Community Care award in the safeguarding children category. Two of the young people involved with 'Tackle It' attended the presentation of the award with Alan Scott, Sunderland Youth Offending Service Prevention Manager. The award ceremony took place in London on the 15th December 2005 where the award sponsored by Hillcrest Care was collected along with a cheque for £5,000 to help further develop the programme.



After the ceremony Alan Scott said *"It's a great honour to receive this award, it pays great testimony to what can be achieved by working in partnership"*. Sunderland Football club's John Fothergill, one of the coaches involved in the 'Tackle It' explained *"Some of the changes I have witnessed in the attitudes and behaviour of young people on Tackle It have been remarkable"*.

YOUTH JUSTICE BOARD COMMUNICATING JUSTICE AWARD 2005



(Chair of the Youth Justice Board)

Sunderland Youth Offending Service has been won the Youth Justice Board Communicating Youth Justice Award 2005 for their joint work with the Local Authority Press Office in developing positive media relations promoting the work of Sunderland YOS and ensuring positive media coverage of efforts to address youth crime.

At the national Youth Justice Board Convention held in London (November 2005), YOS Manager Judith Hay was presented with the award. She said:-

"We'd like to thank our partners and press for their support for our work promoting positive media coverage of young people in Sunderland and in particular reassuring the public that this city is a safe place to live".

The award was presented in recognition of the positive media relationships Sunderland YOS has developed with the local press and radio broadcasters. In particular, for the way in which the service had turned around negative media coverage in the summer of 2004 with a positive summer long campaign highlighted the work of the YOS in 2005. Rod Morgan, Chair of the Youth Justice Board for England & Wales, presenting the award at the national convention said:- *"This award is presented following the YOT's work as they turned around a local paper after a front page headline sensationalising local crime rates. The YOT has since achieved a series of very significant positive news stories, a model of how negative media coverage can be transformed by planning, developing relationships with regional papers and recognising media needs as well as their own".*

YOUTH JUSTICE BOARD VISIT

On 5th December 2005, Rosemary Harthill of the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales visited Sunderland to see the work of the Youth Offending Service. Whilst Rosemary was in Sunderland she had the opportunity to see a number of schemes including the Restorative Justice Community Payback Scheme, the Rehabilitation and Aftercare Programme (RAP), the Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Scheme (ISSP) and the Phoenix Fire Safety Project. Rosemary is one of twelve board members for the Youth Justice Board (as appointed by the Home Secretary) and the visit gave her an opportunity to see projects in action, talk to young people and their parents and in her words *"hearing frankly how things are going, the successes and obstacles, and thinking what can be done to overcome the obstacles"*. As a result of this opportunity to debate policy and practice Judith Hay, Youth Offending Service Manager has been invited to the Youth Justice Board as part of a select group to explore further issues around restorative justice.

During her visit Rosemary had the opportunity to talk to a young person and his mother about his experiences on the developing Rehabilitation and Aftercare Programme and in particular how the voluntary nature of the scheme, alongside the intensive support of the RAP Support staff had succeeded where all else had failed. Similarly she also had the opportunity to talk to two young sisters in relation to their experiences of ISSP – and what worked for them. Rosemary visited a community payback scheme in action and spent sometime on site at the Phoenix scheme.

Commenting on her visit Rosemary concluded *"I had the impression of a well-led, well focussed and enthusiastic team, open to creative ideas and innovation, and communicating with the public more and more effectively"*



Rosemary Harthill (YJB) visiting the Phoenix Project

Regional Anti-Social Behaviour Conference

Sunderland Youth Offending Service Manager Judith Hay, along with Carol Long, Head of Crime Reduction Northumberland and Wallace Wilson, Regional Youth Justice Board Manager, spearheaded a regional Anti-Social Behaviour conference. The aim was to bring together people in the region to identify ways to tackle anti-social behaviour.



One of the highlights of the event was key note speaker Al Aynsley-Green (Children's Commissioner for England) who urged services in the region to continue to engage with and invest in children and young people as the generations of tomorrow. The event featured a range of local and national speakers including Rod Morgan, Chair of the Youth Justice Board for England & Wales and Glenys Jones, formerly Director of Sunderland Social Services. There were also a number of other speakers as well as workshop groups to explore issues.



Conference delegates were also treated to a performance by the interactive drama group GIBBER, who presented their version of 'Auntie Social Behaviour' (pictured right). It was an opportunity for



professionals working in the field of anti-social behaviour to see how young people can explore and debate issues through drama and issue based workshops

Quality Awards 2005

The City of Sunderland Social Services Department recognise and celebrate 'quality' projects and programmes through their Quality Awards. On the 1st December 2005 teams who submitted and entry for the award were invited to a ceremony at the Seaburn Marriott Hotel. Sunderland YOS entered two projects into the Quality Awards – Wear Kids and also Sunderland Volunteer Referral Order Panels. Both entries were successful in receiving a Highly Commended Award.



At the award ceremony a special internal award was presented to Judith Hay, Sunderland YOS Manager, in relation to the Public Servant of the Year Award. Judith was one of only five people shortlisted for this very prestigious national award. The City of Sunderland Social Services Department recognised her nomination.

Volunteers

VOLUNTEER AWARDS

In our last edition we advised you that three of our volunteers had been shortlisted for the Year of the Volunteer Award 2005. All three have now received their commemorative medals and two have been put forward as category champions to the national awards in London. Pictured right: Dave Wilson, Referral Order Panel Member receiving his commemorative medal.



Allan Spencer
Volunteer

DEPARTURE OF A VOLUNTEER

It was goodbye and best wishes for one of our longest standing volunteers, Allan Spencer, who recently gave up his role as a Community Referral Order Panel Member after volunteering for Sunderland Youth Offending Service for 5 years. He became a panel member after retiring from his Senior Social Worker Post at Durham County Council as he "wanted to continue to help and work with young people". Allan is an outstanding example of the commitment made by volunteers everyday. We were sad to say goodbye to Allan but wish him all the best in his retirement. Allan was presented with a certificate for long service from Deborah Loraine, Referral Order Team Manager.

Would you like to be a volunteer?

Panel Members work with young offenders their families/carers and victims of crime. They play an active role in creating intervention programmes to address a young person's offending and also participate in work with victims of crime to ensure victims have a say in what happens to the young person who offended against them.

Community Panel Members require no formal qualifications, though commitment and enthusiasm are essential. They must also have the ability to communicate with a range of people, including young people, their families/carers, victims of crime and professionals. Community Panel Members will be expected to commit to Panels for a minimum of twelve months at a negotiated level.

BECOMING A PANEL MEMBER

Sunderland Youth Offending Service are actively recruiting for more panel members. If you would like further information on becoming a panel member please visit our volunteer page on Sunderland Youth Offending Service website at www.sunderland.gov.uk/yos/volunteers.asp where a copy of the application form can be found. Alternatively please call Deb Loraine on 0191 5663000.



Making a Difference Award

Sunderland YOS submitted an entry for Faye Clark, and also a joint entry for Julia Parr and Lucy Nowlin for Sunderland's Children's Services Making a Difference Award, both of which were successful. The entries were judged by professionals, a group of staff, a group of parents and carers, and a group of young people.

The judges commented on entry for Faye Clark saying "it was felt strongly that this entry was the best attempt to offer support and motivate a young person to make a positive step forward". The overall comments for Julia and Lucy's submission was that it was "the best example of involving a young person in decision making to enable the best possible outcome".

Congratulation to all three members of staff!

This page focuses on the work of the Sunderland Youth Offending Service's Prevention Services, primarily that of the Tackle It scheme that works in partnership with Sunderland AFC to provide an educational football project to young people across the City of Sunderland.

Tackle it™

Top Scorers Award



The Sunderland AFC Foundation celebrated their Top Scorers award, which highlights and rewards special young people from their educational football related projects, including Tackle It. The celebration event was held on the 1st November 2005 at the Stadium of Light.

Adam Jones received the Tackle It award, which was sponsored by Wear Kids (part of the prevention team within Sunderland Youth Offending Service). In addition to one young person receiving an award for each of the educational football related projects, Sunderland AFC Foundation also awarded an overall winner. Adam Jones also received this award, and was presented it by Sunderland SAFC player, John Stead.

Lesley Spuhler, Director of the SAFC Foundation said "This is a great reward for SAFC Foundation as it demonstrates that the programmes we deliver via football related activity do make a difference to young peoples lives, and consequently the community at large. The relationship we have with Sunderland Youth Offending Service is a positive and successful example of what innovative partnership working can achieve"

Tackle It in Prisons

Recently the Tackle It initiative has been extended to be delivered with young offenders in custody (prison). By working with the Prison Service the programme is able to reach highly disaffected, disengaged young people who would not normally access this type of programme through schools with many being out of full time education, training and employment. Judith Hay, Youth Offending Service Manager said "we are very pleased with the partnership working that has taken place through Tackle it. The success of the Castington Pilot shows how far Tackle It has come in a very short space of time. I'm now keen to see how we can keep driving it forward in the future."

John Fothergill, from Tackle It said "the course at Castington Young Offenders Institute has been very successful. The participants have shown a keen interest in the theory and practical side and have worked together to design an anti bullying policy, given their views on earning respect and the importance of controlling your temper."

Tackle It Celebration Event

A celebration event was held at the end of November to celebrate the success of the Tackle It Substance Misuse in Schools scheme. The programme involved resident artists who used art to challenge children and young people to look at their knowledge and understanding of substance misuse issues. Prior to working with the young people the artists were provided with training by specialist substance misuse trainer Derek Winter to ensure they had a good understanding of substance misuse issues. A range of art was used to convey key messages including dance, painting, modelling and film. From this young people produced a range of work including posters, masks, banners and their own film.

Murder Mystery Event

To celebrate being joint first in the Youth Justice Board league table, staff from Sunderland Youth Offending Service went to Lumley Castle, in Chester-le-Street, on the 4th November 2005 on a team building day based around a murder mystery. The day was organised by Alan Scott, YOS Prevention Manager (as pictured right, with Judith Hay, YOS Manager, and the three organisers for Mystery Events).

On arrival staff were divided into teams, and in each team two main characters were chosen. The other team members were also given character names. Everyone was taken through to the Main Hall, where the scene was set and told that they were at the C.O.N.S (Cheerful Obviously Nice Society) annual meeting and awards ceremony.

Staff were given the storyline in terms of the murder mystery. The scene was set around the murder of a member at last years C.O.N.S. celebration, and delegates were tasked with investigating the murder.

The first clue that given was a letter from the deceased providing reasons for his murder. The letter contained cryptic clues, which needed to be solved, to help piece together who the murderer was.

Whilst analysing the note, a C.O.N.S member rushed in to tell us that "Roland Stone" had just been found murdered (played by Ciaron Gallagher, YOS DTO Specialist Officer). Beside his body were a number of clues including a hammer and a car number plate -there were now two murders to solve.

Staff had to work together in teams to help solve the murder of Roland. The main characters were asked to go to the stage and tell the audience a bit about themselves. This was to provide clues into their association with Roland.

Each team nominated their suspect for the murder of Roland Stone, and the team who were closest to the actual event received a prize.

The Murder Mystery Organisers then revealed the murder mystery to the YOS, and described who did it. The murderer was Scarlet Kipper, played by Marie Barritt, YOS Referral Order Officer. She was originally excluded from the investigations, as she was thought to be nothing more than a 'Red Herring'.

Here are a few comments from staff who attended the event:

"It was an enjoyable day in impressive surroundings, working with people from other teams"

"It was a really good team building exercise"

"It was an enjoyable day, lots of fun, and I got to spend time in a team with staff that I don't usually work with"



Organisers of the YOS Away Day



The victim, Roland Stone, played by Ciaron Gallagher, YOS DTO Specialist Officer



The Main Characters



Scarlet Kipper, the murderer, played by Marie Barritt, YOS Referral Order Officer

Christmas Celebrations

Over the festive period Sunderland Youth Offending Service held a number of events to bring together partner agencies, staff and families. This included a special Christmas meal, funded, prepared and served by YOS staff for young people in contact with the service, many of whom were unlikely to experience the same festivities as most of us enjoyed at this time.

PARTNERSHIP NETWORKING EVENT

On Wednesday 14th December 2005 partner agencies were invited to Sunderland Youth Offending Service for a Christmas lunch. The event provided an opportunity for partners and stakeholders to visit the youth offending service premises, get to know the Youth Offending Service Management Team and speak to frontline staff. It was also an opportunity to reflect on the achievements of the multi-agency YOS in partnership with others during 2005.

Pictured right: Councillor Eric Timmins, Press Officer Kevin Douglas & Service Development Manager Pam Jenkins



STAFF CELEBRATIONS

Families of the Youth Offending Service were also able to take the opportunity to share the festivities with a Christmas party organised by Judith Hay Youth Offending Service Manager. It was an opportunity for staff and their families to get together whilst the children received a gift from Santa and also played games courtesy of our resident games organiser Andy Lamb! With everyone making a contribution to the event the buffet was a real festive feast.

It was also an opportunity for the Youth Offending Service staff to thank the cleaning services staff with Christmas gifts. Particular thanks go to Pam Jenkins, Service Development Manager for her support in organising the event.

Pictured right: Families of the Youth Offending Service with Santa Clause (courtesy of Alan Scott, Prevention Manager)



CHRISTMAS DINNER FOR SERVICE USERS

On Friday 30th December young people in contact with the service were invited to enjoy a traditional Christmas dinner with roast turkey, crackers and all the trimmings! The event was the idea of Andrea Robson of the Community Action and Support Team (CAST). Andrea said *“the idea for the YOS Christmas lunch came from a young person on my caseload who was homeless. I thought about what he was going to do for his Christmas dinner. This then made me think about other young people who are homeless or less fortunate than myself. We have our Christmas dinners with all the trimmings and some of our young people have nothing”*.

The event which was all funded, prepared and organised by frontline staff was a huge success. Speaking to the local press about the event Judith Hay, YOS Manager said *“this is the time of year when everyone thinks about friends and family, and the importance of being part of the whole occasion and we wanted to show our youngsters they are all part of that wider celebration and thank them for their efforts this year”*.

Children in Need 2005

As always staff from the Youth Offending Service did their bit for Pudsey in 2005. A total of £131.30 was raised through a dress down day in the Business Support Unit and a breakfast special across the wider service. Managers provided the ingredients whilst staff did the cooking. Thanks to all involved.



Getting to Know...Stephanie McNaul

Stephanie McNaul has been working with Sunderland YOS on a project that has opened up the management team to scrutiny – looking at management styles and how we can adopt transformational leadership qualities. In this edition we catch up with Stephanie on her placement at the YOS.

Name Stephanie McNaul

Role/Official Title: National Management Trainee

Place of Work Sunderland YOS, Lambton House

In one paragraph, how would you describe your role?

Unique! As the Council employs me centrally I spend time working in different departments in a variety of roles, such as project management, policy development & management consultancy. This means that I'm constantly developing new skills & learning more about specific issues facing the Council, such as sickness absence management & flexible working.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

The variation. I like the fact that I get to move jobs quite frequently, which brings me into contact with lots of people in different areas of the council. I get to see the breadth of work that the council does rather than being pigeonholed in one post.

What couldn't you do without at work? Tea!

What frustrates you at work? Unnecessary bureaucracy and unproductive meetings.

What is your most used phrase at work?

"I'm not a student" (mostly because the scheme I'm on is quite new and most people don't know anything about it!)

What would you like to achieve in the future (either personally or within the job)?

To work on some important (and interesting) projects which will make a real difference to people; and to finish my time with Sunderland having developed the skills necessary to be a good manager in local government (and hopefully be offered another contract at the end of my current one!).



Service User Feedback

POETRY BY A YOUNG OFFENDER

I never used to think before I had a drink.
The only thing on my mind was getting off my head,
And having a good laugh with my mates.
If it meant getting into trouble then it was part of the laugh.
One Saturday I met up with my mates in the ISIS Pub
Where I drank pint after pint until I was down to my last £5.
So we went to the shops to buy some cans of lager.
After, someone suggested we go to his house at Ashbrooke,
So we agreed.
As we got near he knew a short cut through Thornhill School,
And over a metal fence.
As a passed my cans over I never expected that I would fall,
But I did.
I knocked myself out for about 10 minutes.
When I woke up I had a broken my left arm,
And fractured my left wrist.
I spent five days in hospital,
Needed metal plates in my elbow and pins in my arm and hand.
Just because I never did **THINK BEFORE I HAD A DRINK.**

LETTER FROM PARENT

I thought I'd put pen to paper to let you know how much I appreciate everything you did whilst supporting Ryan as his Bail Officer.

I don't think you realise how much you also helped us, because before you came I felt as if no-one believed me, and really couldn't see an end to it all. Whilst there has still been ups and downs, Ryan is now home but I'm much stronger, thanks to you and Karen (nurse), and I'm able to lay a few rules down.

So I'll finish by saying thanks again. You gave me my life back. I mean this from the bottom of my heart.

Love and best wishes.

Contacting the Youth Offending Service:

For further information you can contact the Youth Offending Service at:

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For all newsletter enquiries, please contact the Planning and Information Team on 0191 566 3048. This publication can be made available in Braille, large print, on audiocassette and in other languages. Please contact the Youth Offending Service for further information if you require any of these.