Make Me a Criminal

Preventing youth crime

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Institute for Public Policy Research

Challenging ideas – Changing policy

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This paper was first published in February 2008.
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Acknowledgements

Executive summary

This report makes the case for a more therapeutic and family-based approach to youth offending, as opposed to the present, more punitive, system. The arguments for the proposed approach appear persuasive – not only on humanitarian grounds, but also in terms of economics and efficacy.

The UK suffers from two related problems that define the terrain within which youth crime is debated. First, evidence seems to show that we experience higher and more sustained levels of youth crime and anti-social behaviour than culturally similar countries. Second, the UK public experiences more fear of crime and concern about youth misbehaviour than citizens elsewhere. In turn, UK citizens are known to favour more punitive responses to youth crime than those in Sweden, Finland or Germany, and are less forgiving of youth misbehaviour.

But this may be changing. There is emerging evidence that sections of the public do increasingly accept that a more welfare-orientated approach to youth crime would be fairer and more likely to succeed than current approaches – particularly if poor parenting were tackled. A progressive policy agenda for crime reduction can therefore find moorings in public attitudes, although the task is a difficult and complex one.

How do policy and attitudes need to change?

Despite the impressive progress in youth policy, such as that set out in the Department for Children, Schools and Families' Children's Plan (December 2007), there have been mistakes both in the previous legislative agenda on youth offending and in the discourse around, and response to, young people and social change.

This paper argues that:

> Primary-level, universal strategies must improve the capacity of communities including families, local community, schools, early years education and youth activities to socialise norms of behaviour and respect for communities. This is particularly important in light of social change affecting these institutions.

> Secondary-level, targeted strategies must improve the capacity of social services, health services and specialist programmes to both reach and improve the behaviour of the most-at-risk groups, such as those committing anti-social behaviour, showing emotional problems, or having problems at school.

> Tertiary-level reforms must improve the capacity of criminal justice system to both punish and rehabilitate offenders.

At the primary level of prevention, problems exist at the family and community level – partly because social change has undermined the time spent between adults (and parents) and young people, and because engagement in communities is, on the whole, less constructive. Schools are also unable to adequately socialise the most-at-risk because children and young people tend only to come into contact with welfare support when already displaying serious risk factors such as truancy. The most 'at risk' (in this case, excluded pupils) are inadequately supported, even though these are the children and young people most likely to commit crime, breach an order or end up in court.

Secondary-level programmes do not seem to reach the most-at-risk often enough, and are not always based on the real evidence of what works in diverting at-risk young people away from crime. There is not enough joined-up service provision.

Approaches to tackling youth offending

In the UK we lack a single agency responsible for early intervention, such as the ministries for youth and family that exist in Germany and Austria, although the new Department for Children, Schools and Families, working with the Ministry of Justice, may rectify this. Specific (secondary) community-based

prevention work is nearly exclusively targeted on children at risk, and mostly includes leisure activities, mentoring or educational training such as those via Sure Start. However, these are aimed at very young children and families, rather than the 5–12 age group, for which prevention strategies are thought to be most effective. This is different to countries such as Finland, Sweden and Canada, where primary school age children are served by additional universal leisure, therapeutic and family interventions and activity offers, and where emphasis is on using these methods.

According to the Youth Justice Board, in the UK we spend 11 times more on locking up our young people as we do on prevention projects to stop them getting involved in crime in the first place.

Cool to be criminal? Impacts of social change

Contrary to public perception, the UK does not experience significantly worse crime than elsewhere, but it does appear that the UK suffers more intractable and higher levels of anti-social behaviour than other countries in Western Europe.

Relationships with peers

Several social trends have combined to change the context in which young people develop their social and emotional skills. These have altered the amount of time children spend with adults outside school, and the kinds of activities they participate in after school. As a result, we are less likely to see the more affluent, more advantaged young people on the streets as they are increasingly involved in extra-curricular activities, while the more-at-risk are spending more time unsupervised with their peers.

Meanwhile, it appears that there are changes to youth culture and attitudes, with young people becoming less trusting of authority and more heterogeneous in their views of social issues.

It appears that British young people are being given both increasing autonomy over certain areas of their lives at younger ages (their social, consumer and sexual lives) and not so much meaningful responsibility (in terms of having families, jobs, and independent living). At the same time, messages about what is 'cool' in terms of behaviour are set increasingly by advertisers and peers rather than parents. Many analysts have argued that children are unable to cope with the complex and adult environment that they now need to navigate from an ever-earlier age, and that this is increasing levels of anxiety and rebelliousness in younger groups.

Public fear

Adult society has begun increasingly to fear and demonise young people. Studies have shown an increased media and political focus on youth anti-social behaviour, and changes to youth justice policy, such as lowering the age of criminal responsibility to 10, have been perceived as encouraging high levels of concern about youth misbehaviour, and to encourage Britons to be more likely to hold young people independently responsible for their misbehaviour than people in other countries.

Despite all this, it is important that we are not fatalistic about social change. Many policy levers exist that can respond to the changed landscape of youth and redefine the role of families, communities and the institutions of government in young people's lives, as we show below.

Risk factors for offending

Research shows unequivocally that it is possible to identify those individuals most at risk of committing offending behaviour. Longitudinal studies show that the most prolific offenders start early, between the ages of 10 and 13, and have longer criminal careers than other criminals, lasting on average 13 years.

The following factors emerge as particularly important in explaining why some young people offend:

- Having a parent who is an offender, poor relations with parents and not spending much time with parents
- Disorder in the local area and lack of adult intervention in youth activities
- Lack of extracurricular activities and having little or nothing to do in the local area

- Having peers and siblings who offend
- Spending more time with peers than parents
- Truanting or being expelled from school.

In addition, several protective factors emerge – in other words, factors that reduce the probability that a young person will offend:

- High levels locally of collective efficacy (the willingness of adults to actively maintain local civic norms)
- Engaging in positive socialising activities and having lots to do locally
- Having a good relationship with parents
- Having positive peer relationships
- Enjoying the school experience and getting a lot from it.

Emotional and mental health factors often emerge as being strongly linked to anti-social and offending behaviour. Although socioeconomic factors remain absolutely key to young people's behaviour, with those from disadvantaged backgrounds being much more likely to offend than more affluent young people, indicators of emotional well-being at age 10 – locus of control (the degree to which events are perceived as being within their control), self-esteem, and some behavioural and emotional indicators – have a significant relationship with behavioural outcomes at age 16.

Raising children: influence of familial and social context

Cohort analysts shows that young people who have strong, supportive family relationships are more likely to develop good social and emotional skills. Research suggests that the nature of the interaction between parents and child is more important than structural factors such as income and parental education in predicting the development of social and emotional skills. Specific elements of parenting, such as providing stability and security, and authority without hostility, are proven to be particularly important in positive social and emotional development.

But parenting is not the only factor that matters. An analysis by ippr of the 1970 British Cohort Study also shows that some extracurricular activities are positively associated with higher self-esteem and better capacity to manage behaviour. These activities must take place in a group setting, with a clear hierarchy, clear and well-defined universal aims, and consistent meetings.

Activities that combine the appropriate level of skills acquisition, hierarchy, interaction with adult authority figures and constructive activity include:

- Regular sport, drama or arts-based activities
- Activities that involve working towards a long-term goal and in which skills are acquired
- Cadet training that combines both of the above.

Activities that are associated with offending include:

- Regular unsupervised socialising with peers in disadvantaged, high-crime areas
- Regular socialising with anti-social young people without supervision.

In addition, low collective efficacy in the local community is one of the most accurate predictors of high levels of anti-social behaviour in England and Wales. The central idea here is that collective efficacy does not make residents more likely to intervene in serious crimes, rather it enhances their preponderance to intervene in the precursors of crime, for example by discouraging the gathering of teenage gangs or drug taking. Thus interventions which encourage collective efficacy in communities are likely to impact positively on youth anti-social behaviour.

Recommendations

ippr's research suggests several problems with the current approach to preventing offending. One of the most important is the level at which we intervene. There is not enough being done at the primary level (that is, to prevent crime before it occurs) to tackle the broader causes of offending. Second, once an individual is displaying risk factors, or has committed an anti-social act, the nature of the intervention needs to be directed at preventing that behaviour from being repeated, rather than on empty punishments. Hence the recommendations relating to the reform of anti-social behaviour legislation focus on directing young people towards support, rather than on merely punishing them for their behaviour, as too often happens at present.

The recommendations below are necessarily broad in range and scale. They aim first to tackle the culture that permits or even encourages youth offending, and second to target at-risk young people with the right interventions and programmes.

The recommendations are divided into primary and secondary forms of prevention.

Primary prevention

1. Tackling child poverty and in-work poverty
The unavoidable connection between poverty and criminality reminds us once again of the importance of tackling child poverty. Recommendations on how this agenda should move forward, particularly in terms of tackling in-work poverty, are advanced in other work by ippr (Cooke and Lawton 2007).

2. Better support for families: towards a worker/carer model
Strategies to better support families to spend time with children and teenagers are key to responding in a progressive way to social change. Too often, there is a discernibly fatalistic approach to social change. There is a sense that we will never return to the 1950s 'golden age' of nuclear families and stay-at-home-mothers, and this is true.

But we are certainly not heading towards moral and social decline. There are a great many reforms and policies that can help us move as a society towards another golden age – that of a 'worker/carer' society in which caring is valued as much as work. This does not mean, as some have claimed, replacing parenting with professional childcare services and looking to programmes and services to repair the job of poor parenting (the 'professionalising out of childhood'). What it does mean is providing the right balance of support and service to families so that they in turn may balance their working and caring responsibilities more effectively.

The range of reforms to support better work-life balance for parents and families previously identified by ippr (see Bennett and Cooke 2007) should be acted upon. These include:

• Better childcare provision

• Better support for, and greater availability of, flexible working for families with older children

• Better parental leave packages – particularly, better paternity leave to ensure that fathers are able to undertake proper caring roles in families.

Below we focus on areas in which new recommendations are needed.

3. Protecting children: banning corporal punishment
The Government has previously ruled out moving further towards the banning of physical punishment by parents. But it should reconsider its position in light of the evidence presented in the report, as well as for moral reasons. More than 40 years of research show that hitting children increases the chances of aggression, anti-social behaviour and criminal behaviour. Recent studies have demonstrated beyond doubt the causal relationship between physical punishment and increased aggressive behaviour.

Parents should be banned from any form of physical punishment of children. This would not only

reduce criminality in the long term, but would also send out a message about the kind of society we want to be – one in which violence and physical abuse are not tolerated – and send a message to children that they will be treated as we expect them to treat others, and that the law is there to protect them as well as to enforce norms of behaviour.

4. Better provision of activities for 12- to 18-year-olds
Extra-curricular activities for all young people should be provided in every local area, with funding sources for structured extra-curricular activities consolidated into one fund. Moreover, the £80 million that the Ministry of Defence spends each year on the Combined Cadet Forces (CCF), mainly in independent schools, should either be diverted to funding CCF units in schools in deprived areas, or continue to fund only those CCF units in independent schools that attract a certain amount of attendance (say a minimum of 50 per cent) by children at state schools in deprived areas.

Providers of structured extra-curricular activities in deprived areas should be able to apply to this consolidated fund in order to improve and increase provision within their local area. But in order to have an impact on outcomes, these activities would need to have the characteristics that we know are important in improving emotional and social development in young people. In other words, they need to be structured and hierarchical, give opportunities for progression, provide consistency and be regularly attended. Activities would therefore need to be accredited as fulfilling a minimum number of set criteria.

5. Supervised play areas
The Government should invest in a new programme of supervised play areas in disadvantaged, urban areas. These would be staffed adventure play parks, integrated with structured activity (for example, in parks outside Children's Centres and Youth Hubs). This is in line with plans set out in the DCSF's Children's Plan. It would involve:

- Rolling-out a Play Ranger programme, starting in disadvantaged areas

- Integrating landscaped play sites into Youth Hub design and planning

- Providing staffed adventure playgrounds in disadvantaged areas

- Initiating a workforce development programme for the play sector, with recruitment focused on local adults

- Offering subsidised access to indoor play areas for disadvantaged young people.

Further plans should be made to tackle traffic-safety issues in urban areas, and to make areas more child friendly.

6. Supporting collective efficacy
There are several ways in which changes could be made to planning and regulation policy that would help to support a richer variety of public spaces and places where people can meet. Among the most important ideas might be:

- Carrying out regular audits of 'congregational spaces' in each neighbourhood to be conducted by local authorities

- Introducing an 'Investor in Community' badge for commercial developers

- Preparing better strategies for involving local people in planning

- Ensuring that the development and use of shared space supports the above recommendations

- Introducing targets to encourage the development of local activities that are collective and participative. To this end there should a Public Service Agreement (PSA) target to encourage collective and community-led cultural activities – particularly among those from priority groups and in disadvantaged communities and those that encourage the mixing of different age groups.

- Charging local authorities with drawing up Community Plans promoting the long-term welfare of their areas.

Other measures should promote the active engagement of adults in maintaining civic order in their local areas – for example:

· 'Face the public' sessions initiated by the Government's Respect Action Plan should be expanded to mirror the model of Safer Community Councils developed in New Zealand. In these sessions, parents, local authority representatives, teachers from local schools, representatives of young people's groups, local women's groups, local business and church groups meet regularly with the local police to debate community issues.

· Schools should be encouraged to set up parent groups to mutually agree on rules for children. There are several examples of inner-city London schools taking the initiative in setting up parent groups, which meet regularly to discuss and agree on acceptable behaviours for students. There is currently a lack of evidence of the effectiveness of such schemes, so it would be worth investing in a series of pilot schemes to test the value of these and other initiatives.

7. Welfare teams in primary schools
The system of welfare support in English and Welsh schools is not focused enough on early intervention, and the statutory framework only kicks in when children begin to miss school – by which time it is more difficult to re-engage children and young people with their education. There is not enough coordination between schools and social services to pick up on problems when they occur at an early stage.

Local authorities should employ 'welfare teams' comprised of at least one child psychologist, a child psychiatrist, a family worker, a counsellor and a school nurse to undertake school visits. These teams should be based within schools. A similar approach in Alberta Province, Canada, suggests that one team should service no more than three schools in a local area, on a rotating cycle, to meet with children and monitor their welfare. These teams should be made available to all children, and should meet with each child at least once a year. They should be tasked with referring children and their families to appropriate support services, and would replace the current role of the school welfare officer.

Secondary prevention

8. Sure Start Plus: a targeted approach for at-risk 5-12s
There is a clear need for a coordinated, properly targeted but national service for children at risk of crime – particularly for those of primary school age – that tackles those factors within families and communities that can lead to youth crime. This public service should be introduced in line with previous ippr recommendations – particularly the idea behind 'Sure Futures', recommended in previous ippr work (Edwards 2004) – a service designed to address the needs of older children and teenagers.

Sure Start Plus would be an extension of the scheme of the same name currently being piloted with teenage parents and their children. It should be a coherent service that reaches those children who are at risk of prolific offending from ages 5 to 12: a Sure Start Plus programme directed at keeping young children out of crime that would push forward the gains made at Sure Start for the age 2-5s. Ultimately, this should be developed and implemented in a broader, more inclusive way in order to reach all parents, following a primary, not secondary, approach, although this will depend on resource availability.

Although provision and services offered should be responsive to local need, Sure Start Plus should offer the following types of intervention that are already offered in some parts of the country, across the nation:

· Cognitive behavioural therapy to address impulsiveness and other personality traits that lead to criminal activity

· Multisystemic therapy for those with the most complex needs

· Intensive education interventions for those with poor literacy attainment

· Targeted parenting programmes such as functional family therapy.

Touching hard-to-reach groups

The scheme should be targeted geographically at the most deprived areas, but we need to be aware that this in itself will not necessarily reach the hardest-to-reach groups. We therefore suggest a dual approach: first, geographical targeting, second, an element of individual entitlement for at-risk children to ensure that the service reaches those who need it the most. Otherwise, children's ability to access the intervention may well be limited by lack of parental interest or other factors which make it difficult for the poorest to attend. One way in which this could be delivered is through individual budget-holding, currently being piloted in 16 areas.

9. Reform of ASBO legislation

Anti-social behaviour legislation should be explicitly framed as a way of directing the most at-risk young people and their families towards appropriate support and services in order to divert young people from crime:

- Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) should not be used on children younger than 12 unless accompanied by Family or Parenting Orders. Instead, Family and Parenting Orders should be used to improve the family context in which the behaviour occurs, or to ensure appropriate care for the child in extreme situations, such as foster care or additional service support for the family.

- Individual Support Orders should be used where appropriate, alongside Family and Parenting Orders, to target the social context in which offending occurs – in other words, to direct children to purposeful activities in the local area and ensure their attendance.

- All children and young people aged up to 18, should be assessed in all cases as a matter of course before being given an ASBO.

- ASBOs for older children under 18 should be scaled back from the current 2- to 10-year limit to 6-24 months.

10. Outreach schools

Huge variation exists in provision for pupils excluded from mainstream schools in England and Wales, with a marked 'insider-outsider' culture. Ensuring that there is real, engaging provision for these groups should be an essential component of an improved prevention strategy. In a future publication, ippr will recommend the introduction of Canadian-style 'outreach schools' (Sodha and Margo 2008, forthcoming). In Alberta Province, such schools (which have the same status and follow the same curriculum as state schools, but with a more flexible timetable) operate from disused buildings and shop fronts in the local area.

In the UK, subsidised by local authorities, outreach schools would offer learning opportunities that were less structured than those in mainstream schools, combined with on-site therapists and social workers, to young people who have been excluded from mainstream provision. These schools should offer a mixture of guided independent learning and class-based learning, and should be staffed by fully qualified teachers with training and experience in working with young people with challenging behaviours. They should offer a higher level of pastoral support than traditional schools.

Decriminalising children

Alongside this, we must continue to challenge and question the language used in media and by public figures (including politicians) to describe young people, and to refute the claim that young people are somehow distinct from mainstream society. Recognising the responsibility of adults to the younger generation may not be a challenge that policy – beyond involving parents in treatment and punishment of child offenders – can solve alone. Rather, cultural change will be crucial too.

Introduction

In London in 2007, 26 teenagers were killed in stabbings and shootings. In the first month of 2008, newspapers and broadcasters had already reported two fatal stabbings and several other knife attacks on teenagers, committed by teenagers, in England (BBC 2008). What is going on?

In 2005, a quarter of the youth population – 2.8 million young people – reported committing an offence (Home Office 2006). The vast majority were male and frequent offenders – young men for whom this was not a first offence and will not be their last. Half of the 2.8 million reported committing a serious crime. Many will have displayed characteristics at age 10 that could have enabled parents, teachers, social workers, psychologists or care workers to identify them as potential offenders. Many could have been diverted from crime via a variety of interventions and programmes that are far more cost effective than a jail term or criminal record. So far, however, this has happened in few cases.

The problem

The UK suffers from two related problems that define the terrain within which youth crime is debated. First, it is claimed that we suffer from higher and more sustained levels of youth crime and anti-social behaviour than culturally similar countries. Second, the public in the UK is more fearful and concerned about youth misbehaviour than members of the public elsewhere.

Public concern about how young people behave in visible public arenas, and the signals that this sends about the wider moral state of the community, feature strongly in survey data on anti-social behaviour. This concern is also reflected in research on neighbourhood incivilities (low-level anti-social behaviour) and in police reassurance programmes in the UK (see Margo *et al* 2006, Wood 2004, Bottoms 2006, Tuffin *et al* 2006). Large numbers of people take offence, and sometimes experience fear, at the sight of young people 'hanging around'. It signals to them a lack of social order, or the threat of disorder – even if in fact their personal risk of harm is slight or non-existent (Innes 2004). This perception of an association between young people and crime and disorder has been growing since the early 1990s (Margo *et al* 2006).

This notion of young people being somehow distinct from the rest of society has affected the debate about youth crime in several ways. It makes British adults more likely to hold young people responsible for misbehaviour and less likely to hold other adults or parents to account than those abroad. It makes the adult public more hostile and afraid of young people. Finally, it leads politicians and public to consider punishment and the legal system as a more vital component of a strategy to enforce adult norms on young people than those in some other countries who see the criminal justice system as a last resort when dealing with young people. As a result, we invest more in tackling and punishing offending than we do in strategies to support the early socialising structures of family, school, community.

In reality, young people are not distinct, nor are they a homogeneous group. They are part of a society in which it is the responsibility of adults to set – both formally and informally – norms of behaviour. It is also the responsibility of adults to maintain those norms – both through teaching young people control and caution, and by disciplining with measured authority when they transgress boundaries. The evidence on the centrality of adult-child interaction to the development of morality and emotional and social well-being is clear, both from detailed analysis and from psychological research.

This is not to say that young people are merely the products of adult society – they constantly make and remake their lives within social structures, and should learn to take responsibility for their behaviour. But it is no coincidence that youth crime rates rise and fall in similar patterns to adult crime – a pattern mirrored in almost all European countries surveyed in 2006 (Stevens *et al* 2006). Nor that, as we show later in Table 4.2, the best predictor of youth offending is a having a parent or guardian

who offends, a poor relationship with parents, or spending little quality time with parents. And unsurprisingly, when adults are less actively engaged with children in the local community (when levels of local collective efficacy are low) the behaviour of young people tends towards the anti-social and disruptive – as it does in schools where respect for teachers is low or when teachers intervene less often in playground bullying (Sodha and Margo 2008, forthcoming).

Somewhere along the way the belief that it is the moral responsibility of adults to socialise the young has been lost. Although the role of parents is still emphasised, adults in the UK emerge as more afraid of young people, less willing to intervene in the precursors of youth crime, and less willing or able to spend time with young people. (Our young people spend less time with their parents than those elsewhere in Europe, trust fewer adults in the local community and have less trust in figures of adult authority such as teachers and the police.) In turn, the UK public has favoured more punitive responses to youth crime than do Swedish, Finnish or German citizens (see Section 3) and is less forgiving of youth misbehaviour.

Changing our approach

However, there is recent research (see Section 1) that suggests that public attitudes are far more complex than have previously been thought, and that the UK public does support a more welfare-orientated approach to youth crime than has been assumed in the past.

In this report, it is argued that although there has been excellent progress in many areas of youth policy (particularly in light of the Department for Children, Schools and Families' recent Children's Plan [DCSF 2007]), there have been mistakes both in the previous legislative agenda on youth offending and in the discourse of, and response to, young people and social change. The solution to youth offending will be both holistic – responding properly to the emerging needs of all young people, particularly emerging problems that have resulted from social change to families and communities – and targeted at the most-at-risk. But it will be both less punitive and more interventionist than previous strategies.

Previous work takes a public health approach to the prevention of youth crime. This involves work at three levels:

- **Primary prevention** – universal approaches that aim to prevent crime before it occurs.

  - At primary level, universal strategies must improve the capacity of families, local community, schools, early years education and youth activities to socialise – embed – norms of behaviour and respect for communities (this is where crime prevention begins and is most effective). This is particularly important in light of social change affecting these institutions and the findings that adults in the UK are less likely to intervene in the precursors of offending than in other countries.

- **Secondary prevention** – approaches that focus on individuals who are at the highest risk of offending.

  - At secondary level, targeted strategies must improve the capacity of social services, health services and specialist programmes to both reach and improve the behaviour of the most-at-risk groups, such as those committing anti-social behaviour, showing emotional problems or having problems at school.

- **Tertiary prevention** – approaches that focus on preventing re-offending.

  - Tertiary-level reforms must improve the capacity of criminal justice system to both punish and rehabilitate offenders.

While previous programmes and policies have adopted a progressive narrative on youth crime – for example, the Children's Plan (DCSF 2007), the Respect Action Plan (Home Office 2006b), the Every Child Matters framework (2003) and the Transitions (ODPM 2005) and Youth Matters (DfES 2005) approaches, these have not successfully changed public opinion or the experience of those committing anti-social behaviour. Too often, infrastructure that has been developed with good intentions has been twisted in implementation. Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) are a good

example of a policy that was introduced with a positive aim of referring young people at risk to appropriate support before they fall into crime. However, in practice they have been more often used as a punishment, or as a way of speeding up entry to the criminal justice system (see Section 7).

Similarly, the rhetoric of the Government's Respect drive to 'tackle bad behaviour and respect good' (Home Office 2006b) was translated poorly in the process of dissemination via media and discussion – from an original narrative of adult responsibility to young people, to one of blaming and excluding young people for their behaviour. This issue of what language to use when talking about youth crime, and how to tackle public fear, needs revisiting.

In addition, at the primary level of prevention, problems exist at both the family and community level – partly because social change has undermined the quality and amount of time spent between adults (and parents) and young people, and because engagement in communities is on the whole not very constructive. Meanwhile, schools are unable to adequately socialise the most-at-risk because children tend only to come into contact with welfare support when already displaying serious risk factors, such as truancy. The most-at-risk children (excluded pupils) are inadequately supported, even though they are the children most likely to commit crime, breach an order or end up in court (Sodha and Margo 2008, forthcoming).

Our secondary-level programmes do not seem to reach the most-at-risk often enough, and are not always based on the real evidence of what works in diverting at-risk young people from crime. There is not enough joined-up service provision. This report reflects on, but does not consider in detail, the tertiary level, since this will be examined in detail in the second report in this series (Farrington-Douglas 2008, forthcoming).

Ultimately, though, there are limits to what policy alone can achieve: there is a relationship between legislation and culture, but it is a complicated one. We cannot expect there to be policy levers at every level capable of changing the way adults behave towards children and vice versa. The best example of this is in the area of enabling 'collective efficacy' – the propensity of adults to actively monitor and engage in youth behaviour. This emerges as one of the most important protective factors in preventing youth offending in very disadvantaged areas. Yet enabling collective efficacy is not a straightforward job for policy. Rather, we should accept the limits of legislation and focus on the ways in which policy and practice can provide a supportive infrastructure.

Structure of the report

This report first considers the style of crime prevention pursued in the UK, and trends in youth crime, setting these in an international context. It then examines the changing social context within which youth crime occurs, before looking in detail at what factors are correlated to youth crime, identifying the key risk factors. Finally, it examines the evidence of what works in preventing youth crime, and sets out policy recommendations based on this analysis.

Note about the data

This report incorporates original data analysis using the British Crime Survey (since 2001 carried out by the Home Office)[1], the 1970 British Cohort Study (BCS70) (a continuing, multi-disciplinary longitudinal study, carried out by several different bodies over its lifetime, of all those living in England, Scotland and Wales who were born in one particular week in April 1970; see Appendix for more information)[2] the British Social Attitudes Survey (carried out annually by the National Centre for Social Research)[3] and the Family Expenditure Survey (carried out on an ongoing basis by the Office for National Statistics)[4]. All these data sets were kindly supplied by the UK Data Archive, and are Crown Copyright.

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1. www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/bcs1.html
2. www.statistics.gov.uk/STATBASE/Source.asp?vlnk=1303&More=Y
3. www.statistics.gov.uk/STATBASE/Source.asp?vlnk=619&More=Y
4. www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Source.asp?vlnk=1385&More=Y

1. Current strategies for crime prevention

It has become very common for commentators and analysts to portray the UK youth justice system as being particularly punitive compared with those of other countries.

The Home Office's *Offending Crime and Justice Survey* details young people's contact with the criminal justice system, rates of self-reported offending and anti-social behaviour. The most recent figures (Home Office 2006) show that 10 per cent of self-reported young offenders had been cautioned or given a final warning by police in the previous year. Four per cent had been arrested, 2 per cent were taken to court, 1 per cent were given a community sentence and 1 per cent were fined or given a custodial sentence.

The proportion of offences that result in a criminal justice sanction is low, a fact that is well documented. But there are many reasons for why offenders are not reported, detected or dealt with via the criminal justice system (see Home Office 2005) – the most obvious being that the behaviour was dealt with at school or home. This is not so unusual: in countries such as Sweden and Finland, very few offences result in sanction and are more often dealt with by social services or the school (Stevens *et al* 2006).

A range of evidence suggests that the UK incarcerates more young people than do most other European countries (International Centre for Prison Studies 2006, 2007; Farrington-Douglas 2008, forthcoming). Why is this so? It is due in part to the different definitions of age of criminal responsibility in different countries. In England and Wales the age of criminal responsibility is just 10, while in Italy, Germany and Spain it is 14, in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden 15, in Portugal 16 and Belgium and Luxembourg 18. Thus in the UK a higher proportion of the youth population is being held criminally responsible than elsewhere.

In the past year, analysts and practitioners from many quarters have begun to criticise the young age at which we hold individuals criminally responsible for their behaviour (for example, see the joint letter by Jakobi *et al* to *The Times*, 9 October 2007) and called for different responses to anti-social behaviour, the precursor to youth offending. Our higher incarceration rate can also be traced to a more punitive, less holistic approach to youth offending than in some other countries.

Anglo-Saxon versus other European approaches

Junger-Tas (2004), argued that there are 'clear differences in approach to youth crime between "Anglo Saxon" countries and other EU states, particularly in Southern Europe and East and Central Europe', and recognises three distinct clusters of youth justice systems in Europe:

1. 'Justice'-orientated – for example, English-speaking countries (except Scotland).
Features include:

– Retributive measures

– Strong emphasis on accountability

– Parental responsibility a key message of politicians

– 'What works' principles applied (in other words, a pragmatic approach).

2. 'Welfare'-orientated – for example, Germany, France, Eastern Europe and Belgium.
Features include:

– Respect for individual rights of child

– Emphasis on preventative measures

– Prison as a 'last resort'

3. 'Just deserts' – Scandinavia plus Scotland.
Features include:

– A mix of welfare and justice systems

– Principles of treatment before punishment and use of welfare boards.

But what does this mean in practice? It is revealing to compare the prevention approach employed by England and Wales to those of Scotland and Sweden – both of which have a far lower rate of youth incarceration than England and Wales and take a 'just deserts' approach, according to Junger-Tas.

England and Wales

The criminal justice system response to youth crime in England and Wales has undergone significant changes in recent years, with the development of multi-agency Youth Offending Teams, and a policy shift towards preventing youth crime as the primary purpose of professional intervention with young offenders.

A secondary development has been a shift from treatment to punishment of young offenders and anti-social youth, which has been criticised in many recent analyses (Pitts 2005, Gill 2007), including international comparisons of crime prevention strategies (Stevens *et al* 2006). However, since 2007 there have been indications that this shift may be reversing, with a renewed emphasis on social policy responses to youth crime signified by the moving of the Respect Unit to the recently created Department for Children, Schools and Families and the progressive approach adopted in that department's Children's Plan.

Currently, the English and Welsh approach can be characterised as a 'twin-track' approach, with a focus on early identification of and intervention with young people at risk (with Anti-Social Behaviour Orders, parenting interventions and greater police presence), and intensive intervention with persistent young offenders who commit a disproportionate amount of youth crime. This approach acknowledges that critical elements of an individual's relationships and social environment interact with personal qualities to make one more susceptible to involvement in offending (Stevens *et al* 2006). However, it is not clear that this approach feeds through in practice. For instance, the low age of criminal responsibility means that 10-year-old offenders in England and Wales are considered personally responsible for their crimes.

An alternative view is that the criminal activity of a 10-year-old has emerged from a poor developmental context – and that it is this context that needs to be the focus of interventions, not the action of the individual. If this approach were a genuinely holistic one that understood the interaction of the individual and the environment in which crime occurred, one would expect that young people would be held criminally responsible only at an age at which they could reasonably be expected to be making autonomous decisions about activities and behaviour. It would therefore follow that prevention should be aimed primarily at families and communities in which crime is occurring, rather than at the individual.

There have been many crime prevention initiatives in recent years (Welsh and Farrington 2004), following the establishment of the Home Office Crime Reduction Programme. Yet most of these initiatives have been secondary and situational (for example, focusing on burglary reduction through target-hardening and anti-social behaviour legislation, which either places curfews and bans on young people who have already committed anti-social behaviour or directs them to support). Others have been based on the tertiary level (probation or prison-orientated).

Early intervention approaches are based on the secondary level. One successful example was the On Track programme, which was launched in 1999 and provided services for children aged 4-12 identified as at risk of being involved in crime in highly deprived communities. However, as Welsh and Farrington (ibid) conclude, nationally and locally there is no agency whose primary mandate is the prevention of crime. Universal, primary prevention strategies are at best embryonic.

Worthwhile intervention programmes implemented by Youth Offending Teams are targeted on detected offenders. In England and Wales, we have lacked a single agency responsible for early intervention using a public health approach – as taken by the ministries for youth and family that exist

in both Germany and Austria – although there is the potential for the Department for Children, Schools and Families to perform this role in partnership with the Ministry of Justice.

Specific (secondary) community-based prevention work is nearly exclusively targeted on children at risk, and includes mostly leisure activities, mentoring or educational training via Sure Start for example (see, for instance, Gray and Seddon 2005), but this is aimed at very young children and families rather than the 5-12 age group, the age at which prevention strategies are thought to be most effective (Farrington *et al* 2007). This is quite different to countries such as Finland, Sweden and Canada, where primary school age children are served by additional universal leisure, therapeutic and family interventions and activities.

Nevertheless, the Youth Justice Board, which is the body responsible for dealing with young offenders in England, has developed a focus on prevention. Its efforts in this respect do include various programmes to include young people in sports and other diversionary activities. Work is targeted on young people who are considered likely to offend, through the work of Youth Inclusion Programmes (YIPs, for 13- to 16-year-olds) and Youth Inclusion and Support Panels (YISPs, for 8- to 13-year-olds). Other organisations, including the crime reduction charity NACRO, have criticised the involvement of criminal justice agencies such as the Youth Offending Teams in work with young children, pointing to the dangers of labelling that this raises.

The Youth Justice Board is also developing an evidence-based approach to working with young offenders. It has published research that summarises the 'key elements of effective practice' in working with young offenders and has issued guidelines on the basis of this research for 15 types of programme. It has created training programmes for people who work with young offenders on how to implement this research, through the Professional Certificate in Effective Practice.

Scotland

Services that seek to prevent young people from becoming involved in offending behaviour play a critical role within Scotland's youth justice provision, which is coordinated by the Justice Department. Scotland shares with England and Wales a twin-track approach of early identification of potential offenders and intensive intervention with offenders, but the Scottish Executive has in practice given more attention to primary-level interventions than have England and Wales.

To this end, the Scottish Executive has invested more than £33 million since 2002/03 to support the expansion of intensive community-based initiatives that deal with offending behaviour and anti-social attitudes among young people (Youth Justice 2008). These range from prevention and diversionary projects for those on the periphery of offending through to intensive support and supervision for the most dangerous and disruptive young people. It is currently piloting a range of interventions, including a Youth Court feasibility study, a survey of fast-track approaches to dealing with persistent criminals, and a review of the effectiveness of Anti-Social Behaviour, Parenting and Community Service Orders (Youth Justice Scotland 2008).

Also indicative of the more welfare-orientated approach in Scotland is the Children's Hearings system. This structure is unique to Scotland, and provides a system of care and justice for vulnerable and troubled children and young people. It was one of the radical changes initiated by the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968, now incorporated in the Children (Scotland) Act 1995. In 1971, hearings took over from the courts most of the responsibility for dealing with children and young people under 16 who are in need of care or protection or who commit offences (Youth Justice Scotland 2008).

The welfare of the child is the paramount concern of the Children's Hearings system. Decisions by panel members at a hearing are based primarily on the needs of the child. Panel members are trained volunteers who consider whether the children who are referred are in need of compulsory supervision. The system is not about punishment, but about 'social education' (Youth Justice Scotland 2008). Around two-thirds of those children who are referred to a hearing are referred on grounds of care and protection, and have been offended against, rather than offending themselves (ibid).

In addition, diversionary services are delivered across Scotland to those young people on the periphery of offending behaviour. These services are designed to prevent this particular group of young people

from developing into more persistent and/or serious offenders by focusing on the factors that have led to their offending. By identifying and addressing the young person's specific needs, these services can work with young people to change their attitudes and behaviour. Again, these are delivered either directly by local authorities or other partner organisations, such as those in the voluntary sector (ibid).

Sweden

In contrast with the English/Welsh approach, Sweden concentrates its efforts on an inclusive, broad primary prevention, which is largely coordinated by the Swedish National Institute of Public Health. Because young people are not considered criminally responsible until the age of 15, prevention approaches focus mainly on families.

Currently, a series of quasi-experimental trial studies regarding the prevention of youth crime, on the primary and secondary level, are being undertaken. For instance, functional family therapy (FFT) has been implemented and evaluated by Hansson (2001) in a randomised control trial, with positive results so far. Other ongoing work includes a randomised study of multidimensional treatment foster care (MTFC) and the evaluation of multisystemic therapy. We return to the evidence on the efficacy of these programmes in Section 7.

In addition, the Swedish National Institute of Public Health (Hellström 2005) initiated a pre-school, family-based interactive prevention programme called the Community Parent Education Program ('COPE'), based on Cunningham's (1998) work. This is currently being evaluated by the University of Uppsala in a randomised controlled trial. The programme consists of about 15 group sessions, and can comprise up to 30 parents, with one or two group leaders. It aims not only to promote positive behaviour in children, and to teach how to set boundaries and to avoid conflicts, but also to improve cooperation between parents and pre-school provision. The calculated effectiveness when used universally in Sweden is supposed to be approximately 20 per cent, compared with 70 per cent in the United States (Bremberg 2005), which indicates the problem of adapting an effective programme to a different cultural setting.

Other Scandinavian countries follow similar approaches, including Finland, where primary prevention also includes excellent day care and child care in which behavioural and social skills are the focus of learning, and Norway. A more detailed comparison of country approaches to youth offending (Stevens *et al* 2006) supports the assertions above.

In summary, England and Wales concentrate less effort on primary prevention than countries such as Scotland, Sweden and Finland, and appear to take a more punitive line than these countries. But why is this? Earlier in this report mention was made of the uniquely high levels of public fear of crime in the UK. Research reveals that people attach a high importance to the behaviour of youth in public spaces, and that this may drive a more punitive approach to youth crime – or, at the very least, could reduce political space for a more welfare-orientated approach. We go on to examine this below.

The peculiar case of the UK: understanding public attitudes

Fear of young people and concerns about their behaviour have been growing in the UK since the 1990s. The analysis by ippr of the British Crime Survey reveals that in 2004/05 more than 1.5 million Britons had thought about moving away from their local area due to young people hanging around, and 1.7 million avoided going out after dark as a direct result. It is important to note that in the UK 'young people hanging around' is considered a form of anti-social behaviour. This view is unique. It is not matched by similar views in Sweden, Finland or other European countries, so in these countries a punitive legislative agenda on anti-social behaviour has not been developed.

Analysis of UK opinion data gives us some sense of what is driving fear of crime in this country. It reveals, as expected, that fear of crime is in large part driven by concerns about the presence of young people in public spaces. People tend to see persistent graffiti or young people hanging around in a particular place as being actually more threatening to local safety than some more serious crimes, such as residential burglary (Dixon *et al* 2006). The behaviour of adolescents appears to send signals to the public about the moral state of society, exacerbating concerns about crime and disorder in general (Pearce 2007, Margo *et al* 2006). Again, this is a particularly British problem. The analysis by ippr

(ibid) of press coverage of youth behaviour in the UK in 2006 revealed that coverage to be highly negative in nature – supporting the findings of previous work in this area.

Such negative perceptions of young people and concerns about youth anti-social behaviour have, of course, also impacted on public attitudes towards young people in general. In 2004, nearly 80 per cent of Britons – and 99 per cent of those aged over 55 – thought that 'young people today have too much freedom and not enough discipline' (Page and Wallace 2004, Pearce 2007). Looking overseas shows this to be a particularly British concern: as shown earlier, Britons are far more likely than other Europeans to say that young people are predominantly responsible for anti-social behaviour, and they are also more likely to cite 'lack of discipline' as the root cause.

Polls and surveys also record strong and largely enduring support in the UK for the death penalty, longer prison sentences and other authoritarian responses to crime (Pearce 2007). While more liberal attitudes prevail among the better educated and the better off, authoritarian views towards crime are widespread among the public. Britain does not appear to be witnessing a trend towards more progressive views on crime and punishment in the way that it has on issues of sexuality, personal morality or the environment. Indeed, social liberalism may actually encourage punitive attitudes to crime, as people insist that the remaining social rules establishing clear limits to behaviour should be strictly enforced (Tyler and Boeckmann 1997).

Yet public attitudes are not straightforwardly authoritarian: the findings of social psychologists and criminologists tell a more complex story. Although studies repeatedly find that the desire for retribution is powerful and universal – to the extent that it may be considered a basic human instinct – it is not a uniformly expressed emotion (Pearce 2007, Tyler and Boeckmann 1997). It is held most strongly by those socialised from an early age into authoritarian norms, those on low incomes (who tend to experience higher levels of crime and victimisation), the elderly, and those who are poorly educated. And it varies according to how people evaluate the motives and morals of offenders, and the types of crime they commit. Vengefulness is felt most forcefully for crimes that shatter the symbolic moral order of a group – for example, child abuse – but far less so for crimes of a material nature, such as burglary. The intentions of the criminal also matter, as does his or her level of remorse.

Furthermore, when people are presented with information on criminals and their crimes by professionals in public authority, their attitude is considerably more liberal than when they receive it from the media. Deliberation on policy alternatives and involvement in community court and case-conferencing processes also predict more liberal and less punitive attitudes (Hough and Park 2002, Rogers 2005).

Surveys and research studies conducted for the Esmée Fairbairn Rethinking Crime and Punishment (RCP) project (Allen 2004) found much more complexity and potential malleability in public attitudes to crime than opinion polls register. Two findings were of particular interest. First, attitudes towards sentencing discriminated significantly in respect of drug users. Almost everybody, including tabloid readers, takes the view that drug addicts should be treated, rather than punished. Second, there was considerable public support for crime prevention strategies focused on improving parenting and working intensively with children at risk. In contrast, they found that the public are sceptical of the rehabilitative efficacy, if not the legitimacy or desirability, of prison sentences.

Other evidence supports the argument that public perceptions of crime are heavily determined by the behaviour of young people in public spaces, and the messages that this behaviour sends about embedding values ('value socialisation') within families and the wider community. Tom Tyler and Robert Boeckmann's study of attitudes to California's 'three strikes' policy (Tyler and Boeckmann 1997) found that fear of crime as a social problem predicted support for the policy and for a general punitiveness, but that a stronger predictor was depth of concern over the lack of moral socialisation of teenagers in the family, and the growth of gang culture.

In the final two sections of this report (sections 6 and 7) we shall revisit the implications of this research for policy – but public attitudes to crime need to be set in a context. So, in sections 2 and 3 we shall consider trends in youth behaviour, attitudes and offending in the UK, in an international context, before examining risk factors for offending and the development of moral responsibility.

2. Cool to be criminal? Impacts of social change on attitudes, behaviour and perceptions

As we have seen, there is a pervading belief that British society is in moral decline – that social change has undermined the ability of adults to teach and control the younger generation, that youth culture has changed, and that as a result youth offending is on the rise (which it isn't). Research by UNICEF (2007) claims that British youth have fewer friends than their counterparts in the rest of the countries in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and that they fight, smoke and drink more and have poorer relations with their parents. Earlier in 2007 the Institute of Psychiatry found that youth mental and psychological well-being was poorer than for previous generations (Institute of Psychiatry 2007). Meanwhile, the Youth Justice Board revealed that breaches of ASBOs and referral orders had increased by 88 per cent in the four years to 2006 (Youth Justice Board 2006).

Many opinions have been offered as to why our youth seem to be 'in decline'. Too much exam stress (James 2000), the influence of the media and advertising in setting norms of behaviour (Compass 2007), family change, the migration of different cultural groups, and even computer games and the hip hop/ghetto music culture, have all been cited as undermining youth behaviour and the capacity of responsible adults to influence it (see Margo *et al* 2006). Others have argued that persistent inequality, alongside rising affluence, has compounded the injustices experienced by the poorest groups and turned them against mainstream society (MacDonald and Marsh 1995).

In this section, we consider the social change that has affected young people – particularly in terms of their attitudes to authority, their behaviour, and the way in which they are perceived by adults.

Visible youth

We have already argued that young people should not be viewed as distinct from the rest of society – they are an intrinsic part of our social structures. But we can track several events as compounding the sense of fear and anxiety specifically about young people.

Interestingly, the growth in public fear of young people and concern about their behaviour has coincided with a period in which certain groups of young people have become more visible on the streets. Despite the increasing popularity of indoor leisure activities, such as computer games and internet use, the tendency to spend more time at home has not been a uniform cultural change across younger generations.

Since the 1980s the leisure activities of teenagers have become increasingly diversified, with poorer groups spending less time with parents due to work pressures, rising divorce and single parenthood. The combination of less time with parents plus few affordable or easily accessible alternatives of adult-led activities has resulted in some of the most-at-risk groups of young people being 'freer' to socialise unsupervised with peers in public areas than in the past. Figure 2.1 (next page) shows that children in England, Wales and Scotland spend more time with peers than those elsewhere.

Also of interest in Figure 2.1 are the gender differences in socialising. Boys are much more likely than girls to spend time with peers during the week – and it is, of course, boys who are more likely to commit an offence.

There is also evidence that young people are increasingly likely to be hanging around in public areas than in the past. In 1992, Britons were 1.75 times more likely to cite young people hanging around as a problem than they were to complain about noisy neighbours. By 2006 they were more than three times more likely (Walker *et al* 2006). Analysis by ippr of the British Crime Survey shows that in 2004/05 more than 7 million people in England and Wales said that young people hanging around in public spaces was a problem more or less all the time in their area. More than 2 million said this had a significant impact on their quality of life.

Research in this area is severely hampered by a lack of reliable longitudinal data. But one indicator of rising 'peer socialisation' of disadvantaged young people in contemporary Britain is the estimated

Figure 2.1:
Proportion of
15-year-olds
spending time
with friends four
or more evenings
a week, 2001/02

Source: Currie *et
al* (2004)
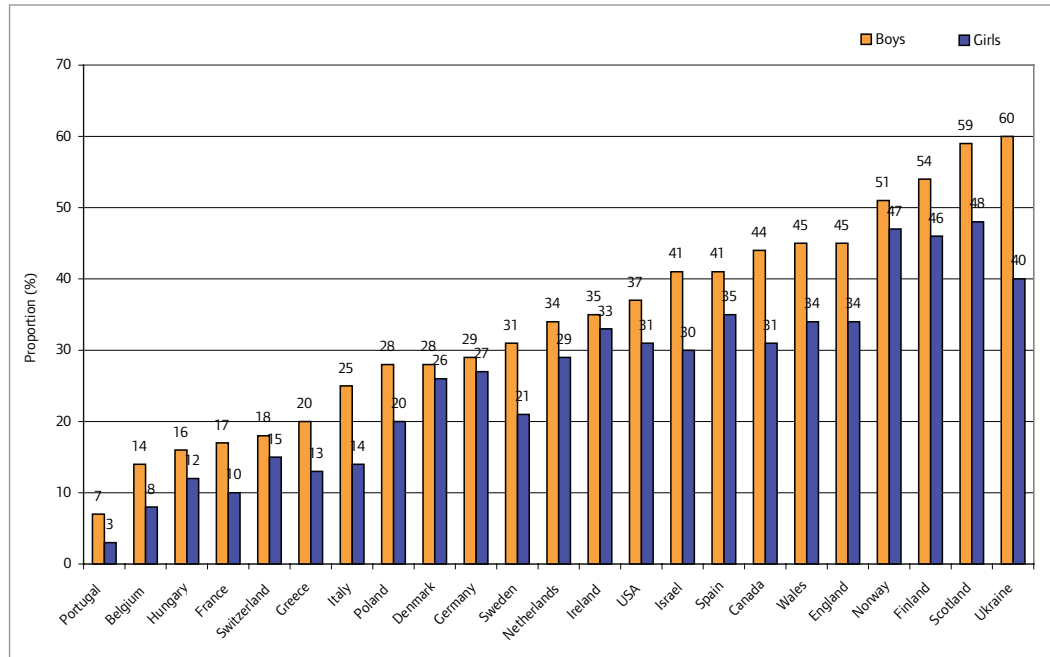
6 per cent of young people aged between 10 and 19 in 2006 who belonged to a gang – rising to 12 per cent of 14- to 16-year-olds (Sharp *et al* 2006). Young people who get on badly with their parents, who spend little or no time with them or who live in areas with high levels of local disorder are much more likely to be gang members – often citing the fact that there is 'not very much or nothing to do' in their local area as reasons for joining a gang (Margo *et al* 2006).

Importantly, these gangs are usually centred around a particular location which the group called 'its own', often an open public space: 43 per cent of members said their gang was centred on a park or recreation ground and 39 per cent said it was centred on a street corner or square. Just 25 per cent claimed that their gang was based around a particular property or home (Sharp *et al* 2006). Data on trends in gang membership are hard to come by, but these figures suggest that a significant proportion of British youth are spending the majority of their time in unmediated, unstructured interaction with peers.

Key to public perceptions of these 'visible youth' is that at a time when at-risk young people are spending more time hanging around with friends, their more advantaged, better socialised peers are increasingly likely to be indoors or participating in adult-led activities. This is particularly evident in the amount of money now being spent on leisure activities for young people.

As Table 2.1 shows, those in the richest quintile spent £106 a week on youth recreation and culture activities in 2004/5, compared with £19.40 for those in the poorest quintile. This figure included £11.90 on sports, subscriptions and leisure class fees per week in 2004/05, compared with £0.70 for those in the poorest quintile.

Table 2.1: Weekly expenditure on leisure services and various other goods, 2004/05

	Poorest income quintile	Richest income quintile
Transport	£15.20	£120.90
(of which public transport)	£3.10	£17.60
Recreation and culture (total)	£19.40	£106.00
(of which sports admissions, subscriptions and leisure class fees)	£0.70	£11.90
(of which cinema, theatre, museums etc)	£0.50	£4.70
(of which books, newspapers and magazines)	£2.60	£7.60
(of which package holidays)	£2.50	£24.40

Note: Figures average of bottom two and top two deciles.
Source: Adapted from Gibbins and Julian 2006

A wealth of other evidence supports the notion that there has been a large divergence in leisure experience between well-off and poor children, which began to make itself felt from the 1980s (Margo *et al* 2006). Media reports of pressured middle-class young people who spend too much time in extra-curricular activities compound the case.

Increased visibility of those young people who are less socialised through adult interaction, and are therefore less likely to conform to adult behaviour norms, may in part explain increasing public fear of young people. These changes have also led to perceptions of a breakdown in 'youth socialisation' – particularly for the most disadvantaged, resulting from the changing amount of time spent with adults.

Time spent with adults and parents

Prior research has shown that trends in work, family life and increased changes to families mean that British children spend less time with their parents than in most comparable European countries (Bradshaw *et al* 2006). Recent analysis of the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) data demonstrates this clearly: as Figure 2.2 shows, in 2000 just 64 per cent of 15-year-olds in the UK ate with their parents around a table several times a week – a lower proportion than any other country in Europe apart from Finland.

Figure 2.2:
Young people whose parents eat the main meal with them around a table several times a week, 2000
Source: Authors' analysis of PISA 2000 data

Note: Data is for 15-year-olds
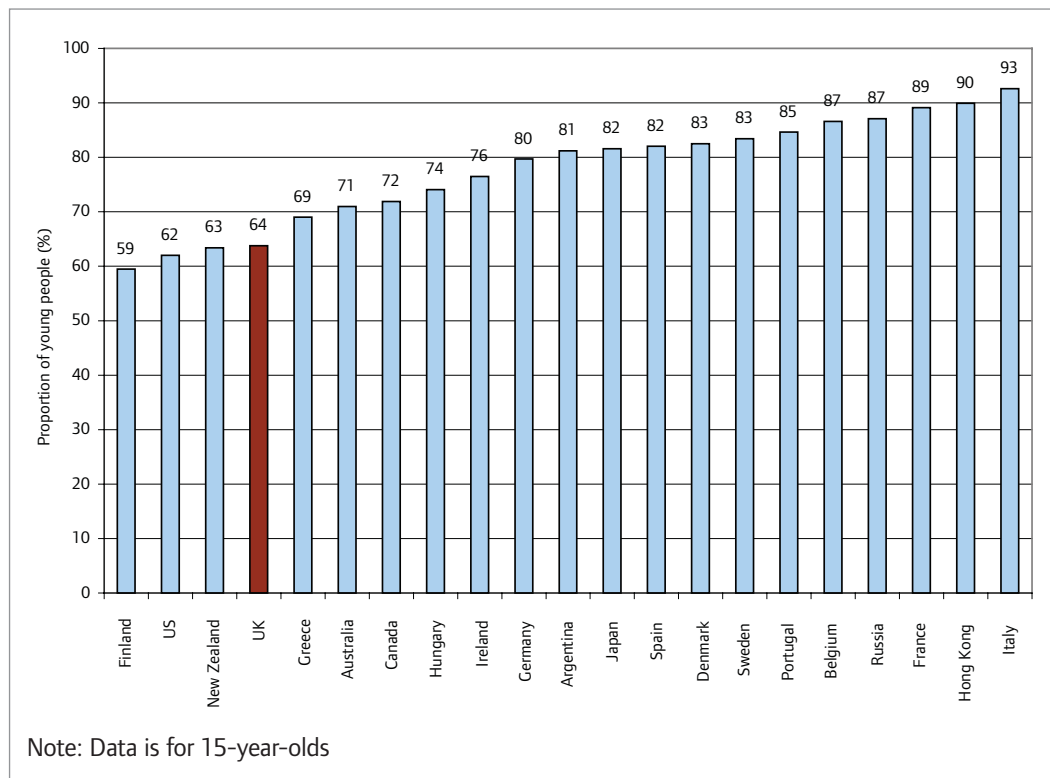
This low level of parental contact is not restricted to mealtimes, as Figure 2.3 below shows. In 2000 just 62 per cent of 15-year-olds said that their parents spend time 'just talking' to them several times a week: far less than in Italy or Hungary, where nearly 90 per cent of young people spent time with their parents in this way.

This finding resonates strongly with the experiences of both parents. Recent MORI polls have shown that while 15 per cent of parents say their main concern is 'not spending enough time with children', 24 per cent of children say their parents are not always there when they need them, 35 per cent say their parents do not make them feel loved and cared for, and 44 per cent say they are unable to talk to their parents about problems (Page and Wallace 2004). When asked in 2002, 49 per cent of parents did not know either exactly where their children were, or whom they were with or what they were doing after school, at the weekends or during the holidays (Nestlé 2006).

Figure 2.3:
Proportion of
young people
whose parents
spend time 'just
talking' to them
several times a
week, 2000
Source: Authors'
analysis of PISA
2000 data

Note: Data is for 15-year-olds
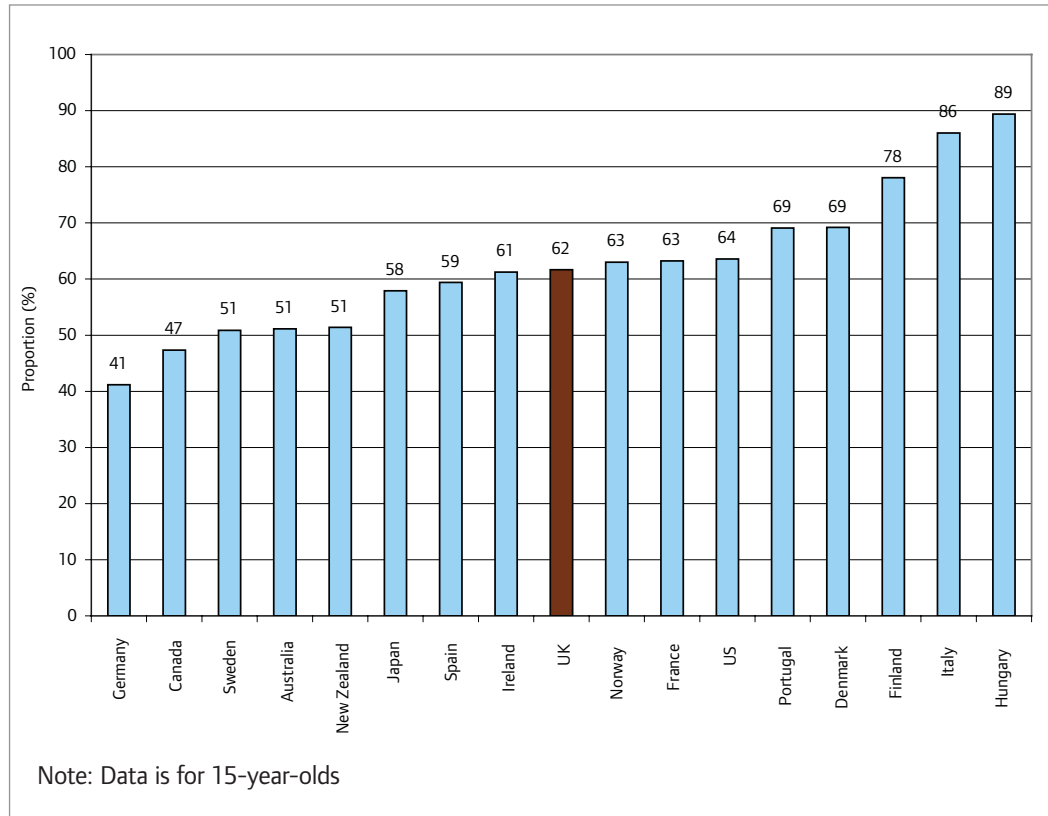
It is likely that family change – more divorce and single parenthood, as well as more women in the labour market – will have contributed to these trends, as suggested in prior research (Margo *et al* 2006). Clearly children from single-parent families in which the lone parent needs to work to support the family will find it more difficult to spend time with their parent than a child with two parents, or with parents who work fewer hours.

In Figures 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3, we see that UK children spend more time with friends and less time with parents than their peers elsewhere. Although children and young people in some other countries also spend little time with parents, they do not spend a lot of unstructured time with peers. For example, although children from countries such as Norway and Finland spend a lot of time with peers after school, and less time eating a main meal with parents, they also spend the highest amount of 'quality time' with parents, talking to them, out of all the countries. Anecdotal evidence also indicates that young people in Finland, Denmark and Norway are much more likely to engage in supervised activities after school than those in the UK (Sodha and Margo 2008, forthcoming).

There is also evidence that fear of young people in the UK has made members of the public – adults in the local community – less willing to intervene and monitor their behaviour than in the past. This matters, because a wide evidence base shows that low collective efficacy (unwillingness to intervene in the precursors of youth anti-social behaviour) is one of the most accurate predictors of high levels of anti-social behaviour in the UK – or, rather, that it is the most important 'protective' factor that can prevent against offending emerging when other risk factors are present.

The most detailed research in this area has been carried out in the United States. In Chicago neighbourhoods, mutual trust and neighbourly altruism were key factors in explaining inter-neighbourhood differences in crime rates. Communities characterised by anonymity and limited acquaintance, unsupervised teenage peer groups and low levels of civic participation face an increased risk of crime and violence (Sampson *et al* 1997, Cote and Healy 2001). Figure 2.4 reveals that in the UK adults are often unwilling to intervene when young people are behaving in a noisy, rude or threatening manner in the community.

Figure 2.4: How likely would you be to intervene if you saw two or three teenagers…?
Source: ADT Europe 2006

Base: representative sample of 1,001 adults (aged 18 and over) across Great Britain
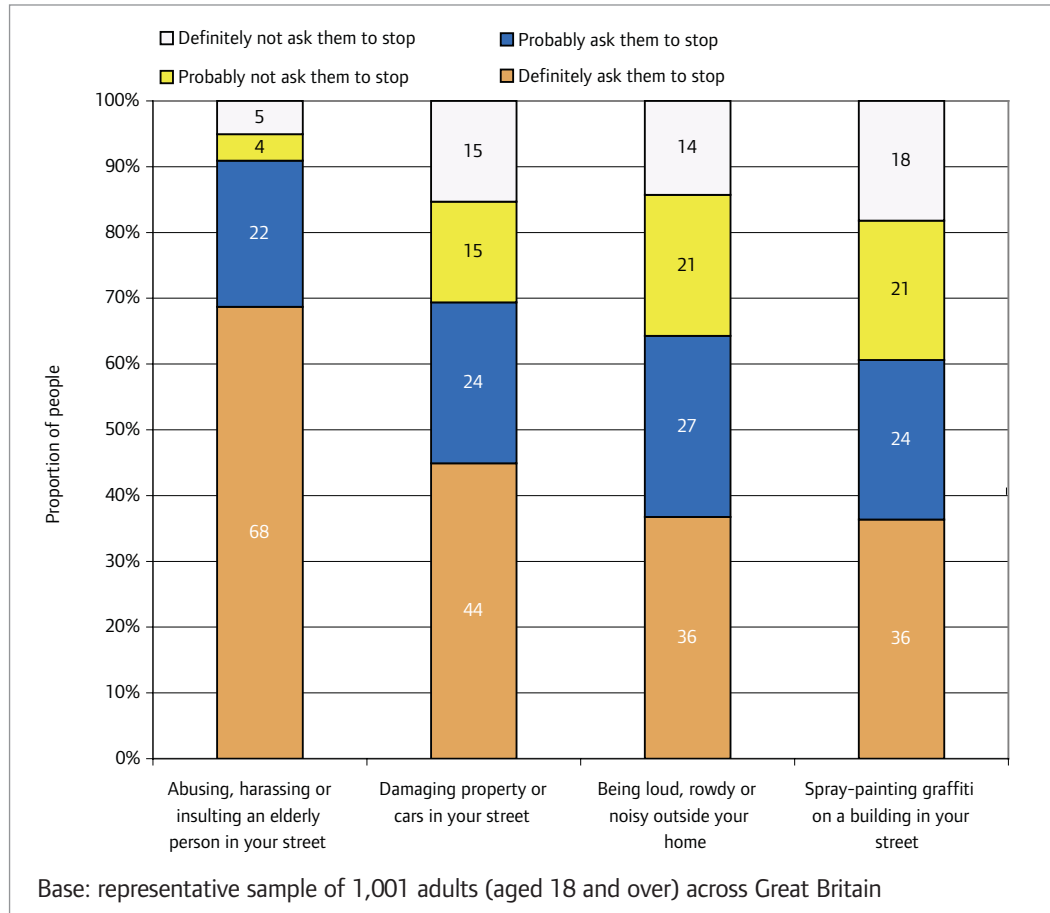
Only in the case of harassment of an elderly person in their street was there a clear majority of those definitely willing to intervene. If we put these questions in an international context, the figures appear even more worrying. In 2006 Britons were less likely than most other European countries to intervene in youth violence (ADT Europe 2006). For example, 65 per cent of Germans, 52 per cent of Spanish and 50 per cent of Italians would be willing to intervene if they saw a group of 14-year-old boys vandalising a bus shelter, compared with just 34 per cent of Britons.

It is worth examining in more detail people's reasons for not intervening. Of those Britons who were unwilling to get involved, 39 per cent claimed they feared being physically attacked by young people, 14 per cent were scared of later reprisals and 12 per cent feared being verbally abused (ADT Europe 2006).

Further research indicated that more heterogeneous communities experience lower levels of collective efficacy. In 2005, people from black and minority ethnic groups were much less likely to say that people in their community would intervene if a child was rude to an adult, or if a group of children were spray-painting graffiti than those from a white background (see Margo et al 2006). Why might this be?

Increased cultural heterogeneity may mean that local cultural norms are less clear cut. Most communities are no longer unified by the church, for example. Different families, with very different expectations of child behaviour, may live close together – making it harder for local communities to tackle anti-social behaviour in a unified way. But it is also well known that those living in poorer areas tend to experience higher levels of fear and concern about their safety (Dixon et al 2006). This highlights just how important it is to engage all communities in local issues in a holistic and integrated way – particularly given that younger generations in the UK are much more likely to be from a minority ethnic background than older cohorts.

Youth attitudes

There is an overriding belief that young people today are less respectful of authority than was the case in the past. Last year, the Youth Justice Board found that the number of young people flouting referral orders had increased by 88 per cent over the past four years. Previous research has also suggested that ASBOs were becoming a badge of honour for young people: something to be proud of rather than an embarrassment (Youth Justice Board 2006). However, this is by no means the case in all similar countries.

In Finland, young people have been shown to be very effectively socialised into adult norms of behaviour, and in general express very negative views about individuals who commit crime and anti-social activities. In recent surveys, almost all children described offenders as 'losers' who require help to get over their 'problems' (Sodha and Margo 2008, forthcoming). Surveys also indicate strong support for authority figures such as teachers, the police and law enforcement (ibid). So what is happening in the UK?

The analysis by ippr of the Young People's Social Attitudes Surveys (which are carried out by the National Centre for Social Research as part of the British Social Attitudes Survey) shows that British youth are more cynical about the police and figures of authority and less likely to trust adults in the local community (Margo *et al* 2006). It also suggested that there may be declining respect for adult norms of behaviour: a greater proportion of young people now say that they would keep extra change given to them in error in both larger stores and corner shops, and this is supported by parents' views of their children's behaviour.

Longitudinal evidence suggests that parents have become more likely to report problems with their teenage children – particularly in terms of lying and general disobedience (see Figure 3.4). But it is also important to remember that children are not adults, and that adult norms are precisely that: normal behaviour for adults. A certain amount of 'problem' behaviour should be expected from children and young people. It is worth reminding ourselves of the evidence cited in Section 1 of the peculiarity of the UK approach to youth behaviour, which considers even hanging around with friends to be an offence. While we should expect young people to behave well in public, we should also expect a certain amount of questioning of authority – something that is a natural part of the developmental process, as Section 5 explains.

The extension of adolescence

While the notion of declining respect for authority is debated, there is some consensus that the trend in many developed countries has been towards the 'adultification' of youth (Margo *et al* 2006), and that this may explain less deference to adult rules. There is no question that young people do increasingly experience and adopt adult concerns and behaviours at younger ages. A more accurate term for this phenomenon might be the 'extension of adolescence' backwards into childhood, as many of the behaviours deemed to indicate 'adultification' are more closely connected to teenage/adolescent behaviour – for example, increased sexual activity, drug and alcohol use, spending more time with peers, and increased concerns about physical appearance and social status. Many analysts have argued that children are unable to cope with the complex and adult environment which they now need to navigate from ever-earlier ages, and that this is increasing levels of anxiety and rebelliousness in younger groups (James 2000).

Conversely, the markers of adulthood – typically thought of as forming long-term relationships and perhaps having children, stable employment, financial independence and responsible behaviour – are increasingly being reached later in life. Although these trends are also taking place in other parts of the world, they are happening much more quickly in the UK and United States (Margo *et al* 2006).

The average age of first sexual intercourse in the UK had fallen from 20 for men and 21 for women in the 1950s to 16 by the mid-1990s, since when it has remained relatively stable. The proportion of young people who are sexually active before the legal age of consent rose from less than 1 per cent to 25 per cent over the same period (Johnson *et al* 2001). However, interestingly, here again it appears that this is a peculiarly British phenomenon. As Figure 2.5 shows, 38 per cent of British 15-year-olds

had had sex in 2001/02 – a far higher proportion than in any comparable European country (Bradshaw *et al* 2006). This is yet another indicator that British teenagers are reaching certain markers of adulthood earlier in their lives than in the past.

Figure 2.5:
Proportion of
15-year-olds who
have had sexual
intercourse,
2001/03
Source: Bradshaw
et al (2006)
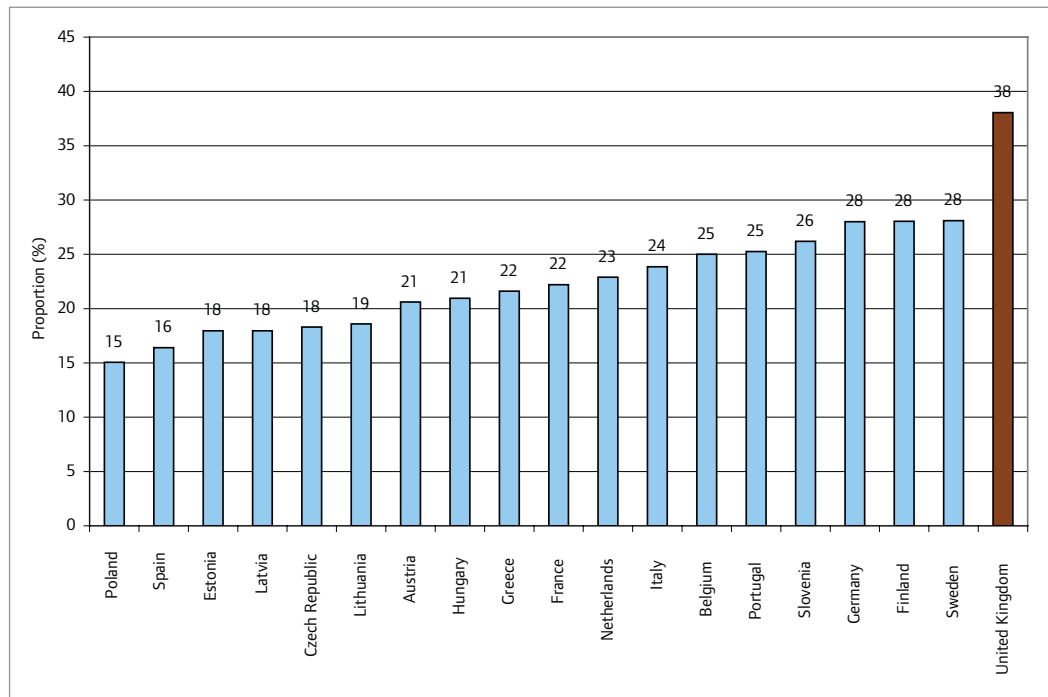
Rising affluence has been an important driver of these trends in the UK, but technological change has also underpinned many of these changes. There has been proliferation of mobile phones: earlier in 2006, 49 per cent of children aged 8–11 and 82 per cent of those aged 12–15 had their own mobile phone (Ofcom 2006). This, in combination with increased internet use, has meant that many young people are increasingly able to control their own social lives at younger ages, planning their leisure activities independently of adult supervision.

There is increasing evidence that similar trends towards more adult behaviour can be seen in other areas of life. But rather than seeing this as something that is taking place within youth culture, we should view this as a phenomenon emerging in response to the way UK adult society socialises and influences young people. Pundits point to the proliferation of 'sex tips' for teenagers in youth magazines, and health and beauty spas for 10-year-old girls, as evidence that children are increasingly exposed to, and expected to navigate, adult concerns at younger stages in their development (Schor and Holt 2000, Schor 2004, Mayo 2005).

The implication is that exposure to messages from say, advertisers, websites or certain magazines which may not have child wellbeing as their explicit aim can be unintentionally detrimental to youth behaviour by indirectly seeming to promote exactly the misbehaviours that the public are most concerned about – drinking, underage sex, graffiti-ing or even certain forms of bullying such as so-called 'happy slapping'. Even reporting on these events in the wrong tone can send mixed messages to young people. Encouraging children to behave in a more adult fashion – to buy cosmetics or products that are attached to certain lifestyles – can impact on their self-esteem and perception of how they should be thinking and behaving.

Much of this relates to the changing nature of the relationship between children and consumerism. The crucial difference between the interaction between today's young people and those of previous generations is that it is increasingly unmediated. Although parents act as guardians to many consumption practices, and control most purchases of goods and services (McKendrick *et al* 2000), young people increasingly act as consumers without adult guidance or supervision (Schor and Holt 2000, Schor 2004). This trend is encouraged by advertisers and child-orientated corporations such as toy, clothing or even cosmetic manufacturers, alike but is viewed as unwelcome by many parents. In

2004, 84 per cent of parents stated that there was too much marketing directed at children (NFPI 2004).

Advertisers are accused of redefining age appropriateness by reducing target ages and creating a more adult-like relationship with children at a younger age. One example of this is the 'tweening' of the 6- to 12-year-old market, with products previously aimed at teenagers now also being aimed at younger ages, encouraging children to care about teenage concerns such as diet and beauty from a younger age (Schor 2004). More than a century after Coca-Cola's first celebrity spokesperson appeared in an advertisement, and 55 years after the first toy ('Mr Potato Head') was advertised on television (Mayo 2005), public fascination with unscrupulous advertising has led to a plethora of undercover media exposés of potentially unethical practices by advertisers (ibid).

Contemporary British children seem to be more enmeshed in consumerism than even their US counterparts, and much more so than children elsewhere in the EU. As Figure 2.6 shows, 66 per cent of British children said they 'like clothes with popular labels,' compared with 52 per cent of US children, and 46 per cent of British children said the 'brand name is important' compared with 40 per cent of US children in 2005.

Figure 2.6.
Children's
consumer
involvement in
the UK, by social
class, 2005
Source: Mayo
(2005)

Note: children aged 10-12
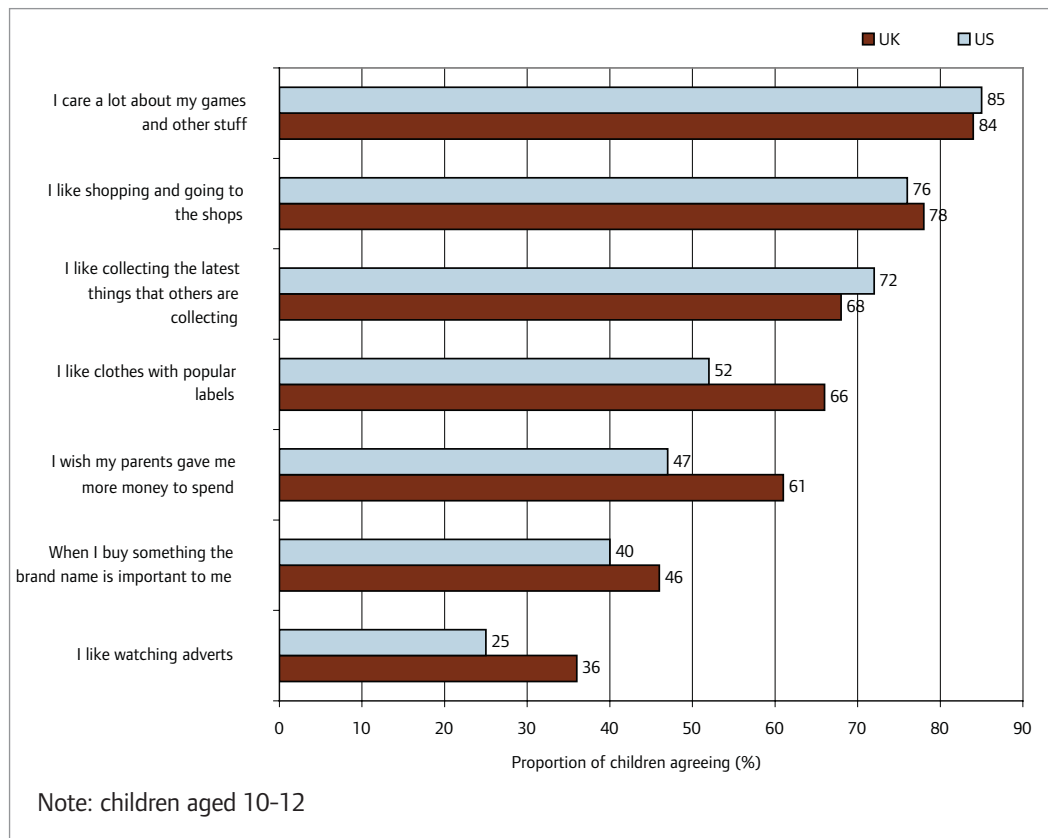
There is emerging evidence that children are beginning to agree with this assertion that there is too much marketing aimed at them, and they are demanding curbs on the 'use of inappropriate advertising aimed at young people' (Mayo 2005: 35). In the rest of Europe, measures are taken to protect children from advertising – for example, with bans on advertising to under-12s (which happens in Sweden, for example). In addition, cultural differences in young people's choices of leisure activities seem to impact on the extent of consumer involvement and its impact on youth attitudes. The evidence suggests that European children spend more time than UK children either with their parents or in purposeful extracurricular activities, and so are less exposed both to negative peer influences and to consumerist influences than those in the UK (Margo *et al* 2006).

Delayed adulthood

The counterpoint to the creeping extension of adolescence into childhood is its extension into adulthood, which has attracted a wealth of academic research and theory – including Arnette's idea of 'emerging adulthood' (Arnette 2004). In the media, numerous shorthand terms have been mooted for a new generation of 'kidults' and 'boomerang kids' who postpone traditional markers of the transition to adulthood. On average, young people in Britain are now staying at home for longer, postponing childbirth, living alone for longer, cohabiting for longer, having more relationships, marrying later, staying in education for longer, and taking longer to 'settle' into a career.

Although transitions are less extended than in many other European countries (Bynner 2005), the trends over time are indisputable:

- The average age of first-time mothers increased from 23.7 in 1971 to 27.1 in 2004.

- The average age of first marriage increased from 25 for men and 23 for women in 1971 to 31 and 29 respectively in 2003.

- The proportion of under-60s cohabiting rose from 11 per cent for men and 13 per cent for women in 1986 to 24 per cent and 25 per cent respectively in 2004.

- The number of men and women aged between 25 and 44 living alone increased nearly six-fold between 1973 and 2004.

- The number of people participating in higher education rose from 621,000 in 1970/71 to 2,436,000 in 2003/4.

- In 2005, 57 per cent of British men aged 20 to 24 (and 23 per cent of those aged 25 to 29) were still living with their parents, compared with 38 per cent and 11 per cent respectively of women.

(Babb *et al* 2006, Dixon and Margo 2006)

Thus it appears that British young people are being given both increasing autonomy over certain areas of their lives at younger ages (specifically, their social, consumer and sexual lives) and less meaningful responsibility (in terms of families, jobs, independent living). Meanwhile, messages about what is 'cool' in terms of behaviour are set increasingly by advertisers and peers rather than parents, and as we assert above, children find it difficult to cope with the complex and adult environment, which is increasing their levels of anxiety and rebelliousness (James 2000). Is this borne out in the evidence?

We consider this question in detail in Section 5. In the meantime, perhaps the most compelling indicator that psychological development has not caught up with social change is the evidence of decline in young people's emotional well-being that is documented by numerous studies (Margo *et al* 2006, Bradshaw *et al* 2006, Margo and Sodha 2007).

Implications for policy

In summary, some key issues emerge from the analysis above, which have implications for policy. First, the nature of interaction between adults and young people has changed. This has resulted in less time, and fewer opportunities for interaction, with adults outside school, and less quality time between parents and children – particularly among disadvantaged groups. This means that there is less opportunity for young people to learn and internalise social norms and adult expectations. In addition, changing and less homogeneous community norms, and a diversity of local cultures, make it less clear to young people how they are expected to behave. Finally, declines in collective efficacy mean that adults are less likely to set clear expectations in communities and enforce them than in the past.

There has been a divergence of leisure activities, which means that certain groups of young people are more visible than others. We are less likely to see the more affluent, more advantaged young people on the streets, as they are increasingly involved in supervised extra-curricular activities. Meanwhile, the more at-risk young people are spending more time unsupervised with peers – and are therefore not benefiting from the developmental opportunities offered by these activities.

Young people's attitudes are becoming both more liberal (for example, towards sex) and more challenging and complex. This is partly due to new and different cultural influences emerging from

media, music and, in some cases, newly arrived migrants from abroad, which have increased the heterogeneity of youth culture. There is a perception that trends have moved towards the 'adultification' of youth: young people are increasingly navigating more adult concerns at younger ages, and taking more control over their social, sexual and consumer lives, while taking less responsibility for their behaviour in other areas.

Importantly, however, social change has not been matched by increased psychological maturity. There is therefore a potential 'socialisation gap', with young people perceived as being more adult than they really are and taking more autonomy over certain aspects of their lives, and young people themselves being less willing to accept adult norms than previously – possibly due to counter-influences from the media.

Finally, adult society has begun increasingly to fear and demonise young people. Studies have shown that the increased media and political focus on youth anti-social behaviour and changes to youth justice policy (such as lowering the age of criminal responsibility to 10) has put a disproportionate focus on the behaviour of children. Britons are more likely to hold young people independently responsible for their behaviour than people in other countries, far more likely than other Europeans to say that young people are predominantly responsible for anti-social behaviour, and are also more likely to cite 'lack of discipline' as the root cause. Seventy-nine per cent of Britons thought that this issue underpinned anti-social behaviour, compared with 69 per cent of Spaniards, 62 per cent of Italians and 58 per cent of French people (ADT Europe 2006).

This section has provided an important background for what follows, in Section 3, where we consider the trends in youth offending in the UK and elsewhere in the world. We investigate whether, against a backdrop of changing relationships between adults and young people, and increasingly different social and familial contexts, young people's behaviour is worsening.

3. Youth offending in the European context

Comparable statistics on youth offending by country are difficult to come by. Countries tend to vary in their definition of an offence, age of criminal responsibility and how figures are collected. However, taking into account the difficulties of comparing juvenile crime statistics across EU countries, this report draws on a combination of existing data on crime across Europe to give at least an idea of current trends.

Trends in youth offending, by country

The British Crime Survey (BCS) is an annual survey, carried out in a representative sample of English and Welsh households, which looks at people's experiences of being a victim of crime. The most recent survey (2004/05) shows that 'since peaking in 1995, BCS crime has fallen by 44 per cent, representing 8.5 million fewer crimes, with vehicle crime and burglary falling by over a half and violent crime falling by 43 per cent during this period.' Crime is now at its lowest recorded level since the BCS began in 1981. However, when it comes to people's perceptions of the level of crime there remains a high percentage who believe that crime has worsened, both in their local area (42 per cent) and in the country as a whole (61 per cent) (Nicholas *et al* 2005).

Generally, juvenile crime trends throughout Europe remained more or less stable between 1999 and 2004, and in some countries even declined. In their report, using data from the Finnish Self-Reported Delinquency Survey from 1995 to 2004, Kivivuori and Salmi (2005) found a drop in property offences, a lack of any consistent trend in violent crime, and evidence of increased conformity by young people (in other words, fewer young people committing crimes).

Self-reported studies show that the nature of crimes committed by young people has been changing. The number of violent crimes and drug-related offences has increased in many countries over the past 15 years, including in the UK. This echoes the rise in violent crimes among the adult population. Simultaneously, there has been a reduction in the number of property offences since the late 1990s. This is backed up by evidence from several European research findings, including from Slovenia (Filipcic 2004), Finland (Kivivuori and Salmi 2005) and Austria.

The third trend picked up by self-reported studies is that of a smaller group of persistent young offenders emerging in many EU countries. In the UK, surveys show that 10 per cent of offenders are responsible for half of all crimes committed (Stevens and Gladstone 2002). A similar picture can be seen in France, where 5 per cent of 13- to 19-year-olds are responsible for 55-85 per cent of crimes committed by that age group (Wyvekens 2004). The Danish self-report survey *Youth at Risk* also revealed a small group (10 per cent) who committed a large number of offences (Balvig 2001). By targeting this very small group of young people, then, a massive impact would be made on crime rates.

Offending in the UK

Looking in more detail at who offends in the UK is revealing. An estimated 2.8 million young people offended in 2005 (Home Office 2005). This represents a quarter of all young people aged 10 to 25. Among the quarter of young people who had committed a core offence in the last 12 months, half (51 per cent) reported committing a serious offence (assault with injury, theft from a person, theft of a vehicle, burglary, selling class-A drugs or robbery).

If we total up offending for all offence types, this shows that many young people who had committed an offence had offended on only a few occasions. Almost a third (31 per cent) of young people who reported offending said they had only committed one offence in the past 12 months. A further 28 per cent had committed two or three offences. However, almost a third (31 per cent) of offenders (equating to 7 per cent of all 10- to 25-year-olds) reported committing six or more offences in the past 12 months, and were classified as 'frequent offenders'.

Three per cent of young people had committed at least one but fewer than six serious offences, and had offended six or more times, including less serious offences. One per cent had frequently committed serious offences (six or more times in the last 12 months) and were classified as 'frequent serious offenders'. Nine per cent had committed a serious offence but had offended fewer than six times, while 2 per cent had offended more than six times but had only committed less serious offences. A further 10 per cent had only committed less serious offences and committed these fewer than six times. The vast majority (75 per cent) had not offended at all.

In 2005, males were more likely to have offended in the past 12 months than females. Nearly one third (30 per cent) of males had committed at least one of the core offences, compared with one fifth (21 per cent) of females.

For males, the prevalence of offending peaked among 16- to 19-year-olds. Forty per cent of males in this age group had reported committing one or more of the core offences (significantly higher than among males aged under 14 and those aged 20 or more). Levels of serious offending peaked among males aged from 18 to 19 (22 per cent), while levels of frequent offending were more spread out across the different age groups. Female offending peaked earlier than male offending, at age 14-15. One third (33 per cent) of females in this age group had offended – a significantly higher proportion than in other age groups.

As mentioned above, 10- to 25-year-olds who had committed six or more offences (7 per cent of the population and 30 per cent of offenders in this age group) were responsible for the vast majority of all offences measured by the survey. Just over eight in 10 offences measured (83 per cent) were committed by this group. Frequent offenders also accounted for 82 per cent of all serious offences measured (Home Office 2005). This is clearly the group we should be targeting.

Although the analysis above suggests that the UK does not experience significantly worse crime than elsewhere, it is often argued that the UK suffers more intractable and higher levels of anti-social behaviour – the key precursor to crime, and an issue that has important influences on public attitudes to and fear of crime – than other countries in Western Europe.

Different definitions of anti-social behaviour

In the UK, anti-social behaviour is defined as: 'behaviour which causes or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to one or more people who are not in the same household as the perpetrator' (Home Office 2003). However, this definition raises a number of difficulties – primarily that people have very different expectations and levels of tolerance. What seems like anti-social behaviour to one person might be seen as normal behaviour by another (Budd *et al* 2005).

The *Offending Crime and Justice Survey* (Home Office 2006) names four key anti-social behaviours:

- Being noisy or rude in a public place, causing someone to complain

- Behaving in a way that resulted in a neighbour complaining

- Graffiti in a public place

- Threatening or being rude to someone because of their race or religion.

In opinion surveys, one of the key reasons for complaints about youth behaviour in the UK in 2005/6 was 'young people hanging around'.

In Sweden and Finland, comparable definitions of anti-social behaviour to those used in the UK are difficult to find. Statistics on the prevalence of these behaviours exist in the UK, but are not collected in other countries. So, to benchmark the behaviour of UK youth with those in other countries, different behaviours were used in the writing of this report.

Youth behaviour: trends and perceptions

Below, we consider several indicators of youth behaviour:

· Relationships with peers

· Incidents of fighting

· Use of drugs or alcohol and smoking.

Where possible, we also examine trends in anti-social behaviour as defined by the Home Office in the UK.

Benchmarking British children's experiences of relationships with their peers against their counterparts in other European countries gives considerable cause for concern. In England in 2001/02, just 45 per cent of boys and 56 per cent of girls aged 11 said that their peers were 'kind and helpful' – markedly fewer than in any other country – although Ireland and Scotland fared better, as Figure 3.1 shows.

Figure 3.1:
Proportion of 11-
year-olds saying
their peers are
'kind and helpful',
2001/02
Source: Currie *et
al* (2004)
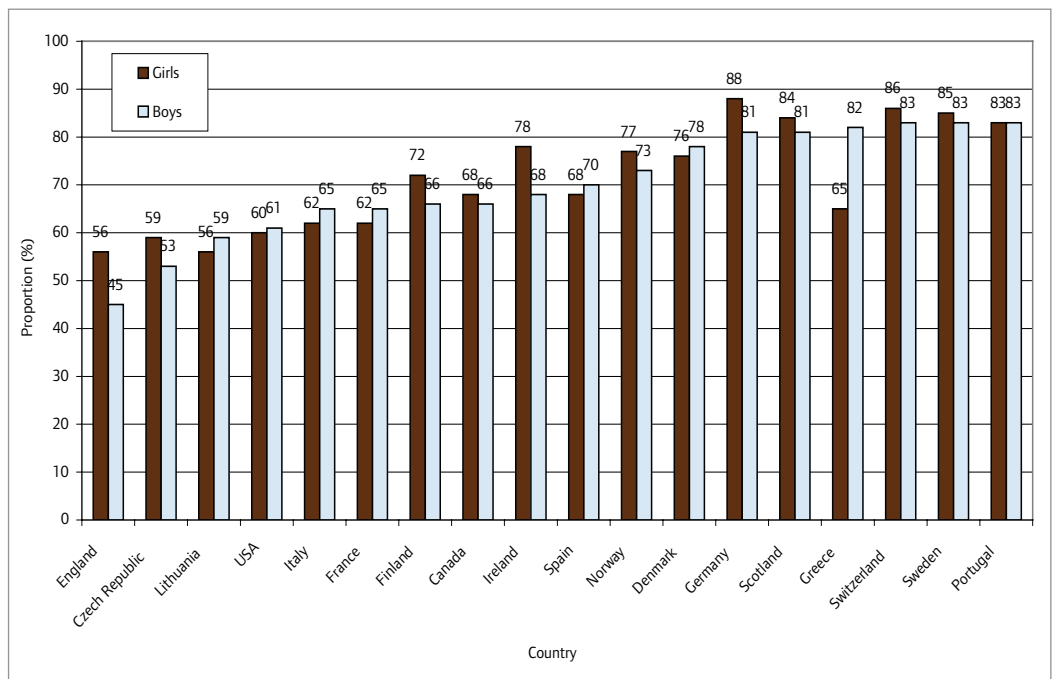
Figure 3.2:
Proportion of
15-year-olds who
have been
involved in a
physical fight in
the previous 12
months, 2001/02
Source: Bradshaw
et al (2006)
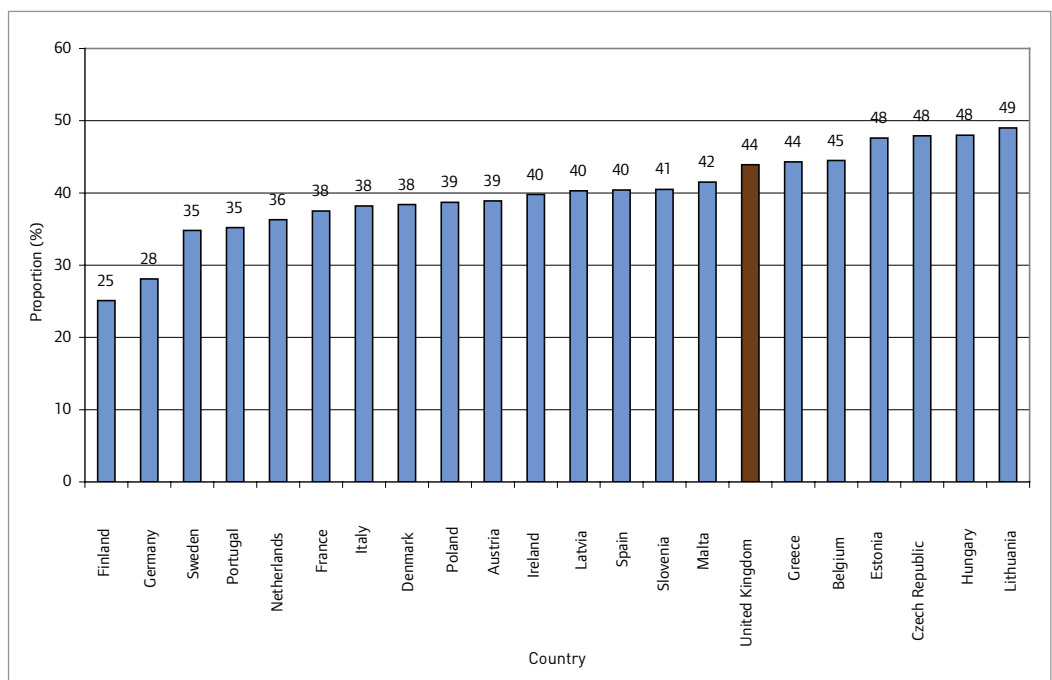
As Figure 3.2 (above) shows, young people in Britain surveyed in 2001/2 were more likely than the majority of their continental counterparts to have been involved in a physical fight in the previous 12 months. Forty-four per cent of 15-year-olds in Britain had been involved in a fight, compared with just 25 per cent of those in Finland, 28 per cent in Germany and 35 per cent in Sweden (Bradshaw *et al* 2006).

In terms of alcohol and substance misuse, in 2003, 38 per cent of British 15-year-olds had tried cannabis, compared with 27 per cent in Germany and just 7 per cent in Sweden. The international picture for teenage drunkenness is similar: as Figure 3.3 shows, British 15-year-olds were more likely than those in any other European country, except for Ireland and Denmark, to have been drunk 20 times or more in their lives (Bradshaw *et al* 2006).

Figure 3.3.
Proportion of
15-year-olds who
have been drunk
20 times or more,
2003
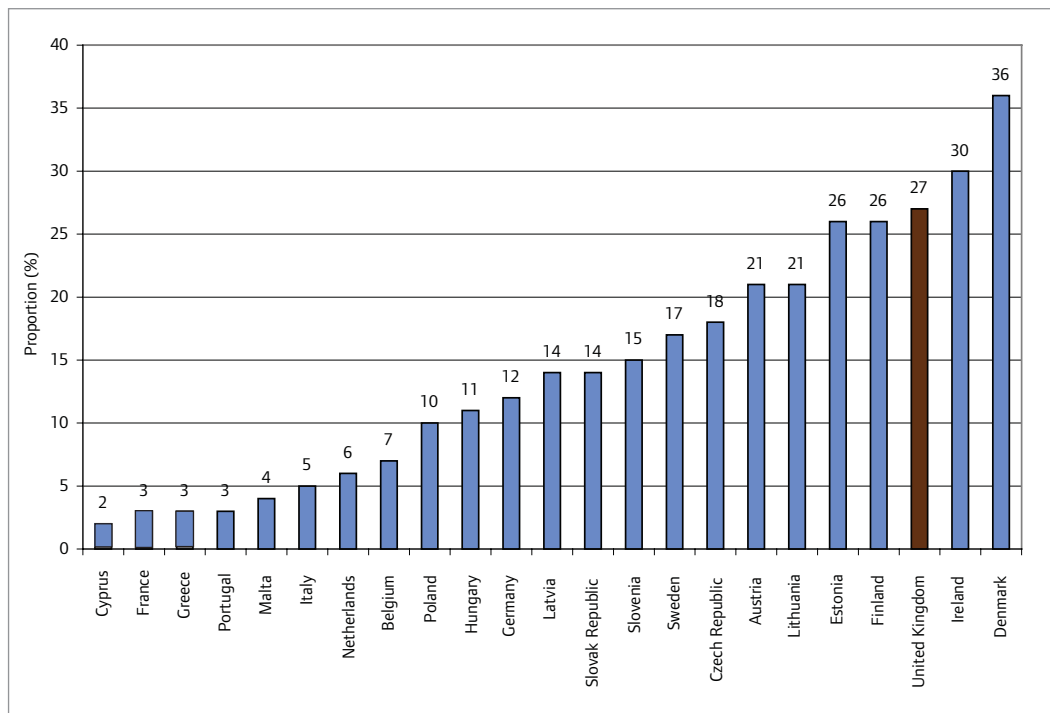Source: Bradshaw
et al (2006)

Figure 3.4.
Conduct problems
at age 16
reported by
parents in the
UK, 1974, 1986
and 1999
Source: Collishaw
et al (2004a)
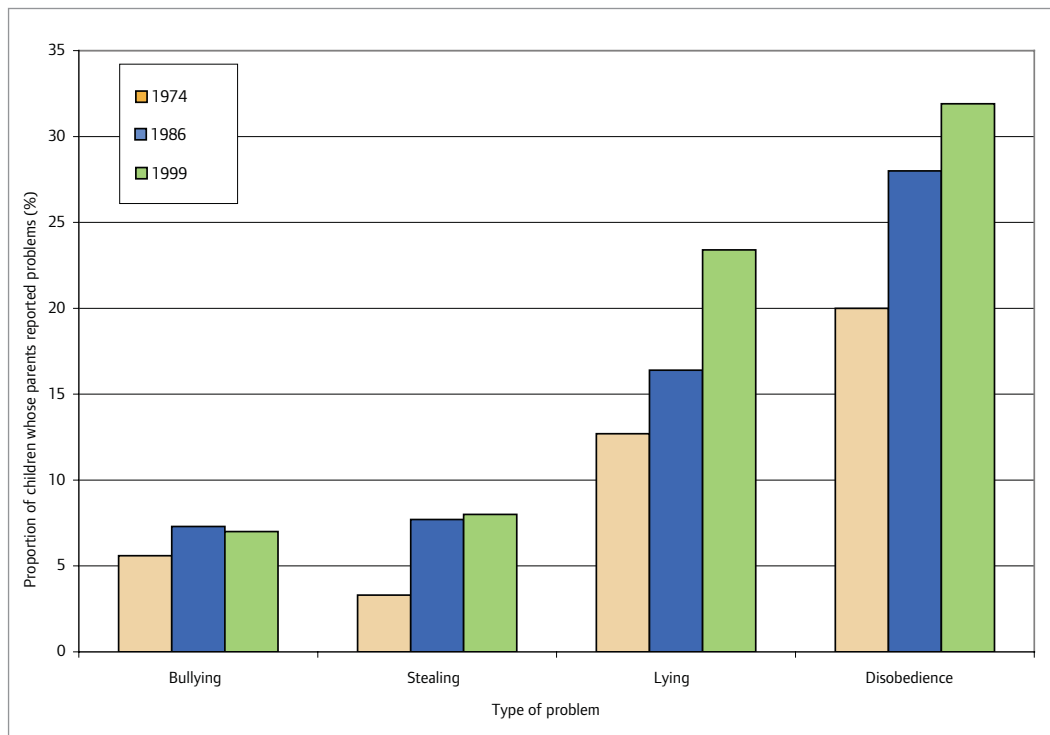
This notion of young people in the UK being 'worse behaved than others' – popular in media reportage – is supported by a range of other data showing that Britons become sexually active at earlier ages, and are more likely to join gangs, than their peers elsewhere (Margo *et al* 2006). This is a picture that the press has been quick to paint, but there have been many criticisms of the evidence from those claiming it is flawed or unfairly negative. Some data sources from within the UK seem to suggest that 'conduct disorders' are becoming more of a problem. Figure 3.4 above suggests that parents believe that conduct problems increased in the UK between 1974 and 1999.

But this evidence is some years old, dating back to 1999. There is additional evidence that perceptions of levels of anti-social behaviour – based on the four types of behaviour used by the Home Office – increased in the UK between 1996 and 2002/03, just as overall crime rates were falling. During this period there was a 44 per cent rise in the proportion of people perceiving very or fairly big problems with vandalism and graffiti in their local area, and a 42 per cent rise in complaints about 'teenagers hanging around', while the overall level of crime actually fell by 36 per cent (Nicholas *et al* 2005, Wood 2005). There are worrying signs that perceptions of rates anti-social behaviour are increasing once more: 2006 showed increases in all measures, as indicated by Figure 3.5.

Figure 3.5.
Percentage perceiving very or fairly big problems with anti-social behaviour, 1992 to 2005/06
Source: ippr analysis of British Crime Survey (various years)
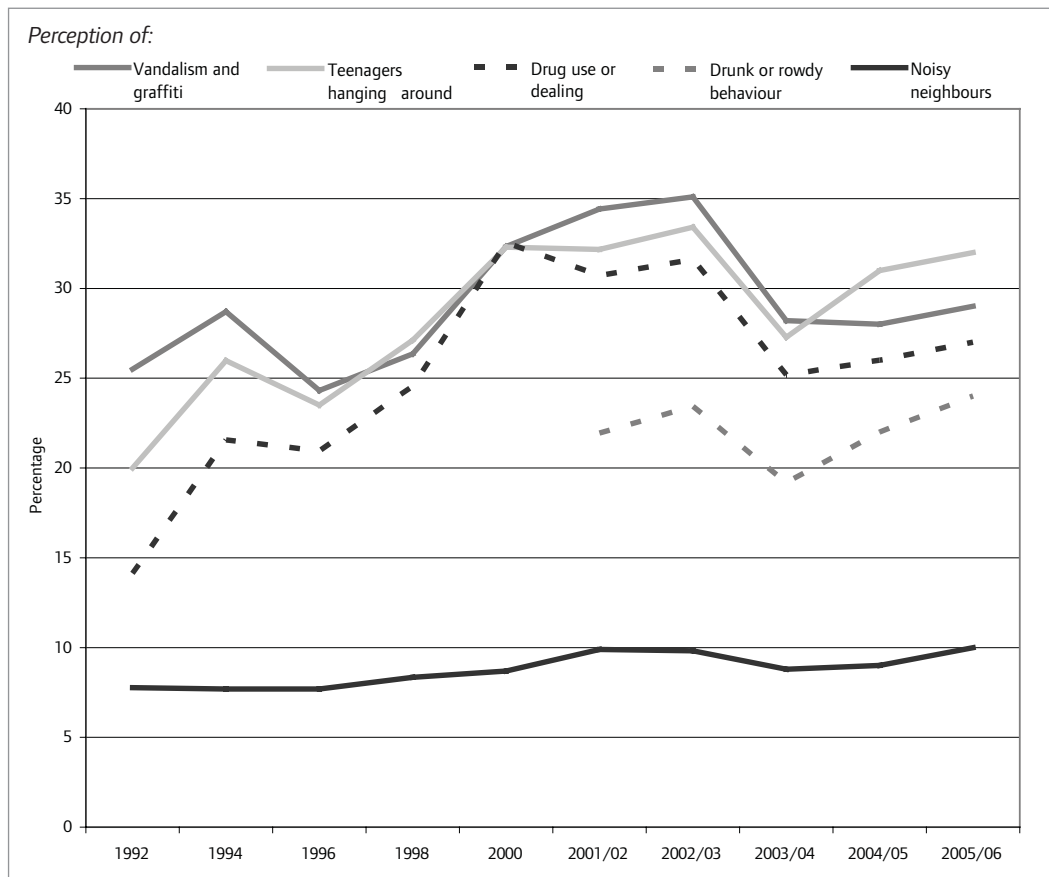
Public perceptions of trends in behaviour are not supported by the hard evidence: the Home Office reports that in 2005 (the most recent year for which statistics are available) just under a quarter (23 per cent) of young people aged from 10 to 25 had committed at least one anti-social act of the five shown in Figure 3.5 (Home Office 2005) – equivalent to 2.6 million young people. Indeed, there has been no significant difference in levels of anti-social behaviour since 2003, when records began.

Implications for policy

In summary, despite the claims to the contrary, there have simply not been large rises in youth anti-social behaviour in the UK. The chief problem appears to be a combination of certain behaviours, such as drinking and drug taking, and very high levels of public fear. This is no doubt compounded by a deep distrust of government crime figures (Dixon *et al* 2006). But is worsened too by the fact that we

in the UK consider misbehaviour by young people, such as drinking, smoking and hanging around on the streets to be a serious problem – and in many ways it is, since unsupervised contact with peers can create problems for some groups of young people – while in other countries, which experience similar levels of these behaviours, the public and governments are much less concerned.

Clearly, understanding what drives public fear is vital. Concerns about drinking and smoking in the UK may relate to the culture around these acts here – a group of young people drinking on a residential street and becoming aggressive would be of more concern than a young person drinking over dinner with his or her parents, as we know they are more likely to do in France or Italy. But figures on this are hard to come by. The frame in which these discussions are taking place also matters: as detailed at the start of this paper, perceptions of young people have been clouded by intense reporting of a few very serious instances of youth stabbings and gun crime. There can be no question that knowledge of such crimes, perpetrated by a very small group of young people, affect how the public perceives young people in general.

The evidence provided in Section 2 suggests that there has been a breakdown in relations between youth and adults in the UK, and that public fear is in large part driven by the increasing visibility of certain groups of unsupervised young people and other facts of social change. Responding to social change will therefore be of central importance to a new approach that tackles the culture within which offending behaviour occurs and is perceived. The fact that British youth do not share the same disdain for offending and anti-social behaviour as those in countries such as Finland, and are less likely to respect the police and adult authority figures, does suggest that new strategies are needed if we are to embed adult norms of behaviour and attitudes.

The response to social change and youth behaviour must be big-picture, aimed at the primary level of prevention. But the aim should not be to reverse social change – indeed, many of the most important and positive developments in society result from the very same shifts. But we do need to rethink the infrastructure supporting families, communities, schools and individuals if we are to ensure that there are fewer negative consequences for young people's development.

We should also not be fatalistic about some aspects of social change. We worry, rightly, that parents are spending less time with children than in the past (or, specifically, in the 'golden age' of the 1950s), but this is not an inevitable decline. Many policy levers exist that can ensure that parents are more able to balance work with caring duties – for example, flexible working and better access to childcare. (These options have been highlighted in previous ippr reports, such as Hughes and Cook 2007, Margo *et al* 2006, Dixon and Margo 2006, Pearce and Paxton 2005, and Stanley ed 2005.)

However, it is also worth reminding ourselves that while many young people engage in anti-social behaviour, it remains a minority who actually commit an offence, and a far smaller minority who are frequent or serious offenders (Home Office 2005). These at-risk young people will require an additional secondary-level response, but the first step is to identify who they are. This is the question that we address in the following section.

4. Risk factors for offending

Research shows unequivocally that it is possible to identify those individuals most at risk of offending behaviour. A recently published longitudinal study by Farrington *et al* (2006) showed that the most prolific offenders start early, between the ages of 10 and 13, and have longer criminal careers than other criminals, lasting on average 13 years. Hence, the authors argue, prevention resources should be aimed at those who are most at risk of prolific offending among pre-school and primary age children. Instantly, this suggests problems with the UK approach – already identified here as lacking proper provision for primary prevention for children aged 5-12. But the evidence requires review. To do this, ippr has drawn from previous studies and undertaken its own original analysis using the British Cohort Studies.

Table 4.1: Factors that impact on likelihood of offending

Variable	Category	Offender (%)	Frequent offender* (%)	Serious offender** (%)
Sex	Female	24	5	13
	Male	30	8	14
Age	10 to 11	16	3	8
	12 to 13	27	5	14
	14 to 15	35	10 18	

Notes: *An offender who has committed six or more offences in the last 12 months
** Serious offences include: theft of a vehicle, burglary, robbery, theft from a person, assault resulting in injury, selling class-A drugs

Table 4.1 presents regression analysis of the factors that impact on likelihood of offending, based on Home Office data analysis. It is important to note that the key factor associated with offending is socioeconomic background. This does not feature in the table, which controls for socioeconomic factors, but has been proven in countless previous reports and studies including Margo *et al* (2006), which shows that coming from a disadvantaged area trumps most other factors. In Table 4.2, highlighted in black are the factors most associated with offending.

Table 4.2: Offending committed in the last 12 months by 10- to 15-year-olds, by sociodemographic and lifestyle variables

Variable	Category	Offender (%)	Frequent offender (%)	Serious offender (%)
Lifestyle and behaviour				
Being drunk once a month or more in last year	No	24	5	12
	Yes	72	32	43
Taken drugs in last year	No	23	4	11
	Yes	70	36	49
Victim of a personal crime	No	18	3	7
	Yes	47	13	28
Attitude to certain criminal acts	Less likely to agree criminal acts are OK	25	5	12
	More likely to agree criminal acts are OK	47	18	26
Committed anti-social behaviour in the last year	No	16	3	6
	Yes	55	18	33

cont. next page

Variable	Category	Offender (%)	Frequent offender (%)	Serious offender (%)
Area factors				
Disorder problems in the area	No problems One-to-three problems Four or more problems	15 28 38	4 6 11	7 12 23
Amount to do in the area	Quite a lot Not very much or nothing	22 30	5 8	11 16
Family factors				
Whether get on with parents	Get on well with parent(s) **Get on badly with at least one parent**	26 56	6 31	13 35
Young person's perception of parents	Good parenting skills Poor parenting skills	25 38	6 13	12 26
Whether friends or siblings have been in trouble with police in last year	No **Yes**	20 47	4 15	10 24
Whether parents ever been in trouble with the police	No **Yes**	23 52	5 23	11 33
How much you care about what your parents/guardians think	A lot A little or not at all	22 40	5 12	11 22
Parents/guardians know who your friends are	Parents know all of friends Parents only know some of friends	19 32	3 9	11 16
Young people's perception of parents' attitudes to criminal behaviour	Parents perceived to have less relaxed attitude **Parents perceived to have more relaxed attitude**	25 48	5 24	12 29
Free time spent with parents	Some to all of time **Little or no time**	24 46	5 12	12 23
School factors				
Whether ever truanted	No **Yes**	21 48	5 25	11 27
Whether ever been suspended or expelled	No **Yes**	25 55	5 22	12 35
Perception of school	Good perception Bad perception	26 38	6 13	12 24
Whether participate in after-school groups	Yes No	26 30	6 9	12 19

(Source: Home Office 2005)

The most important factors include, in descending order of importance:

- Having been drunk once or more a month in last 12 months (associated with 72 per cent of offenders)

- Having taken drugs in last 12 months (associated with 70 per cent of offenders)

- Getting on badly with at least one parent (associated with 56 per cent of offenders)

- Having committed anti-social behaviour in the past year (55 per cent associated)
- Having been suspended or expelled from school (55 per cent)
- Parents who have been in trouble with the police (52 per cent).

Anti-social behaviour is, of course, a key risk factor associated with offending. In response, the Government has developed a comprehensive programme of orders and support for young people who engage in anti-social behaviour. But crucially, it is not the case that all young people who are persistently anti-social progress to more serious crime. Home Office research shows that just over half the respondents who reported committing an act of anti-social behaviour in the preceding 12 months had also committed a core offence. This compares with 16 per cent for those who had not also demonstrated anti-social behaviour. Those who committed anti-social behaviour frequently were significantly more likely than the infrequent offender group to have also committed an offence – 77 per cent versus 46 per cent (Home Office 2005).

Several additional factors emerge from the table as being particularly associated with young people who offend:

- Having a parent who is an offender, poor relations with parents and/or spending less time with parents
- Disorder in the local area and lack of adult intervention in youth activities
- Lack of extracurricular activities and/or having little or nothing to do in the local area
- Peers and siblings who offend and/or spending more time with peers rather than parents
- Truanting or being expelled from school.

In addition, several protective factors emerge:

- High levels of collective efficacy locally
- Engaging in positive socialising activities, and lots to do locally
- Having a good relationship with parents
- Having positive peer relationships
- Having a positive school experience.

These are all contextual factors relating to the family and social context within which the individual lives. Again, this presents a challenge since, as the analysis above revealed, British youth (particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds) tend to spend more time with peers and less time with parents than those in other countries, and spend less time in purposeful activities than more advantaged young people. But the key finding here is the importance of familial and social context to offending – something we return to in Section 6.

Research also allows us to understand better how and why characteristics such as poor parenting and more time spent with peers impact on likelihood of offending. In large part, this is due to how these factors impact on young people's emotional and social development.

The importance of social and emotional skills

Below we examine the evidence on the role of social and emotional development in youth behaviour and offending, before explaining how the risk factors identified above act to increase a young person's chances of offending as a result of their impact on social and emotional development.

The importance of emotional and social skills to life chances in general is gaining recognition in government and beyond. The analysis by Leon Feinstein and colleagues of the 1970 British Cohort Study shows that emotional and social well-being in young adulthood, including high self-esteem, internal locus of control (the degree to which events are perceived as being within their control) and positive peer relations, had a considerable effect in determining adult behaviours for this group, including offending (reported in Margo *et al* 2006).

Work by Heckman and colleagues – which measured separately the impact of cognitive skills (as shown through qualifications and social and emotional skills) indicated by locus of control and self-esteem measures – found that low levels of social and emotional skills and cognitive skills were equally important determinants of the likelihood of serving a jail term and of taking part in illegal activities (Heckman *et al* 2006).

But the distinction between emotional/social and cognitive skills is a false one. In order to learn to read, a child requires not only the intellectual capacity to learn, but also the psychological propensity – for instance, to concentrate on learning the words – to be motivated to study, and to be confident enough to test their reading skills. Social development also comes into it, so that if the child feels an urge to throw their book at the teacher in frustration at the difficulty of the task set, they require an understanding of cause and effect and concern for the consequences of their actions (which may be longer term), as well as the ability to control how they express their emotions. To behave well, a child requires not only emotional maturity and social skills, but also the intellectual capacity to understand what is right and wrong.

We have conducted new analysis to examine the relative significance of different emotional factors in childhood for behavioural outcomes in adolescence. This analysis uses data from the British Cohort Study to look at which childhood factors are associated with behavioural problems by age 16. Our findings, methodology and models are outlined fully in the Appendix to this report. We controlled for a wide range of socioeconomic and demographic variables at birth, ages 10 and 16, and included measures of locus of control at age 10, self-esteem at age 10, the difference in standardised locus of control and self-esteem scores between ages 10 and 16, a range of behavioural/emotional indicators at age 10, and reading and mathematical test scores at age 10.

What our analysis shows is that, while socioeconomic factors remain central to explaining why some young people offend, indicators of emotional well-being at age 10 – locus of control, self-esteem, and some behavioural and emotional indicators – have a significant relationship with behavioural outcomes at age 16.

We considered which factors were associated with:

- Higher levels of aggressive conduct problems at age 16 (evidenced by fighting or bullying)
- Non-aggressive conduct problems at age 16 (evidenced by stealing, lying and disobedience)
- Hyperactivity at age 16 (evidenced by fidgeting, restlessness and inattention)
- Emotional anxiety at age 16 (evidenced by misery, worries and being fearful of new situations).

Again, emotional indicators at age 10 seemed to be highly important in explaining variance across these outcomes.

So, children's emotional well-being at age 10 can predict their behaviour at age 16. This suggests that interventions aimed at primary school age children that improve emotional well-being could reduce the risk of committing offences or conduct disorders at age 16. Crucially, the risk-factor analysis reported thus far does support the claim that we now have a good understanding of what kind of child offends, and the most important factors underpinning that offending. This again highlights the importance of interventions aimed at the primary level – reaching young people before they offend or exhibit some of the more serious behavioural problems associated with offending.

Before examining in more detail how children develop emotional well-being, in the next section we look at how and when children develop emotional and moral maturity – the ability to control behaviour and emotional responses. This is important to ascertaining how appropriate it is to expect certain behaviours from young people.

5. The development of moral responsibility

Key to the current approach to youth offending is the belief that children as young as 10 years old can be held criminally responsible – that they are able to understand the consequences of their actions. But does psychological and scientific research support the belief that 10-year-olds are morally and emotionally mature enough to be held criminally responsible? And what does research teach us about what kinds of interventions would be most effective in deterring young people from crime? Both psychology and behavioural science provide some revealing answers to these questions.

Phases of psychosocial development

In the 1950s and 1960s the psychologist Erikson argued that the process of psychosocial development consists of eight phases (see Table 5.1). Each stage is regarded as a 'psychosocial crisis' that arises and demands resolution before the next stage of psychological development can be satisfactorily negotiated. These stages are conceived in an almost architectural sense. Satisfactory learning and resolution of each crisis are necessary if the child is to manage the next and subsequent stages satisfactorily.

Table 5.1 highlights the key stages identified by Erikson. The first is now commonly known in psychology circles as 'early attachment' – the child must feel secure and nurtured by the caregiver, to avoid developing a sense of insecurity. Stage two involves the child grasping self-control, but he or she still requires support and nurture from the caregiver to overcome the psychosocial crisis. Although his stages of development seem mainly to describe the process of gaining independence and moral autonomy, Erikson emphasises the need for security, protection, support and structure throughout. Without these, he argues, the psychological development of the child will be stunted or undermined.

Table 5.1: Erikson's eight stages of psychosocial development

Stage	Ages	Basic conflict	Important event	Summary
1. Oral-sensory	Birth to 12-18 months	Trust vs. mistrust	Feeding	The infant must form a loving, trusting relationship with the caregiver, or risks developing a sense of mistrust and insecurity.
2. Muscular-anal	18 months to 3 years	Autonomy vs. shame/doubt	Toilet training	The child's energies are directed toward the development of physical skills, including walking, grasping. If not encouraged and supported, the child risks experiencing shame and doubt.
3. Locomotor	3-6 years	Initiative vs. guilt	Independence	The child continues to become more assertive and to take more initiative, but may be too forceful, which needs to be handled sensitively.
4. Latency	6-12 years	Industry vs. inferiority	School	The child must be helped to meet demands to learn new skills or risk a sense of inferiority, failure and incompetence.
5. Adolescence	12-18 years	Identity vs. role confusion	Peer relationships	The teenager must achieve a sense of identity in occupation, sex roles, politics, and religion.
6. Young adulthood	19-40 years	Intimacy vs. isolation	Love relationships	The young adult must develop intimate relationships or suffer feelings of isolation.
7. Middle adulthood	40-65 years	Generativity vs. stagnation	Parenting	Each adult must find some way to satisfy and support the next generation.
8. Maturity	65 to death	Ego integrity vs. despair	Reflection on and acceptance of one's life	The culmination is a strong sense of agency and fulfilment.

Source: Adapted from Erikson (1950, 1958, 1964, 1968)

Erikson's theory holds that children do not reach emotional maturity until around the age of 12 (and that this is not emotional maturity in the sense that adults would understand it, but the capacity to understand the difference between right and wrong). It suggests that processes vital to development include the experience of democratic play, where identity and creativity can flourish, alongside purposeful, ordered interaction – whether through interaction with parents, siblings or peers – where sense of purpose and understanding of status and role can develop. Both are required for secure development (Erikson 1968).

Research also suggests there are clear developmental differences between girls and boys. Slower social and emotional development of boys has long been used to explain the disproportionately high percentage of serious crimes committed by male juveniles (Cohn 1991). One influential US study found significant gender differences in 'ego development' – essentially, emotional and psychological maturity – with girls tending to display more ego development at each grade, and the gap beginning to close by the end of high school, roughly at the age of 18 (Cohn 1991). The key point here is that prior to the age of 18, some boys still displayed psychological immaturity.

Cohort analysis supports claims of gender differences in the development of emotional maturity. While girls are found to be more able than boys to control behaviour at ages 10 and 16, they tend to have lower self-esteem throughout adolescence, which suggests that they are more vulnerable to peer influences at this age (Feinstein 2000). The biggest gender difference is for the development of 'attentiveness' at the age of ten, an age at which boys do particularly badly: this means they are much less able than girls to take in information and memorise it.

Evidence from the physical sciences

This psychological and social science research is backed up by research in the physical sciences. Neuroscience shows that the parts of the brain that are responsible for self awareness, emotional control, moral understanding (right and wrong) and affective responsiveness – reacting appropriately to situations and understanding how to manage oneself – is the prefrontal cortex in the frontal lobes (Stuss and Alexander 2000). There is a wide consensus that frontal lobe development is not complete by age 10 (Giedd *et al* 1999). In fact, magnetic resonance imagery (MRI) scans of the brains of post-adolescents reveal that the frontal lobe continues to mature into early adulthood. This means that the capacity of the frontal lobe to control the excesses of the emotional system is not fully operational during adolescence (Sowell *et al* 1999, Goldberg 2001).

Research further shows that by the age of 12, the prefrontal cortex has sprouted many more cells than are visible in children's brains, but these are immature and thin (Brizendine 2006). As a result of the increased number of cells, emotional impulses from the amygdala (the emotional centre of the brain) to the motional control centre of the prefrontal cortex are more rapid and dramatic. The underdeveloped prefrontal cortex is often unable to handle the increased traffic from the amygdala and becomes overwhelmed (ibid). This is what takes place when teenagers act without considering consequences and become resentful of authority that tries to head off their impulses.

It takes several years for the connections between the prefrontal cortex and amygdala to become structurally sound. For this to happen, a substance called myelin needs to coat the cells. This may not happen till the late teens. Without this coating, which allows for quicker connections to be made to the prefrontal cortex, emotional impulses often result in immediate, raw behaviours (ibid) – and excess emotional impulses are regular occurrences in adolescent brains.

Psychological research also finds that hormone surges during later childhood and adolescence (testosterone in boys and oestrogen in girls) can account for violent behaviours and emotional responses (Brizendine 2006). The hormones associated with aggression, both in males and females, are called androgens. They begin to rise early in puberty and continue until they peak at age 19 in females and 21 in males. In a study at the University of Utah, levels of aggression in teenage girls were found to be linked to levels of the androgen androstenedione (ibid).

So, underdevelopment of the part of the brain responsible for behaviour control, plus hormonal imbalances throughout the teenage years, can explain why adolescents are more likely than adults to submit to their emotions and resort to high-risk behaviour.

Implications for policy

This research should not be taken to suggest that adolescents should not be expected to conform to adult norms of behaviour, or to have adult understanding of what is acceptable and unacceptable. However, it does suggest that efforts to curb youth crime should account for a different and less-developed capacity to control behaviour in the first place. This research also raises the question of whether we should reinstate the requirement of *doli incapax*, in which the prosecution is compelled to prove that a child under the age of 14 was capable of making a moral judgement about his or her behaviour.

In the following section we consider the factors involved in child development, in order to demonstrate where interventions aiming to prevent youth offending could best be directed if they are to be effective.

6. Raising children: the influence of familial and social context

A wide body of research supports the risk-factor analysis cited here: that youth offending emerges from particular social contexts. In this section we examine some of this evidence. One of the most important risk or protective factors is parenting. Much research – from social science, but also from cognitive and behavioural disciplines – supports the argument that family plays a key role in a young person's social development.

First, we know that certain socioeconomic factors, such as whether a child receives free school meals, lives in rented or owned property and whether they live in a deprived neighbourhood, are all predictive of offending (Home Office 2005) – probably because both are also proxies for low income.

Bio-social criminologists have shown that deprivation impacts indirectly on behaviour by increasing the stress levels of the individual. Robinson (2004) found that the ability to control behaviour, while rooted in the functioning of the frontal lobe, is related to levels of serotonin in the brain – which are, in turn, affected by environmental factors such as deprivation, stress and instability. He found that that low self-control is strongly and inversely related to levels of serotonin, and that levels were much lower in individuals living in stressful or disadvantaged situations.

Related biological and neurological disciplines also tend to support the thesis that environmental factors (including deprivation) have a serious impact on behaviour. The neurogeneticist Professor Liz Gould has shown, using marmoset monkeys, that poverty can damage the brain by stunting the growth of neurons, as the brain diverts energy towards survival rather than creating new cells and connections (Gould *et al* 1998). And experiments with rhesus monkeys have shown that 'peer-raised' monkeys have lower levels of serotonin than parentally-raised monkeys, and are therefore less able to exert self control (Bennett *et al* 2002, Kraemer *et al* 1998).

We must be careful about how we understand and use such research, but it does suggest that disadvantage impacts on behaviour not only in obvious ways, such as by increasing the opportunities and motivations to offend, but also via the consequent instability and stress it can cause and the way in which this impacts on brain development (Gould 1998, Margo *et al* 2006).

Parenting

Increasingly, evidence is emerging about how parenting in particular impacts on social and emotional development. Cohort analysts shows that young people who had strong, supportive family relationships were more likely to develop good non-cognitions, and research suggests that the nature of the interaction between parents and child is more important than structural factors such as income and parental education in predicting the development of social and emotional skills (Feinstein 2000, Bynner *et al* 2002, Blanden *et al* 2004, Feinstein *et al* 2005, Blanden 2006).

Specific parenting styles are proven to be particularly important in positive social and emotional development (Stanley ed 2005, Waldfogel 2006). These include:

• Consistency in rules and style

• Warmth and interest

• Stability and security

• Authority without hostility.

Conversely, specific parenting styles emerge as being negatively associated with emotional and social development (ibid). These include:

• Hostility

• Using physical violence, such as smacking

• Lack of interest and disengagement

• Inconsistency.

This evidence illustrates the mechanisms through which poor parenting is a significant risk factor for anti-social and offending behaviour. Table 4.3 showed that having parents who have come into contact with the police, parents who do not discourage young people from anti-social behaviour, or parents who are perceived by children to have poor parenting styles are all risk factors that are highly predictive of offending behaviour. Previous research also shows the impact of parental hostility and lack of discipline at home in predicting poorer emotional development (Waldfogel 2006).

A wealth of research proves the causal link between hitting or smacking children and increased aggressive behaviour (Lyon 2000). The Nottingham Research Study on corporal punishment (Newson and Newson 1972) found that the two most frequent indicators for having a criminal record before the age of 20 were having been hit once a week or more at age 11, and having a mother strongly committed to corporal punishment at that age. Unfortunately corporal punishment is not often an indicator used in risk-factor analysis for offending, so it is not possible to compare the strength of its connection with behaviour to other known risk factors.

In the recommendations of this report, we argue that much can be done to support parents, via particular interventions and programmes as well as more general reforms to improve the opportunities to work flexibly and balance work with child-caring and child-rearing. But effecting a culture change to how parents interact with children is a long-term and difficult goal in which policy plays but a small part. Nonetheless, there is a role for legislation even beyond the areas of work-life balance and service support.

In the UK, unlike other countries, we have fallen short of legally banning the smacking of children by parents – even though previous work has suggested that many parents can misunderstand the guidance and too easily fall into genuine physical assault (Lyon 2000). It is surely morally confusing to children that they can now be tried for assault for smacking an adult at age 10, but are not themselves legally protected from being smacked by a parent at this age. Perhaps, as Lyon argues, this also needs to be looked at when thinking about how to embed adult norms of behaviour or how legislation can act to change culture and behaviour. Making a legal case to protect children from abuse and smacking by parents would send out a different message about how we should treat and view children – an important one if we are indeed to meaningfully improve the family and social context in which children develop.

Activities and social and emotional development

In Table 4.2, we saw that having little to do in the local area was predictive of offending behaviour. Other research has shown that involvement in certain extra-curricular activities can protect against the development of anti-social or offending behaviour – and that, conversely, lack of participation in purposeful activities can predict offending or anti-social behaviour (Margo *et al* 2006). Consistent and regular participation in at least one extra-curricular activity per week can reduce the likelihood of drug and alcohol problems, aggression, anti-social behaviour, crime or becoming a teenage parent. There is also plenty of evidence that participation in extra-curricular activities improves educational outcomes.

Analysis by ippr of the 1970 British Cohort Study (the most recent longitudinal study available) shows that certain extracurricular activities are positively associated with developing a more internal locus of control (that is, believing events to be more within one's control) (Margo *et al* 2006). These activities must take place in a group setting, with a clear hierarchy, well-defined aims – in that the group is working towards something, such as a final performance – and must require regular meetings.

Even bearing in mind the different context of 1980s Britain (when this cohort will have reached childhood and adolescence), these findings are nonetheless intuitively attractive because they shift focus towards the kinds of purposeful activities that the public supports for young people (listed below). We can understand the way in which these activities impact positively on young people via the opportunities to gain social skills such as communication, teamwork, patience, self-esteem, motivation and application. They also provide opportunities for young people to engage positively with peers in purposeful activity – again, positive peer relations feature strongly as preventative factors in young offending (see Table 4.2).

Activities that combine the appropriate level of skills acquisition, hierarchy, interaction with adult authority figures and constructive activity include:

- Sport, drama or arts based activities at which attendance is regular and consistent and skills are acquired

- Activities that involve working towards a long-term goal and in which skills are acquired, such as those run by the Scouts Association or Girlguiding UK

- Cadet training, such as army or police cadets or 'boys' brigades', which combine both of the above.

Activities that are associated with offending include:

- Regular unsupervised socialising with peers in disadvantaged, high-crime areas

- Regular socialising with anti-social young people without supervision.

We examine these activities in more detail in Section 7.

The role of local communities

Studies that have measured the relationship between individual risk factors, neighbourhood characteristics and juvenile offending show that children and young people with high risk factors were significantly more likely to seriously offend in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods. But in more affluent neighbourhoods, predictions of future criminal behaviour based on risk-factor assessment – including the state of the family and relations with parents – did not manifest (Smith and McVie 2003, MacDonald and Marsh 2005, Sampson et al 1997, Furlong et al 2003).

This again highlights the power of socioeconomic context – that is, area-based deprivation – in predicting a child's future behaviour and life chances: any strategy aiming to target youth anti-social behaviour must target disadvantaged communities. But one of the most powerful risk or protective factors for anti-social behaviour, shown in Figure 6.1, is the level of collective efficacy in a local area.

'Collective efficacy' is the ability to socialise the young and maintain norms of respect for the law, and for one another (Sampson 1999). The factors that make for collective efficacy – dense friendship networks, community supervision of teenagers and high levels of civic participation – make collective

Figure 6.1: Areas and groups at high risk of perceiving high anti-social behaviour
Source: Wood (2005)
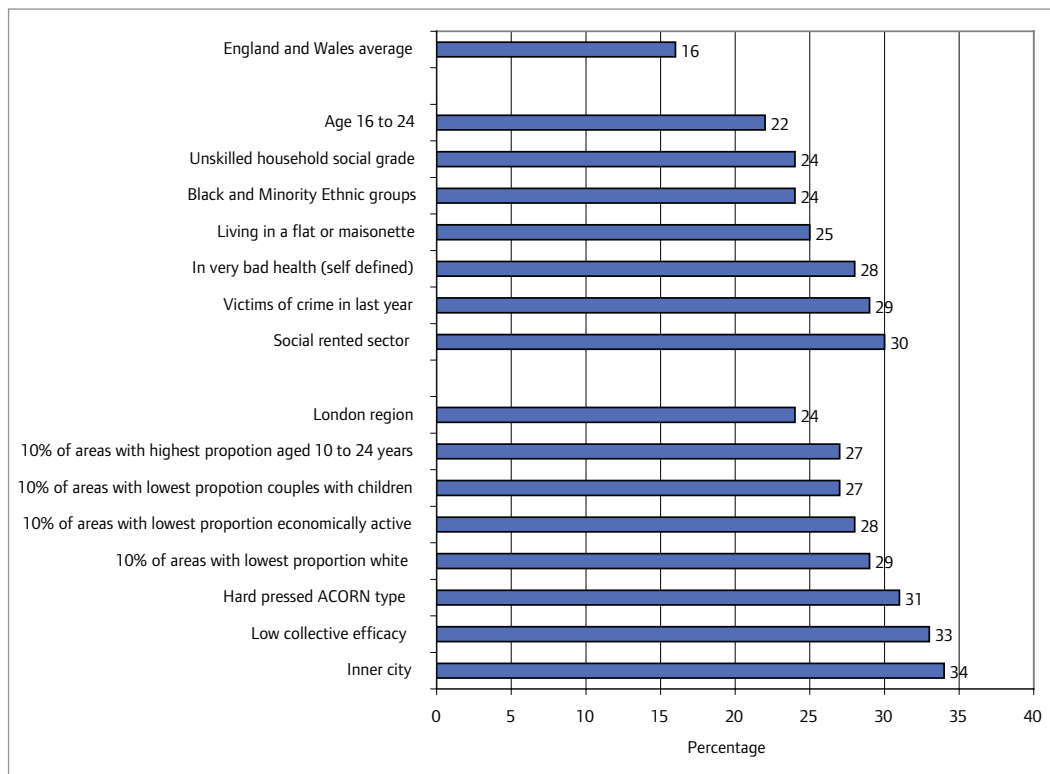
efficacy a very close cousin of 'social capital' (Dixon *et al* 2006). But the concept is a more action-orientated one, focusing in particular on how communities mobilise themselves for the achievement of public goods (Sampson and Groves 1989).

As Figure 6.1 (above) shows, low collective efficacy is one of the most accurate predictors of high levels of anti-social behaviour in England and Wales. But the most detailed research has been carried out in the United States. In a study of Chicago neighbourhoods, mutual trust and neighbourly altruism were identified as key factors in explaining inter-neighbourhood differences in crime rates. Communities characterised by anonymity and limited acquaintance, unsupervised teenage peer groups and low levels of civic participation faced an increased risk of crime and violence (Sampson and Laub 1997, Cote and Healy 2001).

The central idea here is not that collective efficacy makes residents more likely to intervene in serious crimes. Instead, it enhances their preponderance to intervene in the precursors of crime – for example, by discouraging the gathering of teenage gangs or drug taking (Halpern 2001). Thus interventions that encourage collective efficacy in communities are likely to impact positively on youth anti-social behaviour.

There are two ways to understand how this would impact: first, because residents would be more likely to intervene to maintain local civic order, but also because collective efficacy within a community has been associated with increases in authoritative parenting (Simons *et al* 2005). This may be because local networks of parents tend to set behavioural norms within a community, deciding what behaviour is appropriate and how it should be dealt with, and support each other in doing so (Jones 2005). This will be particularly important in areas where there is a lower ratio of men to women, or where there is a large number of single younger mothers, so the ratio of adults to young people is lower (Margo *et al* 2006).

Implications for policy

The key finding from this research is that young people's behaviour is strongly determined by their familial and social context. In order to be effective, strategies to prevent offending must therefore target not just the individual child, but their social context too. This will mean tackling family risk factors, community risk factors and peer-group risk factors. Without doing so, it is unlikely that behaviour will be changed in a meaningful way.

However, we must again acknowledge the limits of legislation in affecting culture change. We cannot expect there always to be a policy lever available to change people's behaviour in desirable ways, and it may be that we need to look in other directions if we want to change the way that adults interact with children in the community.

7. What works? Proven effective interventions

In this section we draw on evidence from across Europe of successful and unsuccessful approaches to youth offending. We look at interventions aimed at parenting, schools, communities and situational crime prevention (including ASBOs), aiming to root the explanation for the efficacy of different approaches in the theory and research findings detailed above.

Returning to our original model of crime prevention programmes, we consider interventions that operate at two levels:

- **Primary prevention** – universal approaches that aim to prevent crime before it occurs
- **Secondary prevention** – approaches that focus on individuals who are at the highest risk of offending.

Drawing on international evidence, we find several approaches that are particularly promising for preventing offending. These are:

- **Primary prevention** – parenting programmes, early intervention including pre-school and daycare programmes, after-school activities.
- **Secondary prevention** – therapeutic interventions, holistic family interventions.

A range of approaches also emerge as being particularly *in*effective at preventing youth crime. These are:

- ASBOs
- Juvenile curfews
- Probations
- Boot camps
- 'Scared straight' programmes.

We examine the latter list of interventions first, before moving on to look at what works.

Ineffective interventions

Although they are commonly seen as mainly aimed at young people who have already committed crime, the interventions outlined below are often used to deter children and young people from crime. We assess each one in turn, in the context of preventing crime rather than dealing with children who have already offended.

Anti-Social Behaviour Orders

Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) are a key part of UK anti-social-behaviour legislation. They target young people for public disruptive behaviour that is not yet criminal. In recent years, an 'anti-social behaviour industry' (Pitts 2005) has developed – a multi-million-pound operation with a series of new laws, interventions and specialist personnel.

ASBOs are part of a tiered response, which includes, in the following order:

- Warning letters
- Formal warning letters
- Referral to Youth Inclusion Programmes
- Parenting Contracts (voluntary)
- An Appropriate Behaviour Contract (ABC) established with the family's landlord or the police
- A Parenting Order (non-voluntary)
- A Curfew Order
- Finally, an ASBO.

The ASBO can lead to 'naming and shaming' in local and national media, and even a custodial penalty when breaching an Individual Support Order (ISO) or an ASBO. Other consequences of an ASBO include 'tenancy enforcement action', meaning eviction from the home. Although they were originally intended to be handed out to children and young people only in 'exceptional circumstances', more than half of all ASBOs have been received by children (Home Office 2005).

This approach has been criticised as a 'governmentally orchestrated moral panic' (Pitts 2005: 25) that serves to criminalise behaviour that is often just a matter of 'youthful spirits'. Some argue that ASBOs are becoming a motor of youth incarceration, and that public services for young people are being 'criminalised' as they are forced to reduce their universal, area-based work due to a proliferation of issue-based work with particular groups (Crimmens *et al* 2004). Between 2000 and 2004, a total of 3,826 ASBOs were issued in England and Wales, with 74 per cent served on people under the age of 21.

There is little evidence that, in general, the programme works, and there is some evidence that it does not work at all. As we have seen, rates of anti-social behaviour have not declined in light of these measures. What is more, the breach rate for ASBOs imposed on under-18s is around 55 per cent, of which 46 per cent resulted in a custodial sentence in 2004 (National Audit Office 2007) – supporting the claim that ASBO legislation can fast-track young people into the criminal justice system. Similarly, Table 7.1 shows that the less formal Appropriate Behaviour Contracts (ABCs) were breached in 37 per cent of cases. The children in question were mostly known to social welfare, educational and criminal justice agencies, and were mainly excluded from school.

Table 7.1: The proportion of people who did and did not re-engage in anti-social behaviour following the three most common interventions

Intervention behaviour	Proportion not engaging in further anti-social behaviour	Proportion engaging in further anti-social	Median time to further anti-social behaviour for those that engaged in it
Warning letter	63%	37%	73 days
Acceptable Behaviour Contract	65%	35%	155 days
Anti-Social Behaviour Order	45%	55%	296 days
Source: National Audit Office (2007)			

Evidence cited earlier suggests that ASBOs are not sending a message to young people that their behaviour is inappropriate; rather, in some of the most-at-risk groups, they are becoming a symbol of cool rebellion – a 'badge of honour' (Edwards and Hatch 2004).

This indicates the root of the problem with ASBOs: they do not introduce proper interventions to address the context within which the behaviour occurs – families, peer groups and communities – and the message they send out has been distorted over time.

Evidence on two related measures tested in the United States – curfews and probations, both of which are based on similar aims to restrict young people's movements and monitor their behaviour – suggests similar problems.

Curfews

The imposition of curfews that ban children from certain locations at certain times has become increasingly widespread in the United States. Most US cities operate some form of juvenile curfew, and most of them believe they are effective (Bannister *et al* 2001). These curfews are usually intended to keep all people under a certain age off the streets at night, in order to reduce their opportunities to get involved in crime and anti-social behaviour.

Despite their apparent popularity, evidence on their effect is weak to say the least. Adams (2003) reviewed 10 quasi-experimental studies of juvenile curfews, and found that the majority showed no significant effect in reducing crime. Of those that did show effects, these were evenly split between increases and reductions in crime.

Adams concludes that the effects of curfews do not justify the money spent on them, and that they are often implemented in discriminatory fashion. The young people who are caught in the enforcement of Curfew Orders tend to be socially excluded and vulnerable. Adams notes that as many as one third of curfew violators had to be sheltered for the night as no parent or guardian was available to pick them up, and that curfew violations needlessly add to the criminal records and labelling of these young people. His criticisms echo earlier concerns about the effectiveness and human rights implications of juvenile curfews (Fried 2001).

Wacquant (1999) used juvenile curfews as an example of how a measure that has no effect other than restricting liberty and producing crime, and no justification other than press relations (in that it is often favourably received in the press), can be taken up by a number of countries nonetheless.

Probation

Since at least 1992, research has suggested that probation supervision for juvenile offenders is no better than providing no intervention at all in reducing offending and recidivism rates in the US (Lipsey 1992). Various efforts have been taken to reduce probation caseloads, or to intensify probation efforts, but at least two randomised trials of such intensive supervision for children at risk of committing crime have found no reductions in the likelihood of offending or recidivism, despite increased costs associated with higher staff numbers, drug testing and increased use of imprisonment for technical violations (Petersilia and Turner 1993). Nevertheless, probation can be successful when combined with therapeutic programmes.

We now consider two further initiatives that have proved popular in the United States and have been considered in the UK.

Scared straight programmes

These programmes aim to deter juveniles from crime by taking them into prisons, where they meet convicted offenders who are often encouraged to provide their life story in order to show the consequences of continued criminal behaviour. They have become very popular in the United States, perhaps because they offer an attractive combination of seeming tough, while being cheap and providing a means for convicted offenders to acknowledge the error of their ways. Unfortunately, they do not work.

A meta-analysis of nine randomised studies of scared straight and similar programmes was funded by the Campbell Collaboration. It showed that, on average, these programmes were more harmful than doing nothing at all. Overall, they lead to increased rates of juvenile crime and arrest among participants (Petrosino *et al* 2003). Several other researchers have noted the negative effects of scared straight programmes (for example, Aos 2002 and Baas 2005).

Such strong evidence of a method having a negative effect on juvenile offending is very rare in this field – no effect, or moderate positive effects, are much more common. However, the evidence has not put an end to the programmes. Petrosino *et al* refer to one Californian programme that showed a negative effect on the young people exposed to it. The response was to end the evaluation, rather than the programme itself.

Boot camps

These are specially structured residential institutions that operate along military lines. The young people (usually men) sent to boot camps are expected to follow an intense regime of discipline, drill and exercise. Boot camps have been claimed to respond to the lack of structure, discipline and self-esteem in juvenile offenders. But even if they do provide these elements, they do not seem to fit with the needs of these young people. The track record of boot camps in reducing offending is poor. Juvenile boot camps were one of the few methods (alongside scared straight programmes) to have negative effects on average in Aos's (2003) review of criminal justice and prevention programmes. Kerns and Prinz (2002) suggest another reason for these negative findings, which is that boot camps are not similar enough to real life for youth to see how they can transfer positive changes from one to the other.

It is instantly apparent that none of these approaches respond to the evidence detailed above. Curfews, probations and orders are merely ways of delaying bad behaviour, unless they are also matched with interventions aiming to tackle the factors that underpin that behaviour.

Anti-social behaviour may better be targeted with youth work, family therapy and leisure initiatives in order to harness youthful energy and decrease peer-pressure. Strategies aimed at the school, and seeking to tackle peer influences and to change the leisure culture are doubtless more effective, as we shall now see. Furthermore, parenting programmes aimed at at-risk families before anti-social behaviour emerges are more effective than those given under order.

Effective interventions

The initiatives identified in this section are divided into two categories: primary interventions, which seek to address the wider social and environmental factors likely to contribute to youth crime, and secondary interventions, which comprise parenting programmes or early intervention in children considered at risk of offending in later life.

Primary prevention (early intervention)

Research in North America suggests that many of the risk factors associated with family background can be influenced by providing support to the early development of children and adolescents. Methods for the provision of such support include:

- Prenatal care
- Home visits to parents of young children.
- Parenting training
- Provision of good quality childcare/day care
- Additional educational support
- Programmes to involve parents in their children's education.

Several such programmes have now been evaluated in the US and Canada. Homel (2005) reviews five examples: the Elmira Prenatal/Early Infancy Project, the Syracuse Family Development Research Project, the Perry Preschool Program (which we consider in the following section), the Montreal Prevention Project and the Seattle Social Development Project.

Four of these projects have demonstrated benefits that outweigh their costs, with much of the benefit coming from reductions in victimisation costs by reducing the criminal activities of the children who participated. Homel notes that the provision of support to children before they reach the age of five seems important in producing good outcomes. This is emphasised by the evaluator of the Montreal project, who has noted that it is harder to learn non-violent means of communication after this age (Tremblay 2004).

A further set of initiatives were reviewed by Utting and colleagues (Utting *et al* 2007):

- Nurse-family partnerships (currently being piloted in the UK)
- The Incredible Years
- Preventative Treatment Programme.

These initiatives, along with others under the umbrellas of child care and after-school activities, are described and assessed in more detail below.

Nurse-family partnerships (Utting et al 2007)
Aims: To help first-time mothers from low-income backgrounds achieve the best start for their children by preventing health and parenting problems that can lead to anti-social behaviour. The programme aims to address three main risk factors:

- Behaviour with negative health impacts by mothers during pregnancy such as smoking, drinking alcohol or taking illegal drugs

- Child abuse and neglect

- A troubled maternal life course, including reliance on state benefits and unintended subsequent pregnancies.

This is to be accomplished through intensive home visiting by nurses during pregnancy and the first two years of a child's life.

Impact: A longitudinal study into the effectiveness of this form of intervention was carried out in Elmira, a semi-rural area in New York State (Olds *et al*, 1986, 1997, 1998, 2003 cited by Utting *et al* 2007). Participants were recruited while pregnant (before 26 weeks gestation) and followed up until their child's 15th birthday. Children whose mothers had been treated with the full nurse-family partnership programme had 60 per cent fewer instances of running away, 56 per cent fewer arrests, 81 per cent fewer convictions or violations of parole and 56 per cent fewer parent-reported behavioural problems from drug and alcohol use.

Cost-benefit analysis: The nurse-family partnership programme in Elmira paid for itself in cost savings by the time the child had reached the age of four, due mainly to the reduced reliance on welfare by the mother and reductions in the number of subsequent pregnancies for those in the programme. Savings had exceeded the cost of the programme by 4:1 by the time the child reached 15, in terms of decreased government assistance, and decreased expenditure on education, health and other services, and criminal justice system spending. Also, there were increased tax revenues as mothers were more likely to be in employment.

The Incredible Years project
Aims: Based on extensive research, the Incredible Years aims to promote positive parenting and education approaches that increase the ability of children to solve problems and interact socially, and that lessen aggressive tendencies. A parent-centred programme for those with children aged 2-7, it involves 'videotape modelling', in which groups of parents view videos of child-adult interactions and strategies and then discuss what they have seen in the group setting, with the goal that lessons learned should be used in their own parenting experiences.

An additional 'advanced' curriculum offers parents the opportunity to consider their adult relationships and problem-solving skills, in order to facilitate a positive family atmosphere in which good parenting can take place. Associated programmes for parents of older children and teachers have also been developed.

Staffing: Group leaders are recruited from various family and health-related fields, such as education, social work, nursing, and psychology. Most have post-graduate qualifications. There is a lengthy and detailed training process that culminates in accreditation.

Recruitment: In the UK, families have been recruited primarily through Sure Start centres. Services such as transport and childcare are often provided as part of the programme, in order to facilitate attendance.

Impact: Studies have been conducted across a broad range of demographic groups, and have identified that the techniques are effective in numerous populations, including deprived communities and those that are difficult to access. In various evaluations studies, including those carried out by independent evaluators, the Incredible Years has been shown to be as effective as treatment of conduct-disordered children in clinical settings.

Preventative Treatment Programme (Utting et al 2007)
Aims: An offshoot of Parent Management Training (PMT), this programme particularly targets boys between the ages of seven and nine who have problems with aggression and hyperactivity, and is designed to facilitate the reduction of these symptoms through a combination of applied PMT and anger-management and social-skills training.

Recruitment: In the initial pilot, subjects were white, Canadian-born males, ages 7-9, from families in

low-level socioeconomic groups, who were assessed as having high levels of disruptive behaviour in kindergarten. A further study was conducted in Massachusetts for five-year-olds who had been screened for symptoms of behavioural and emotional problems. Implementation of PTP is challenging as the high level of commitment required by parents often leads to low attendance.

Impact: Children who participated in the key PTP studies were shown to have reduced attention deficits and aggression. The behaviour of the highest percentage of children (in contrast to other treatment programmes) was brought into the normal range. A PTP study in the United States called the Fast Track programme was provided for 900 children aged 5-6 who were identified as being in the top 10 per cent for anti-social behaviour. After three years of involvement in the programme participants were less likely to show signs of serious conduct problems. Six years after intervention children then aged 13-14 had lower rates of arrest than the control group (38 per cent compared with 42 per cent) and conduct disorders were reduced from 27 per cent for the control group to 17 per cent in the experiment group.

Childcare: Perry Pre-School Programme
Following research by Welsh and Farrington (2004) and others, day-care centres with an enriched programme for children in pre-school age, led by educators trained in psychology, is considered a promising early intervention. The most effective appears to be the well-known Perry Pre-School programme described by Ashcroft *et al* (2004) and Schweinhart (2004).

Aims: to provide high-quality early childhood education to children from low-level socioeconomic backgrounds to address the relationship between childhood poverty and educational failure. This two-year intervention lasts for 2.5 hours a day, five days a week, seven months a year. It provides cognitive stimulation, and teaches children to be active and independent learners, increasing school readiness and enhancing academic performance.

Impact: An evaluation based on the random assignment of 123 African-American infants to pre-school and non-pre-school groups between 1962 and 1966 demonstrated greater subsequent success for those in the treatment group on educational, criminological and economic outcomes. In terms of impact on education, 65 per cent of the participant group graduated from high school compared with 45 per cent of the control group. A positive impact on criminal behaviour was also evident: at age 19, only 31 per cent of participants had been arrested for a crime, compared with 51 per cent of the control group. At age 27, the treatment group had had half as many arrests as the control group.

A sustained positive impact on economic prosperity was also apparent. At age 27, the median annual income for participants was US$12,000, compared with $10,000 for the control group. At age 40, the difference was greater, with participants earning a median of $20,800 compared with $15,300 for the control group. Related to these earning differentials, home ownership at age 27 was also higher among the participants: 27 per cent ownership compared with 5 per cent for the control group.

Cost-benefit analysis: By the time the participants had reached the age of 27, the programme had provided a saving of $7 for every $1 invested. When participants had reached age 40, this saving was increased to $17 per $1 invested. The savings are due to reductions in spending on welfare assistance, special education, criminal justice and costs to crime victims, and increased tax revenues from participants' higher earnings. The most significant saving comes from criminal costs, with 88 per cent of savings attributed to this area. There is a notable gender division of savings: 93 per cent of savings emanate from the performance of males, which can be related to their expected higher rates of criminal offending.

After-school activities
A large body of research shows that participation in extracurricular activities promotes educational attainment, including low rates of school failure and dropout (Mahoney and Cairns 1997). Participation is associated with heightened school engagement and attendance, better academic performance and interpersonal competence, and higher aspirations for the future (Barber *et al* 2001, Mahoney *et al* 2003).

Other work also shows that participation in organised activities is associated with reduced problem behaviour across adolescence and into young adulthood. Recent research shows that involvement reduces the likelihood of drug and alcohol problems (Grossman and Tierney 1998), aggression, anti-social behaviour and crime (Mahoney 2000), or of becoming a teenage parent (Allen *et al* 1997). A study of 695 school pupils in California who were followed up to age 24 suggested that those who participated in extra-curricular activities were less likely to offend, both before and after the school-leaving age. However, this effect depended on whether the pupil's social network also participated in extra-curricular activities, and on whether these activities provided structured activities that developed skills and attachment to conventional values (Mahoney 2000).

The success of activities in preventing offending is explained by the opportunities presented to mix with better-behaved peers, to be mentored by adult activity leaders, and the fact that organised activities represent a conventional endeavour that is highly valued, challenging and exciting (Larson 2000). But in addition to this, play itself is vital to youth development. Both purpose and order, and democratic, unstructured play are essential to youth well-being (Gill 2007). Lack of either one of these can be seriously detrimental. Organised activities can provide both.

Participation in organised activities has also been associated with improved mental health and personal skills, including:

- Lower levels of negative emotions such as depressed mood and anxiety during adolescence (Barber *et al* 2001)

- Heightened motivation for learning and self-efficacy (Mahoney *et al* 2005)

- The promotion of initiative – which involves the application of extended effort to achieve long-term goals (Larson 2000, Larson *et al* 2005)

- Maintaining or increasing self-esteem and sense of identity (Mahoney *et al* 2005).

Some research has also shown that participation is related to developing a civic-minded identity (McIntosh *et al* 2005). The opportunities for social relationships and belonging that arise from taking part in these activities are thought to impact on these psychosocial processes too.

Analysis of the 1970 British Cohort Study has shown that certain youth activities, such as sporting, uniformed and church activities, were associated with positive adult outcomes by age 30, controlling for other relevant factors including outcomes up to age 10 and socioeconomic background, while attendance at youth clubs was found to predict negative adult outcomes (Feinstein *et al* 2005, Margo *et al* 2006).

Activities that are effective in improving behaviour include those:

- in which participants acquire new skills (such as sport, art, drama, or any other skill)

- that are regularly attended, or to which regular attendance is an expectation, such as football teams that hold regular practice sessions

- in which the participants work towards a final performance or goal

- that are supervised by adults.

Secondary prevention initiatives

Kerns and Prinz (2002) provide a useful list of 41 programmes that have been evaluated for use with children who display aggression. Such programmes can be targeted in one of the following ways:

- At the individual, like some of the early intervention programmes listed above

- At the family, such as Fast Track (mentioned under Preventative Treatment Programme, above) or functional family therapy, multisystemic therapy, and Triple P Positive Parenting Programme (see below).

In reading the literature on juvenile crime prevention, some programmes are cited repeatedly as

offering good prospects for crime prevention. Perhaps the most frequently cited example is multisystemic therapy (MST) (Henggeler and Borduin 1990), which has been called 'the outstanding candidate for efficacious intervention in the adolescent age group' (Bor 2004). In another study, multisystemic therapy was included, along with family functional therapy and aggression replacement training, in a list of the most cost-effective crime prevention interventions (Aos 2002).

Multisystemic therapy (MST)

This method is intended for use with adolescents aged 12-17 who are involved in crime, substance misuse or violence. It operates through small teams of well-trained and supported practitioners. Its features include:

- A focus on the present, on specific problems, and on action to resolve these problems
- Clear treatment plans and expectations of behaviour
- Daily or weekly effort, with regular review
- Daily contact with therapists
- Therapists with low caseloads, available day and night, seven days a week
- A typical time limit of three to five months.

Difficulties in implementation can destroy the prospects of even the best tested MST interventions. Kerns and Prinz (2002) provide several recommendations for the effective implementation of interventions as follows:

- Programmes should avoid stigmatising participants. This can be done, for example, by issuing general invitations to participate, then focusing recruitment efforts on at-risk groups, rather than publicly targeting these groups.
- Programmes should recognise the effect of environment and address poverty and other factors of adversity.
- Recruitment and retention of the targeted participants can be improved by:
    - Recruiting people at the places where they usually are, in the languages they understand
    - Enabling young people to build positive, stable relationships with caring and committed adults
    - Enabling parents who may be illiterate to provide informed consent without having to admit that they cannot read
    - Employing culturally competent staff who reflect the ethnic mix of the target population
- Programmes should be matched to the developmental stage of targeted children (this can be helped by involving them in setting goals and choosing methods).
- The application of programmes that were designed for older children to younger children should be avoided, unless they are adapted.
- High quality staff should be recruited and retained by:
    - Providing training and supervision
    - Offering a finders fee to existing staff and volunteers
    - Providing administrative support
    - Good coordination between staff.

In Norway, a randomised-control trial of MST (Ogden and Hagen 2006) has illustrated sustained positive results from this form of intervention. The study consisted of 75 adolescents with serious behavioural problems, who had been referred to the municipal child welfare services in three different

areas. They were randomly assigned to a treatment and control group. The treatment group received MST for an average of 24 weeks, while the control group were treated with regular child welfare services. Participants were assessed before treatment began and two years after the termination of treatment.

Impacts: The results of the Norway study demonstrated positive outcomes for those receiving MST. The treatment group scored significantly lower on measures of behavioural problems and anti-social behaviour assessed using data reported by the individuals themselves, their parents and their teachers. The living situation of treated individuals was improved, with more of those treated remaining living with their families than was the case for the control group. MST was found to be particularly effective among boys.

A previous evaluation of MST conducted in Missouri with 176 juvenile offenders showed similarly positive results. The situation of the participants was followed up four years after participation in the trial. Those treated using MST had recidivism rates of 22 per cent, while offenders treated with individual therapy had a much higher rate of 72 per cent and those who refused treatment 87 per cent. This clearly shows a strong positive effect of MST on reducing the levels of offending. A follow-up investigation almost 14 years later showed the sustained effects of MST. Those treated with MST had 54 per cent fewer arrests and 57 per cent fewer days in custody than those treated with individual therapy (Borduin *et al* 1995).

Cost-benefit analysis: In the US, Sheidow and colleagues have investigated the cost benefits of using MST in comparison with the usual methods of treatment for offenders. Their results show that during the treatment period there is a net cost saving of US$1,617 per youth treated with MST. This was measured by comparing the Medicaid spending on the youths involved in a random control study, taking into account all necessary treatment costs in the period. In the 12 months after treatment had finished, a further $400 per youth was saved for those who had been treated using MST, but this difference was not significant.

Given the more positive results shown to emanate from MST it seems that this form of treatment is the most economically effective (Sheidow *et al* 2004). The cost-benefit analysis did not take into account future costs that may be incurred due to reoffending, the rates of which are lower for those treated with MST. Thus, it is likely that the cost savings could be even greater.

The Positive Parenting Programme ('Triple P')
Aims: Triple P is a form of family therapy that seeks to enhance family protective factors and reduce risk factors associated with severe emotional, developmental and behavioural problems in children. It focuses on:

- Augmenting knowledge, skills, and confidence of parents

- Promoting positive relationships

- Promoting social, emotional, intellectual and language development, and behavioural competencies in children.

Developing parental capacity for self-regulation is a core tenet.

Staffing: Staffing requirements reflect the intensity of the Triple P intervention. Whereas earlier levels can be implemented by health or parenting key workers, often in association with family doctors, higher levels of intervention require more highly-trained welfare workers and allied health professionals. Practitioners receive licences to practise after they undergo a standardised training course.

Recruitment: The programme is divided into five levels, in an attempt to target families with a spectrum of support needs. The most basic level includes a universal, population-wide campaign, whereas the most intense level, which includes home visits and an individually tailored programme, is targeted to the families with greatest need.

Impact: Triple P has not been thoroughly tested in UK settings, but extensive studies in Australia have demonstrated markedly positive impact. These include significantly improved child behaviour and parental competence. Parents show increased confidence in parenting ability, reduced dependency on potentially abusive parenting practices and demonstrate reduced stress and/or depression in relation to their role as parents. Children experience fewer problems, get on better with their peers and behave better at school.

Functional family therapy

Functional family therapy (FFT) (Sexton and Alexander 2000) is another family-based prevention and intervention programme that has been applied successfully in a variety of contexts to treat a range of high-risk youths and their families. This approach draws on a multisystemic perspective in its family-based intervention efforts.

FFT is a good example of the current generation of family-based treatments for adolescent behaviour problems. It combines and integrates established theory, empirically supported principles, and extensive clinical experience into a clear and comprehensive clinical model. The FFT model allows for intervention in complex and multidimensional problems, through clinical practice that is flexibly structured and culturally sensitive to the young person, his or her family, and the community. Although often used as a tertiary intervention programme, such as for adolescents on probation, FFT is also a prevention programme for at-risk adolescents and their families.

FFT targets young people between the ages of 11 and 18, but also provides treatment to younger siblings of referred adolescents. FFT is a short-term intervention — including, on average, eight to 12 sessions for mild cases and up to 30 hours of direct service (for example, clinical sessions, telephone calls and meetings involving community resources) for more difficult cases. In most cases, sessions are spread over a three-month period. Regardless of the target population, FFT emphasises the importance of respecting all family members on their own terms.

FFT is currently used in Sweden – for example, in a project called Turning Point for Children Through Parents, which targets children who have been reported for a crime for the first time. Participation in the project is voluntary. The project is run in collaboration between the schools, the police and social services. The project began in March 2004, and was made a part of ordinary social services in 2006. The project is financed by the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention and three other organisations that work with children and adolescents.

Nee and Ellis (2005) describe a project in the UK that is using a multisystemic approach in targeting offending children (starting with children at the age of seven, who therefore have often not yet been involved with the criminal justice system). It concentrates on (potential) prolific offenders, offenders with special educational needs, and those who are referred as a preventative or protective measure by school, authorities or parents.

This approach has a strong theoretical basis, and applies sound assessment and allocation to the service on the basis of need. It relies on being very responsive and flexible to the needs of the offender (taken from effective interventions with older offenders), and its multi-modal approach is based on existing evidence of effective interventions – for example: interpersonal skill training, individual counselling, cognitive behavioural programmes, involvement of parents and other family members such as siblings. The first evaluation by the University of Portsmouth indicates the effectiveness of the intervention (Nee and Ellis 2005).

It is immediately apparent why these approaches work: each is targeted at previously identified risk factors (poor parenting, lack of extra-curricular stimulation, individual developmental problems, lack of adult-child interaction and supervision of youth activity) and targets not just the individual but the context – the family, siblings and peers, and changes the environment within which the child operates.

Implications for policy

These findings have clear implications for government policy: punitive measures are simply far less effective at preventing youth offending than are therapeutic and family-based initiatives.

However, there is one reason why the UK government has been reluctant to emphasise therapeutic interventions over the more punitive ASBO legislation: public attitudes. The Government has tended to believe that the public demands more serious, punitive measures – or, conversely, that they would view a more interventionist agenda as nanny-statism. However, this claim needs to be updated. As we saw in Section 2, public attitudes are, in fact, not as straightforwardly pejorative as often claimed.

So what are the implications of those research findings for policy? Public attitudes towards crime are not immutably authoritarian. People interpret the behaviour of young people in public spaces as signifying the strength of the social order, but this behaviour itself is clearly amenable to policy intervention. They also discriminate between types of crime and the values and interests that these breach, and account for the motivations, intentions and moral posture of offenders in particular by recognising that 'drug addicts do not behave rationally'. They become more liberal in their orientations when supplied with information from professionals rather than the media, and when they have personal involvement in case resolution in the criminal justice systems. But they stand firm on basic social norms and react harshly to high-profile and what they perceive as repugnant breaches of those norms.

A progressive policy agenda for crime reduction can therefore find moorings in public attitudes, even though the task is a difficult and complex one. Opportunities to shape a progressive consensus on youth offending, and to lead public attitudes in new directions, clearly exist in a number of very specific areas. For example, the public supports the idea of introducing more discipline to young people's lives, and such sentiments go with the grain of research findings. As this report has demonstrated, young people who experience structure, discipline and hierarchy in their social and family lives are much less likely to become anti-social young adults and to subsequently offend, and lack of discipline in early and mid childhood is strongly predictive of anti-social behaviour in childhood and adolescence and offending in adulthood (Margo *et al* 2006).

There is also a strong sense that children deserve a fair chance. People regularly complain that there is not enough for children to do in their local area, and worry about the capacity of schools and other children's services to do their best by the younger generation (ibid). The current youth justice system does chime with the more punitive side of public attitudes, but to dismiss the other, more progressive side, would be disingenuous.

Politicians have a choice about how they present policies and agendas to the public. Academics such as George Lakoff and Ian Shapiro have illustrated the capacity of politicians to frame policy ideas in ways that can be 'sold' to a sceptical public (Lewis 2007). In this regard, reforms to extend the provision of structured activities and supervised public space for young people, and to tackle issues of poor youth socialisation via family-based interventions, offer potentially fertile ground for changing the public discourse on youth crime in the UK.

8. Recommendations

According to the Youth Justice Board, in the UK we spend 11 times more on locking up our young people as we do on prevention projects to stop them getting involved in crime in the first place. Rectifying this anomaly is key to a progressive agenda on youth crime.

The new government under Gordon Brown has already indicated its intention to move well beyond a punitive agenda on youth offending to one that better reflects the aims of Every Child Matters and Youth Matters. Moving the Respect unit and responsibility for youth offending from the Home Office to the new Department for Children, Schools and Families was a significant step towards this, as was the Children's Plan (DCSF 2007) and the ongoing Youth Offending Project (PMSU/Home Office).

Yet the emphasis of our crime prevention strategy is still firmly in the 'justice' camp, and we still lack a coordinated, properly targeted but national service for children at risk of crime – particularly for those of primary school age. Meanwhile, provision of appropriate socialising activities for teenagers is poor in many disadvantaged areas. In addition, a number of gaps in current provision emerge when it is examined in the context of the above research findings. This must be rectified as part of a holistic primary prevention strategy to prevent youth crime.

Furthermore, updating and improving the infrastructure and legislation around anti-social behaviour and prevention would be the logical step to better reflecting the evidence on how best to prevent offending.

The need for a new approach

A more balanced public-policy response to concerns about youth offending does not mean ignoring behaviour that contravenes social norms – far from it. But it does mean viewing offending and anti-social behaviour differently – as behaviour that needs to be reformed and dealt with meaningfully and in context: not merely punished in the short term and then forgotten about.

The research considered in this report suggests several problems with the current approach to preventing offending. One of the most important problems is the level at which we intervene. While targeting is essential, there is not enough being done at the primary level to tackle the broader causes of offending. However, the recommendations below are necessarily incomplete: they aim to improve the opportunities and supports available to the primary socialising institutions of family, community, school. But ultimately, much of what needs to happen rests on public behaviour – and the capacity for legislation to change this is limited.

Nor should we always look to legislation or professionals to solve problems that may result from social change. For example, the solution to families spending less time together than several decades ago is not to 'replace' parenting with professional childcare and so on: many policy levers are available to help parents spend more time with children without losing out on the opportunities of work and leisure in modern Britain. (See Hughes and Cook 2007, Dixon and Margo 2006 and Margo *et al* 2006 for more detail.)

Once an individual is displaying risk factors, or has committed an anti-social act, the nature of the intervention needs to be directed at preventing that behaviour from being repeated, rather than on empty punishments. Punishment is an important component of our criminal justice system, but effectively diverting young people from crime is just as important. Orders and sanctions must always be accompanied by a form of therapeutic or purposeful activity if they are to be effective at crime prevention. This will also send the message to the public that the behaviour is being dealt with in a meaningful way.

Strengthening our secondary-level interventions is vital for another reason too: this report has not considered in any detail the problem of crime committed by newcomers who would not have been able to access the primary socialising institutions we examine simply because they were not living in the UK previously. While the solution to the problems faced by these individuals needs to be looked at

as part of another independent study, the prime solution will be to look at strengthening the programmes offered at the secondary, later intervention stage and ensuring later interventions are more effective.

The recommendations below are divided into primary and secondary forms of prevention.

Primary prevention

1. Tackling child poverty and in-work poverty

The connection between poverty and criminality reminds us again of the importance of tackling child poverty. Recommendations on how this agenda should move forward, particularly in terms of tackling in-work poverty, are advanced in other work by ippr (see Cooke and Lawton 2007). These include:

- Reforms to the minimum wage

- Improvements to work incentives – through a personal Tax Credit Allowance

- Renewing trust in the tax-credit system through a 'no claw-backs' rule, and by writing off overpayments to low-income families

- Increasing support to low-income working families.

2. Better support for families: towards a worker/carer model

Key to responding in a progressive way to social change will be strategies to better support families to spend time with children and teenagers. Too often, there is a discernibly fatalistic approach to social change – a sense that we will never return to the 1950s 'golden age' of nuclear families and stay-at-home mothers. This notion is true, and as it should be.

But we are certainly not heading into moral and social decline. There are a huge number of reforms and policies that can help us move as a society towards another golden age – of the 'worker/carer' society. This does not mean 'professionalising-out' childhood, as some have claimed – we should not aim to replace parenting with professional childcare services and look to programmes and services to repair the job of poor parenting. What it does mean is finding ways to provide the right balance of support and service to families so that they in turn may balance their working and caring responsibilities more effectively.

The range of reforms to support better work-life balance for parents and families previously identified by ippr (see Hughes and Cooke 2007, Dixon and Margo 2006 and Stanley 2005) should be acted upon. These include:

- Better childcare provision

- Better support for, and greater availability of, flexible working for parents of older children

- Better parental leave packages – particularly, better paternity leave to ensure that fathers are able to undertake proper caring roles in families.

These issues have been covered thoroughly elsewhere by ippr. The recommendations below focus on areas in which new initiatives are needed.

3. Protecting children: banning corporal punishment

The Government has previously ruled out moving further towards the banning of physical punishment by parents. But it should reconsider its position in light of the evidence presented in this report, as well as for moral reasons. The evidence from more than 40 years of research is that hitting children increases the chances of aggression, anti-social and criminal behaviour. Recent studies have demonstrated beyond doubt the causal relationship between physical punishment and increased aggressive behaviour (Lyons 2000).

Parents should be banned from any form of physical punishment of children. This would not only reduce criminality in the long term, but would also send out the right message about the kind of society we want to be – one in which violence and physical abuse are not tolerated – and also sends

the message to children that they will be treated as we expect them to treat others, and that the law is there to protect them as well as to enforce norms of behaviour.

4. Better provision of activities for 12- to 18-year-olds

Involvement in extra-curricular activities can protect against offending, but in the past disadvantaged young people have been less likely than their more advantaged counterparts to access structured activities. Cohort analysis shows that young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, or who had high risk factors for poor attainment later in life, were much more likely to attend unstructured activities such as youth clubs (Feinstein *et al* 2005, Stattin *et al* 2005), and much less likely to attend structured activities. This is likely to be partly due to the availability of such activities in disadvantaged areas.

Additional background

There are concerns that provision at a national level is too low to meet demand. Nationally, there are around 950,000 places available in the Girl Guides and Scouts. To take the Girl Guide groups as an example, although 14 per cent of six-year-olds attend Rainbows, 25 per cent of eight-year-olds attend Brownies and 10 per cent of 11-year-olds attend Guides, there are still 50,000 girls on the national waiting list – one for every ten existing members. However, although there is currently no socioeconomic breakdown of these figures, anecdotal evidence suggests it is overwhelmingly the most affluent young people who are taking up these places, which is unsurprising considering the earlier findings from cohort analysis.

The Cadets is an organisation that is often associated with negative aspects of militarism and hierarchy, but it also offers young people important developmental activities and experiences, such as camping, building and making structures, learning new skills, and working with adult mentors. However, there are only 88,000 cadets altogether in the Sea Cadet Corps, Army Cadet Force and the Air Training Corps, in around 3,000 units based within local communities.

In addition, there are 40,000 children in the Combined Cadet Force (CCF). This is based in schools, but of the 253 CCF units only 52 are in state schools (although the Government is piloting provision in five more state schools, and is looking to pilot a project in a Scottish school soon). So the vast majority of the £80 million-a-year Ministry of Defence funding for the CCF goes to funding provision for young people in independent schools, who tend overwhelmingly to be better off than other young people and to suffer far fewer risk factors than other young people. This level of expenditure is equal to more than half of what is spent on the Children's Fund each year (Hansard 2007), highlighting a disjunct between the desire to provide activities for the most disadvantaged and the reality of provision.

A look at the schools chosen for the CCF pilot project set up by the Ministry or Defence in 2007 suggests that the pilots have not targeted provision at the most-at-risk young people. The percentage of pupils receiving free school meals is a good indication of the level of disadvantage in a school. Table 8.1 lists percentages of free school meals in the schools chosen for pilot CCF projects.

Table 8.1: Schools chosen for pilot CCF projects	
School	Pupils receiving free school meals
Archers Court Specialist Maths and Computing College, Dover	25%
Budmouth Technology College, Weymouth	22%
Deacon's School—Specialist Technology College, Peterborough	22.8%
Haberdashers' Aske's Federation of Hatcham College and Knights Academy, London	18%
Treorchy Comprehensive School, Treorchy, Mid Glamorgan	21%
UK average	21%
Note: Statistics accurate as of May 2007. Source: Ofsted – various reports	

It is immediately apparent that these selected schools are about average in terms of the socioeconomic background of their students, while the level in areas such as the deprived London borough of Tower Hamlets is 53.9 cent. Reaching the most disadvantaged and at-risk young people would clearly require targeting those schools with the highest number of pupils on free school meals first.

In terms of provision in communities, under-provision in deprived areas may be particularly marked. As an indication of provision, we investigated the number of Scouts and Army Cadets organisations in areas of particular deprivation. Aston, in Birmingham, has only one Scout brigade, with 20 members, and one cadet unit with 26 cadets – in an area with an overall population of almost 27,000 (including 5,819 5- to 16-year-olds). Possilpark, Glasgow, similarly has no scouts brigades and only two cadet units, with 30 cadets each, despite having an overall population of 5,300.

In many ways this under-provision is unsurprising, as these organisations depend on the willingness of adults to come forward as volunteers. This itself will be related to levels of collective efficacy in the community, which tend to be lower in disadvantaged areas (Margo *et al* 2007). This is unfortunate because it is the children living in these areas for whom participation in purposeful activities is so important.

Policy recommendations
Extra-curricular activities for all young people should be provided in every local area, with funding sources for structured extra-curricular activities consolidated into one fund. Moreover, while the Combined Cadet Forces is far from the only organisation offering purposeful activities to young people, it is morally wrong that the majority of limited resource currently goes to more advantaged young people. The £80 million that the Ministry of Defence spends each year on the Combined Cadet Forces, mainly in independent schools, should either be diverted to funding CCF units in schools in deprived areas, or continue to fund only those CCF units in independent schools that attract a minimum amount of attendance (say 50 per cent) by children at state schools in deprived areas.

Providers of structured extra-curricular activities in deprived areas should be able to apply to this consolidated fund in order to improve and increase provision in these areas. But in order to have an impact on outcomes, these activities would need to have the characteristics that we know are important in improving emotional and social development in young people. In other words, they need to be purposeful, with opportunities for progression and to take on more responsibility, provide consistency and be regularly attended.

The evidence cited within this report is that children develop morally and socially via engagement in democratically structured play and activity, but they also need opportunities to progress, and to understand and engage in purposeful activities that encourage progression. Activities would therefore need to be accredited as fulfilling a minimum number of set criteria.

Activities that should be encouraged include:

- Sporting activities such as football clubs

- Art and drama-based activities that include a 'final show' or performance (so that they are goal-orientated)

- Girlguiding UK, Scout Association, cadet groups and Woodcraft Folk (as these are goal orientated and provide skills-based learning opportunities)

- Other democratically structured but purposeful activities.

5. Supervised play areas for children (under-12s)
Provision of purposeful activities is important, but so is play, as this report has noted at several points, so outdoor spaces must be provided for primary school aged children to play freely and safely with friends.

Additional background

Research shows that in the UK 16 per cent of households are in poor-quality environments (PMSU/ DCSF 2007). Many areas – particularly the most disadvantaged – suffer from traffic problems and dangerous roads, and adults in the UK are less willing to supervise other people's children in the local area (Margo *et al* 2006). In addition, there are fewer than 100 staffed adventure playgrounds in the UK, and local budgets for play services are low or non-existent (PMSU/DCSF 2007).

The combination of these trends has been that young people spend less time playing in supervised areas than elsewhere in Europe (Gill 2007). Meanwhile, 75 per cent of parents believe that their children now face increased risks and are reluctant to allow them to play unsupervised outside (Gill 2007).

Additionally, as Table 4.2 shows, there is a correlation between offending behaviour and complaints of little to do in the local area. Young people need more opportunities to engage positively in supervised activities that are purposeful and fun in the local area. Doing so not only increases their social, emotional and behavioural skills, but gives them a sense of ownership over the local area, and teaches them to engage positively with public space – for example, respecting public property and the rights of others (Gill 2007, Margo *et al* 2006). Meanwhile, the increased visibility of young people playing and interacting positively is thought to help soothe public concerns about youth behaviour (ibid) and to help generate more collective efficacy and positive relationships between young people and the adults around them.

Recommendations

The aim should be for these supervised play areas to be offered in every local area. But in the first instance, they should be targeted at disadvantaged urban areas where need is greatest and where there is not already active voluntary-sector or local-area provision. Research shows that children and young people consistently complain about having little to do in their local area (Margo *et al* 2006), and that the public would support such measures (Gill 2007).

As set out in the Children's Plan, the Government should invest in a new programme of supervised play areas in disadvantaged urban areas. These would be staffed adventure play parks, integrated with structured activity (for example, in parks outside Children's Centres and the proposed new programme of youth centres [known as Youth Hubs]) and would require the following steps:

- Rolling out a 'Play Ranger' programme, starting in disadvantaged areas

- Integrating secure play sites into Youth Hub design and planning

- Staffing adventure playgrounds in disadvantaged areas

- Setting up a workforce development programme for the play sector, with recruitment focused on local adults

- Providing subsidised access to indoor play areas for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

In order to ensure that children can play safely outside in inner-city areas, further plans should be made to tackle traffic safety issues in urban areas and to ensure that town-planning decisions are made with children and young people in mind.

6. Supporting collective efficacy

While the previous recommendation is important in laying the foundations for more positive interaction between adults and children, further challenges remain in supporting communities to develop collective efficacy. This involves encouraging adults in the local community to come together to decide on norms of behaviour, and to be willing to enforce them.

Additional background

Research consistently shows that the role of the wider community and other adults in socialising young people is vital to their behaviour and well-being. There has been a range of recent ippr research

in this area (Rogers 2005, Dixon *et al* 2006, Keaney 2006, Keaney and Rogers 2006, Khan and Muir 2006). These reports all agree that where adults are willing and able to actively participate in maintaining order and acceptable behaviour in their communities, children's behaviour benefits hugely. Parenting is also improved when local networks of parents can agree on what behaviours are acceptable, as shown in Margo *et al* 2006, and researchers believe this to be due to the confidence that individual parents can gain from the support of other adults in the community and the way in which young people then perceive messages from an older generation – as being messages, rather than unreasonable expectations of their own parents.

But the role of policy in enabling the development of collective efficacy is a complex one. Here again, it is clear that policy cannot simply force local culture to change, but can only facilitate it.

Recommendations

First, in line with the findings reported here that collective efficacy flourishes when public space is well-maintained, there are several ways in which changes could be made to planning and regulation policy which would help to support a richer variety of public spaces and places where people can meet. The most important ideas include the following:

- Local authorities should conduct regular audits of 'congregational spaces' in each neighbourhood, to determine how much such space is available and what condition it is in. This information could then be used to inform planning decisions or public-spending decisions.

- The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) should award and monitor an 'Investor in Community' badge to encourage commercial developers to pursue design policies that fully reflect the principles of sustainable development, by integrating economic, social and environmental factors in design and implementation. Public procurement of new homes and other dwellings should exclude any developers that do not achieve this standard.

- Better strategies for involving local people in planning the development and use of shared space should support the above recommendations.

- To encourage the development of local activities that are collective and participative, government should introduce targets. To this end, there should a Public Service Agreement target to encourage collective and community-led cultural activities – particularly among those from priority groups and in disadvantaged communities, and those that encourage the mixing of different age groups. This would support and build on ippr's recommendations in Keaney (2006) to encourage civil renewal.

- More crime prevention money should be directed towards 'positive' measures that defend public space, by designing the built environment to encourage constant use, rather than the 'defensive' strategies that are currently dominant, such as CCTV, which do little to make crime harder to commit. Initiatives targeting, say, design or lighting in the public realm could actively encourage more use of public space, thus naturally providing more 'eyes on the street'. CABE should work with local authorities, NACRO and the Home Office to research and develop such a strategy.

- Local authorities are charged with drawing up Community Plans promoting the long-term welfare of their areas. The process should include the creation of 'public realm strategies' as recommended by the Urban Task Force, based on genuine consultation with residents, with plans looking up to 20 years ahead. The quality of public space – the streetscape, parks, green spaces – should be focused upon by Local Strategic Partnerships set up to oversee the process of neighbourhood renewal in disadvantaged localities.

Second, we propose the following recommendations designed to increase local engagement and involvement in behaviour and crime:

- The Respect Action Plan sets out a range of measures designed to improve local accountability and bring service providers closer to the priorities of people in their local communities. Senior representatives of police and local authorities should hold regular 'face the public' sessions, which could be open to the media. These sessions should be expanded to mirror the model of Safer

Community Councils developed in New Zealand. In these, parents, local authority representatives, teachers from local schools, representatives of young people's groups, local women's groups, local business and church groups meet regularly with the local police to debate community issues.

- The New Zealand Safer Community Councils are not only charged with the responsibility of tackling anti-social behaviour and crime issues in their local areas, in partnership with local police, but are empowered to ask for local crime statistics, to be prepared by police and presented at meetings. The councils do not themselves have any powers to tackle challenging behaviour but are able, through regular meetings, to inform the police of local concerns and monitor the progress of efforts to tackle them. The UK should follow this model.

- There are further examples of inner-city London schools (such as Camden School for Girls) taking the initiative in setting up parent groups, which meet regularly to discuss and agree on acceptable behaviours for students. There is a lack of evidence of the effectiveness of such schemes, so we recommend investing in a series of pilot schemes to test the value of these and other initiatives. Further information on this recommendation is in Sodha and Margo (2008 forthcoming).

7. Placing welfare teams in primary schools

Appropriate support should be made available for all primary school aged children and their families – particularly those most at risk. The system of welfare support in English and Welsh schools is insufficiently focused on early intervention, and the statutory framework only kicks in when children begin to miss school – by which time it is more difficult to re-engage them with their education. There is not enough coordination between schools and social services to pick up on problems when they occur at an early stage.

As recommended in Sodha and Margo (forthcoming), local authorities should employ welfare teams comprised of at least one child psychologist, a child psychiatrist, a family worker, a counsellor and a school nurse to undertake schools visits. These teams should be hired by the local authority but be based in schools. A similar approach in Alberta Province, Canada, suggests that one team should service no more than three schools in a local area, on a rotating cycle, to meet with children and monitor their welfare. These teams should be made available to all children, and should meet with each child at least once a year. They should be tasked with referring children and their families to appropriate support services (such as Sure Start programmes, OnTrack, Connexions, Social Services or child and adolescent mental health services [CAMHS]), and would replace the current role of school welfare officer.

This system would help to solve the problem of Sure Start reaching those most in need – this is important as evaluations of Sure Start have found that services were not being accessed by the most-at-risk families. It would also ensure that children were reached by proper professional support before they began to display serious problems. A further benefit would be in ensuring more joined-up working between different children's services. See Sodha and Margo (forthcoming) for details.

Initially, the teams should be targeted at schools in deprived inner-city areas where youth crime is most often perpetrated. However, the long-term aim should be to roll them out nationally, to better balance the educational role of schools with their pastoral responsibilities.

Secondary prevention

8. Sure Start Plus: A targeted approach for at-risk 5–12s

A key gap in current provision for preventing crime is that preventative interventions tend to be focused on the early years – for example, Sure Start is aimed at children aged 2-5. Interventions aimed at addressing emotional well-being and anti-social behaviour by children and teenagers are targeted (through CAMHS provision) at those who are already offending or causing anti-social behaviour, or have experienced mental health problems. This is too late: we need a range of interventions for the 5-12 age group that prevent emotional and behavioural problems occurring in the first place. A report by Utting *et al* (2007) recognises that identifying and supporting at-risk children at an earlier stage before problems surface represents a key policy challenge for the future.

Additional background

The Children's Fund, set up in 2000, aims to reduce the social exclusion of young people and is targeted at children aged 5-13. It provides funding in 149 partnership areas across the UK for interventions designed to improve outcomes. These mostly take the form of local 'club-based' provision, including breakfast clubs, after-school clubs and homework clubs. Other services include play areas, educational support, child therapy, mentoring schemes and parent-focused interventions. As with Sure Start, the primary method of targeting used is geographical, with services being focused on the most deprived areas according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation.

But there still remains a lack of joined-up services – particularly for primary school age children. Investment in activities for young people, such as through Youth Matters, has not been directed at the most effective activities for preventing behavioural problems; it has focused overwhelmingly on youth-club provision and social work, but not enough on constructive activities for the most disadvantaged (Margo *et al* 2006) – although this is changing (HM Treasury 2007).

Recommendations

There is a clear need for a coordinated, properly targeted but national service for children at risk of crime, particularly for those of primary school age, that tackles factors within families and communities that can lead to youth crime. This public service should be introduced in line with previous ippr recommendations – particularly the idea behind 'Sure Futures', recommended by Edwards and Hatch (2003) – a service designed to address the needs of older children and teenagers. There is currently a pilot of Sure Start Plus for teenage parents and their children; this scheme should be radically extended. Eventually, the aim should be for Sure Start-style services to be available to all age groups. While Sure Start Plus should serve 5-12s and their families, a Sure Futures should offer the kinds of career guidance, activities and advice that teenagers and their families need.

Via Sure Start Plus, interventions to address impulsiveness that leads to criminal activity can be addressed through cognitive behaviour therapy while other risk factors, such as low school attainment, require more established but nonetheless intensive interventions (such as Reading Recovery, an early literacy intervention programme for children at the end of the first year of primary school). Holistic programmes, such as multisystemic therapy, are of proven efficacy for those with the most complex needs, while targeted parenting programmes of the kind reviewed here have been shown to improve outcomes.

The long-term aim should be to draw these multi-agency interventions together under the rubric of 'children's services' into a coherent service that reaches those children who are at risk of prolific offending from ages five to 12. We propose that this would be in the form of a Sure Start Plus programme, directed at keeping young children out of crime, that would target older children not served by Sure Start. Ultimately, this should be developed and implemented in a broader, more inclusive way in order to reach all parents, following a primary, not secondary, approach, although this would depend on resource availability.

Evidence suggests that such an intervention would receive widespread support. It would also help shift more of the resources spent on young people towards those living in conditions of disadvantage in deprived areas.

Although provision and services offered should be responsive to local need, Sure Start Plus should offer the following types of intervention that are already offered in some parts of the country, across the nation:

• Cognitive behavioural therapy to address impulsiveness and other personality traits that lead to criminal activity

• Multisystemic therapy for those with the most complex needs

• Intensive education interventions, such as Reading Recovery, for those with poor literacy attainment

• Targeted parenting programmes of the kind reviewed here, such as functional family therapy.

Reaching hard-to-reach groups

Children and young people who have committed anti-social acts should be referred with their families to Sure Start Plus alongside any other programme or order. Ideally Sure Start Plus would reach the most-at-risk groups before risk factors such as anti-social behaviour became manifest. Hard-to-reach groups are a problem that the Government has acknowledged with regard to Sure Start. Like Sure Start, the Sure Start Plus scheme should be targeted geographically at the most deprived areas but it should be recognised that, as with Sure Start, there could be problems in that it might exclude the hardest-to-reach groups.

We therefore suggest a dual approach, combining geographically targeted services alongside an element of individual entitlement to Sure Start Plus services for at-risk children, to help ensure that the provision reaches those who need it the most. This would help ensure that children's access to the intervention is not limited by lack of parental agency.

One way in which this could be delivered is through individual budget holding, which is currently being piloted in 16 areas. In the pilot schemes, lead professionals control individual budgets for at-risk children that can be used to buy a range of services, including leisure activities, school holiday activities, travel costs, parenting support groups, respite care and counselling. Budgets range from £100 to £2500. If budget holding were rolled out on a wider basis to all at-risk children, an individual entitlement to Sure Start Plus services could act as a bolt-on, with a ringfenced amount available to spend on preventative services in the budget of each at-risk child. These could be used to purchase treatment such as those listed above.

9. Real, engaging provision for excluded pupils

Huge variation exists in provision for pupils excluded from mainstream schools in England and Wales, with a marked 'insider-outsider' culture. Excluded young people who are not in formal education are among those most likely to commit an offence and breach an order. Ensuring that there is real, engaging provision for these groups should be an essential component of an improved prevention strategy.

In a forthcoming report (Sodha and Margo 2008), ippr has recommended the introduction of 'outreach schools', as run in Alberta Province, Canada. These schools, which operate out of disused buildings and shop fronts, have the same status as state schools, and follow the same curriculum, but with a more flexible timetable.

If schools such as this were subsidised by local authorities, they would offer less-structured learning opportunities, combined with on-site therapists and social workers, to young people who have been excluded from mainstream provision. They should offer a mixture of guided independent learning and class-based learning, with a higher level of pastoral support than traditional schools, and should be staffed by fully qualified teachers who have training and experience of working with young people with problem behaviours.

Research reveals staying-on rates at Canada's outreach schools of more than 95 per cent – some achievement considering that they are serving the most challenging and at-risk young people. The key to their success is that they are small, allowing adequate attention for each child, and offer less formal teaching. Timetables are less rigid, there is an expectation of attendance for a minimum period each week but work can also be completed at home or elsewhere if this suits the child, and they are strongly linked to local social services via their on-site staff, enabling children and young people to receive guidance and support when necessary. Outreach schools are cheap to run in terms of staff and resource costs, and building hire is minimal as a result of using disused and informal sites in the local area. We recommend that the UK would follow this model. (See Sodha and Margo 2008, forthcoming.)

10. Reform of ASBO legislation

Additional background

Between April 1999, when Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) were introduced, and December 2005 a total of 9,853 ASBOs were issued in England and Wales, with 41 per cent of these served on

people under the age of 18. The use of ASBOs is on the increase, with the majority of orders issued in that time occurring at the end of the period, in 2004 (3,440) and 2005 (4,060) (Home Office 2005). As more and more evidence comes to light of the ineffectiveness of punitive measures alone in preventing offending, it is becoming increasingly difficult to justify the use of ASBOs on children when these are not accompanied by other interventions aimed at addressing their problems.

According to the Government (Home Office 2005), the ASBO was never intended to be a form of punishment, but was meant instead to direct families to support and divert young people from crime. But the manner in which ASBOs have been employed since their introduction, and the extent of their use, has undermined this goal. So has the fact that the legislation does not require an assessment of the child's needs before an order is given – although this may be changing in line with recommendations in the Children's Plan (2007). Evidence that ASBOs are not used to direct young people to support should be sufficient to encourage proper reform of the system. As Table 8.2 shows, Individual Support Orders (ISOs) are rarely handed out to young people, and Parenting Orders are also used quite infrequently. It is ASBOs and Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs) that are used far more often.

Table 8.2: Anti-social behaviour interventions, by numbers

Types of intervention	1 Oct 03 – 30 Sept 04	1 Oct 04 – 30 Sept 05	Percentage increase
Acceptable Behaviour Contracts	5,094	8,654	70
Anti-Social Behaviour Orders	2,874	4,274	49
Housing Injunctions	946	1,614	71
Parenting Contracts	307	1,296	322
Parenting Orders	229	537	134
Crack House Closure Orders	176	338	92
Individual Support Orders	5	30	500

Note: Crack House Closure Orders were brought in from January 2004 and Individual Support Orders from May 2004.
Source: National Audit Office

Recommendations

Cognitive science and psychological research do not support the notion that children as young as 10 years old can be treated as autonomous individuals who are fully aware of the consequences of their actions. Instead, problematic behaviour of children of this age should be seen as a signal of a problematic family or social context, and this needs to be the focus of interventions. Anti-social behaviour should be dealt with through strategies that target family, community and peer groups, as recommended above, via therapeutic interventions, leisure activities and proper provision of services locally. Strategies to tackle individual risk factors will not work if they do not also tackle the factors that underpin poor emotional and social development.

We should therefore undertake urgent review of the use of ASBOs and create new guidelines to ensure that they are used to divert children away from crime and, with their families, towards service support – rather than as empty punishments or short-term sanctions.

It would be neither politically tenable nor rational to do away with ASBO legislation. The evidence from the Together Action Plan website shows that ASBOs serve an important function in reassuring the public, and do give local communities an important additional power to combat the local disorder that can greatly reduce quality of life.

However, on the back of the evidence cited in this report, we recommend that ASBOs should not be given to children under 12 years of age unless accompanied by family-based and other interventions. This would serve to reaffirm the role of the family in children's lives and to ensure a more sustainable approach. These orders should direct the family to the kinds of therapeutic intervention reviewed here: not merely parenting classes, but multisystemic or functional approaches of proven efficacy, which should be delivered eventually via Sure Start Plus.

The family is of central importance to a young person's behaviour. But the peer group matters too. Under-12s who have committed an anti-social act should be compelled to attend skills-based purposeful leisure activities as well as therapeutic intervention for any child who has been given an Individual Support Order (ISO) as a result of anti-social behaviour.

For 13- to 18-year-olds, ASBOs should be limited to between six months and two years, with therapeutic and family intervention employed alongside all except the most minor orders. There is no justification for an order that lasts longer than two years, but current orders may last between two and ten years. A two-year ASBO sends the same message to the public that the behaviour is being dealt with as a longer order, but does not tie a young person into longer-term, ineffective bans that are too easily breached. This should help reduce the number of young people ending up in court for breaching orders relating to minor anti-social activities.

In some cases, the family may be a serious problem for the young person – for example, abuse or neglect may be encouraging the anti-social behaviour. Anti-social behaviour legislation should be able to direct children to social services and, in the worst cases, therapeutic foster care. For example, Kent County Council has established a therapeutic Foster Care Project for children aged between 4 and 13. The children are placed temporarily (for up to two years) in a therapeutic foster-care home. The foster carers are trained by, and are part of, a care planning team, and undertake some tasks normally carried out by social workers, such as recording the child's progress and advocating for the child. They also meet regularly with a psychologist and with other members of the care team for the child. Such interventions have previously been judged as very effective (see Baas 2005), and should be extended where possible in seriously disadvantaged areas.

In summary, reform of anti-social behaviour legislation is required in order to limit the use of 'empty' sanctions and instead to use orders to direct children and their families to appropriate programmes and professional support, via Sure Start, social services and – in the long-term – Sure Start Plus. Specifically:

- Anti-social behaviour legislation should be explicitly framed as a way of directing the most at-risk young people and their families towards appropriate support and services, in order to divert young people from crime.

- ASBOs should not be used on children younger than 12 unless accompanied by Family or Parenting Orders. Instead, Family and Parenting Orders should be used to improve the family context in which the behaviour occurs, or to ensure appropriate care for the child in extreme situations, such as foster care or additional service support for the family.

- Individual Support Orders should be used where appropriate alongside Parenting and Family Orders, to target the social context in which offending occurs – in other words, to direct children to purposeful activities in the local area and ensure their attendance.

- All children, including older children (those aged 13-18), should be assessed in all cases as a matter of course before being given an ASBO.

- The length of ASBOs for older children under 18 should be scaled back to between six and 24 months.

11. Decriminalising children

The recommendations above would be a first step towards a more welfare-orientated approach to diverting youth crime.

However, several findings reported here should also have implications for our notion of when a child can be held criminally responsible, and how we respond to youth offending.

Neuroscience, developmental psychology and behavioural science all produce evidence to suggest that the capacity to make moral decisions and to control emotions is underdeveloped in children and teenagers. Punitive measures may therefore be inappropriate for young people in the 10-14 age range. Instead, they need to learn, through proper therapeutic interventions that have been tried and

tested, to control their emotions and behaviour, and to be given a chance to develop the capacity to do so before being given a criminal record.

Evidence from around the world shows that punitive measures do not divert young people from crime as effectively as do therapeutic and family-based interventions. Using civil routes to direct young people to appropriate support and intervention would therefore be less costly and more effective than the present interventions.

Politically, the criminalising of young children sends the wrong message to the public and encourages the existing negative attitudes to children and young people. Instead, we need to represent children as they are – at least partly as products of a particular environment, not yet autonomous individuals, and capable of reforming behaviour and attitudes if given the appropriate opportunity.

Current public and political debate means that further change to criminal justice legislation will be difficult to undertake. But in the long term, the aim must be to ground the response to youth crime fully in the evidence of what works, and in a more welfare-orientated approach to youth offending.

Alongside this, we must continue to challenge and question the language used in media and by public figures, including politicians, to describe young people and refute the claim that young people are somehow distinct from mainstream society. Recognising the responsibility of adults to the younger generation may not be a challenge that policy alone can solve, but, as this report shows, there are some important ways in which it can make a start.

Appendix: Data analysis of the 1970 cohort

Sonia Sodha

This Appendix details the original data analysis of the 1970 British Cohort Study, supplied by the UK data archive, carried out by ippr for this report, to look at mental health outcomes at age 16. This data analysis looks at the factors that are associated with higher levels of malaise and behavioural and emotional problems at age 16 for the 1970 cohort. The results are reported at the end of this Appendix.

The 1970 British Cohort Study

The British Cohort Study (BCS) is a longitudinal survey that tracked a representative sample of people born in England, Scotland and Wales during the week of 5-11 April 1970. Information was also collected at age 5 (in 1975), at age 10 (1980), at age 16 (1986), at age 26 (1996), at age 30 (1999-2000) and at age 34 (2004-05). The sample size in 1970 contained 17,200 children. However, in subsequent years the sample size was much smaller due to attrition, with some children not traced for subsequent interviews.

The study represents an incredibly rich source of data: although it was originally designed with a specific focus on perinatal mortality and the provision of antenatal and postnatal services, in later waves it expanded its focus to a wide range of socioeconomic, demographic, health, attitudinal and ability measures (Sigle-Rushton 2004). Despite relatively high rates of attrition, past studies have shown that the sample sizes achieved remain broadly representative of the British population (Shepherd 1997).

Mental health outcomes in adolescence: previous findings

To determine which childhood/adolescence factors might be important in determining poor adolescent mental health outcomes, we undertook a literature review of existing studies of mental health outcomes based on the analysis of large-scale data. Our review offers a good guide as to which factors we need to include in our data analysis, but demonstrates that there is a gap: there is no analysis that uses statistical regression techniques on either longitudinal or non-longitudinal UK data to examine which factors are associated with negative mental health outcomes in adolescence, as opposed to in childhood.

Moreover, there is no UK study that examines indicators of emotional well-being in childhood, such as self-esteem, locus of control and anxiety, and the association of these indicators with negative mental health outcomes in adolescence.

A study by Meltzer *et al* (2000), based on National Statistics data from 1999, examines which populations of children aged 5-15 are most likely to suffer from mental health outcomes, based on survey data from parents, teachers and the children themselves. They find that poor mental health outcomes – in the form of emotional disorders (such as anxiety, depression and obsession), hyperactivity disorders (such as inattention and overactivity) and conduct disorders (characterised by awkward, troublesome, aggressive and antisocial behaviours) – are more prevalent within certain populations.

These populations are as follows:

- Children from lower socioeconomic groups – 14 per cent of children in social class V (unskilled occupations) had mental health problems compared with just 5 per cent in social class I
- Children from families in lower-income groups
- Children from lone-parent families: 16 per cent of children from lone-parent families had mental health problems compared with 8 per cent from two-parent families
- Step-families: 15 per cent from step-families compared with 9 per cent from other families
- Children from large families

- Children whose parents had lower or no educational qualifications: 15 per cent of children whose parents had no qualifications compared with 6 per cent of children whose parents had degree-level qualifications

- Children whose parents were out of work: in families in which neither parent had ever worked, 21 per cent of children had mental health problems

- Children in rented accommodation: 13 per cent of children in privately-rented accommodation and 17 per cent of children in social housing had mental health problems compared with just 6 per cent of those in owner-occupier families

- Children with physical disorders, including epilepsy, coordination difficulties, muscle disease, bed-wetting and obesity

- Children with special needs: 44 per cent of children with the severest level of special needs (stages 4 and 5) had problems, compared with 6 per cent of children without special needs

- Children whose parents had mental health problems.

However, Meltzer *et al* (2000) do not perform a statistical regression on this data, so it is not possible to extrapolate how important each of the above factors is while all other factors are held constant. This means that we cannot draw out relationships from the data, as one relationship (for example, between parental mental health and child mental health) may entirely account for another (for example, between social class and child mental health). All this data enables us to do is to draw conclusions about the incidence of mental health problems in different population groups.

Siegle-Rushton (2004) uses the 1970 British Cohort Study to undertake a statistical regression analysis of mental health outcomes in adulthood (at age 30). Using self-reported malaise (see below) as the outcome of interest, she finds that for men, anxiety, aggression, low performance in academic tests, experience of living in poverty, lower social class and living in social housing in childhood were associated with higher levels of malaise at age 30. For women, restlessness, aggression, low performance in academic tests, living in non-owner-occupied housing, poverty in childhood and lower social class in childhood were associated with higher levels of malaise at age 30. The analysis controls for a wide range of socioeconomic and demographic factors, but not for locus of control, self-esteem or parental mental health in childhood.

There are also important studies in the United States and Switzerland that examine adolescent mental health. Data from the Oregon Adolescent Depression Project – a large cohort study of students aged 14-18 who were assessed at two points over a year – show a relationship between behavioural problems, experience of stressful life events, low self-esteem, increased self-consciousness, reduced social support, excessively emotional dependence on others and impaired coping skills, and depression in adolescence (Lewinsohn *et al* 1994).

Meanwhile, analysis of the Zurich Adolescent and Psychology and Psychopathology Study, a longitudinal study from the early 1990s of young people at ages 13, 16 and 20, shows that avoidant behaviour, perceived parental rejection, high levels of competition among classmates, controlling teachers and high performance stress at school were risk factors for externalising behaviour problems (including disruptive behaviour and conduct disorders). Similarly, avoidant behaviour, perceived parental rejection, high levels of competition among classmates, and controlling teachers were associated with internalising behaviour problems (including anxiety and depression). High self-esteem, perceived parental warmth and peer acceptance seemed to be protective factors for both kinds of problems (Steinhausen 2006).

Previous analyses using this study have also shown that low self-esteem is strongly associated with depression (Steinhausen and Winkler Metzke 2001).

Rosenberg *et al* (1989) use data from Youth in Transition, a US panel study of 10th-grade boys interviewed in 1966 and 1968, to consider the causal relationship between self-esteem and depression. This study also identified a strong relationship between low self-esteem and depression, and the analysis suggested that most of the causal relationship ran from self-esteem to depression.

Assessing behavioural and emotional outcomes in adolescence

To assess behavioural and emotional well-being in adolescence, we use a variety of indicators that are available in the BCS data. The first is self-reported malaise, assessed using the 15-item psychological subscale of the Malaise Inventory (Rodgers *et al* 1999). Originally developed in the 1970s by Michael Rutter (Rutter *et al* 1970), this is a commonly-used self-completion scale for the assessment of psychiatric morbidity using questions about the symptoms of depression and anxiety. It assesses depressed mood rather than depressive disorders directly (Collishaw *et al* 2004b). It has been shown to be internally consistent and externally valid (Rodgers *et al* 1999).

The British Cohort Study follow-up pupil questionnaire, conducted 16 years after the study started, contained the following questions to assess malaise:

1. Do you feel tired?

2. Do you feel miserable or depressed?

3. Do things worry you?

4. Do you have great difficulty sleeping?

5. Do you wake unnecessarily early in the morning?

6. Do you wear yourself out worrying about your health?

7. Do you ever get into a violent rage?

8. Do people annoy and irritate you?

9. Do you suddenly become scared for no good reason?

10. Are you scared if alone?

11. Are you easily upset or irritated?

12. Are you frightened of going out alone or meeting people?

13. Are you keyed up and jittery?

14. Is your appetite poor?

15. Does every little thing get on your nerves and wear you out?

Students were asked to respond 'most of the time', 'some of the time' or 'rarely or never'. For each question, we scored 0 for 'rarely or never', 0.5 for 'some of the time', and 1 for 'most of the time' to produce a malaise score out of 15.

Summary information about malaise at age 16 is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Malaise scores at age 16

Observations	Mean	Standard deviation	Median	Lower quartile	Upper quartile	Min	Max
4,837	3.40	2.10	3	2	4.5	0	15

As Table 1 shows, data on malaise is available only for a restricted number in the sample: for 4,837 of the 6,003 16-year-olds who completed the student questionnaire in 1986, and of the 10,112 children who have some data in the 1970, 1980 and 1986 waves.

We therefore created a dummy variable for a missing malaise score and ran a probit regression for all 10,112 children with data in each of the three waves used, controlling for mother's age at birth, birth weight, number of older siblings, sex, socioeconomic group at age 10 and 16, father's education level, mother's education level, eligibility for free school meals at age 10, whether parental attitudes were hostile or dismissive at age 10, whether the child had no parents at age 10, whether there was no father figure in the household at age 10, housing tenure at ages 10 and 16, and father and mother's employment status at ages 10 and 16.

The following factors were found to be significantly associated with a missing malaise score:

- Younger mother at birth
- Having older siblings – particularly more than one
- Father having no qualifications
- Being male
- Mother having no qualifications
- Entitlement to free school meals at age 10
- Parents not owning home at ages 10 and 16
- Mother unemployed at age 10
- Being from socioeconomic group IV (partly skilled occupations) or V (unskilled occupations) at age 16.

Rather than impute malaise scores for such a large section of the sample, we dropped missing cases from the analysis. This does need to be borne in mind when interpreting the following findings. However, our models below suggest that malaise at age 16 is not significantly associated with most of the factors above.

The second set of indicators that we used comprises a series of behavioural indicators. Information was collected on behaviour at ages 10 and 16, both at school (in a teachers' questionnaire) and at home (in parental interviews). We have used the information from parents about a child's behaviour: first because the questions asked of parents at age 16 were much more wide ranging than those asked of teachers, and second because the return rate of teacher questionnaires in 1986 was extremely low (just 3,816) due to a National Union of Teachers strike that was on at the time (Goodman and Butler 1986, Gerova 2005).

In order to assess behavioural outcomes at age 16, we follow Collishaw *et al* (2004b) in producing four composite scores for:

- Aggressive conduct (assessed using evidence of fighting or bullying)
- Non-aggressive conduct (assessed using evidence of stealing, lying and disobedience)
- Hyperactivity (assessed using evidence of fidgeting, restlessness and inattention)
- Emotional problems (assessed using evidence of misery, worries and being fearful of new situations).

At age 16, mothers were asked whether statements regarding the above 'certainly applies', 'applies somewhat' or 'doesn't apply' to their children – or, in some cases, whether statements applied to their children 'very much', 'pretty much', 'just a little' or 'not at all'. We scored answers to questions with three discrete categories 0, 0.5 or 1 (with 1 indicating presence of a behavioural problem), and answers with four discrete categories: 0, 0.33, 0.66 or 1. We then standardised scores to have a mean of 0 and a standard deviation of 1.

Table 2 shows the mean, standard deviation, minima and maxima for each of the composite scores.

Table 2: Standardised behavioural scores at age 16

Score	Observations	Missing scores	Mean	Standard deviation	Min	Max
Aggressive conduct	7,720	730	0	1	-0.359	6.653
Non-aggressive conduct	7,751	750	0	1	-0.563	5.257
Hyperactivity	7,811	781	0	1	-0.740	5.047
Emotional problems	7,763	767	0	1	-0.798	4.317

Explanatory variables

Below we discuss the explanatory variables used in our models.

Emotional well-being in childhood

We used six measures as proxies for emotional well-being in childhood, described below.

Locus of control

The first indicator of emotional well-being used here is locus of control (Rotter 1954, Feinstein 2000). Locus of control refers to an individual's sense of being able to influence their own destiny. Individuals with a high locus of control are better able to process information from the outside world, are concerned with improving themselves and their circumstances, and are more stable in response to external influences (Rotter 1954).

Locus of control is assessed by means of the CARALOC questionnaire developed by Gammage (1975). This is a series of 15 questions (with five additional distracter questions) as follows:

1. Do you feel that most of the time it's not worth trying hard because things never turn out right anyway?

2. Do you feel that wishing can make good things happen?

3. Are people good to you no matter how you act towards them?

4. Do you usually feel that it's almost useless to try in school because others are cleverer than you?

5. Is a high mark just a matter of 'luck' for you?

6. Are tests just a lot of guess work for you?

7. Are you often blamed for things which just aren't your fault?

8. Are you the kind of person who believes that planning ahead makes things turn out better?

9. When bad things happen to you, is it usually someone else's fault?

10. When someone is very angry with you, is it impossible to make him your friend again?

11. When nice things happen to you is it only good luck?

12. When you get into an argument is it usually the other person's fault?

13. Are you surprised when your teacher says you've done well?

14. Do you usually get low marks, even when you study hard?

15. Do you think studying for tests is a waste of time?

Students were asked to respond in 1980 and 1986 with 'yes', 'no' and 'don't know' as to whether these statements applied to them. In all cases, 'don't know' was scored 0.5. For all questions except 8, 'no' was scored 1 and 'yes' 0, and for Question 8 'yes' was scored 1 and 'no' 0.

We standardised these scores to have a mean of 0 and standard deviation of 1. In the analysis, we controlled for the standardised CARALOC score at age 10, and the difference between the standardised CARALOC scores at age 10 and 16.

Table 3: Standardised CARALOC scores at ages 10 and 16

Score	Observations	Missing scores	Mean	Standard deviation	Min	Max
CARALOC age 10	8,633	1,479	0	1	-4.22	1.69
CARALOC age 16	4,883	5,229	0	1	-4.41	1.38

Self-esteem

The second indicator of emotional well-being that we used is self-esteem. This is defined by Lawrence (1981) as 'a child's affective evaluation of the sum total of his or her characteristics both mental and physical'. Like locus of control, this is assessed in the BCS in 1980 and 1986 using a questionnaire – in this case, the Lawrence Self-Esteem Questionnaire (LAWSEQ – Lawrence 1973).

In 1986, there were 12 questions:

1. Do you think your parents usually like to hear about your ideas?

2. Do you often feel lonely at school?

3. Do other children (pupils) often break friends or fall out with you?

4. Do you think that other children (pupils) often say nasty things about you?

5. When you have to say things in front of teachers, do you usually feel shy?

6. Do you often feel sad because you have nobody to play with at school?

7. Are there lots of things about yourself you would like to change?

8. When you have to say things in front of other children, do you usually feel foolish?

9. When you want to tell a teacher something, do you usually feel foolish?

10. Do you often have to find new friends?

11. Do you usually feel foolish when you talk to your parents?

12. Do other people often think that you tell lies?

Questions 6 and 8 were omitted in 1986. Students were asked to respond 'yes', 'no', or 'don't know'. Again, 'don't know' was always scored 0.5, for all questions except 1, 'no' was scored 1 and 'yes' 0, and for 1, 'yes' was scored 1 and 'no' 0. These scores were standardised to have a mean of 0 and a standard deviation of 1. In the models below, we controlled for standardised self-esteem score at age 10, and the difference between standardised self-esteem scores at ages 10 and 16.

Table 4: Standardised LAWSEQ scores at ages 10 and 16

Score	Observations	Missing scores	Mean	Standard deviation	Min	Max
LAWSEQ at age 10	8,631	1,481	0	1	-3.57	1.27
LAWSEQ at age 16	4,415	5,697	0	1	-4.36	1.42

Aggressive conduct, non-aggressive conduct, hyperactivity and emotional problems at age 10
Finally, we also used measures of aggressive conduct, non-aggressive conduct, hyperactivity and emotional problems at age 10, using the same methodology as at age 16. However, in 1980 mothers were asked to score their children's behaviour by making a mark on a continuous scale rather than using discrete categories, which was then coded as a score of 0 to 100. These scores were therefore simply summed to give scores across these four dimensions, and standardised to give a mean of 0 and standard deviation of 1.

Table 5: Standardised behavioural scores at age 10

Score	Observations	Missing scores	Mean	Standard deviation	Min	Max
Aggressive conduct	7,720	2,392	0	1	-0.36	6.65
Non-aggressive conduct	7,751	2,361	0	1	-0.56	5.26
Hyperactivity	7,811	2,301	0	1	-0.74	5.05
Emotional problems	7,763	2,349	0	1	-0.80	4.32

Other variables
In addition to emotional well-being in childhood, we also control for a wide range of other variables, including socioeconomic and demographic outcomes:

• Mother's age at birth (treated as a continuous variable: 53 cases with missing values dropped)

• Birthweight (treated as a continuous variable: 8 cases with missing values dropped)

- Number of older siblings

- Sex

- Socioeconomic group of head of the household at ages 10 and 16

- Father/mother's highest qualification at ages 10 and 16

- Eligibility for free school meals at age 10

- Whether mother/father's attitudes towards their child are hostile at age 10

- Whether mother/father's attitudes towards their child are dismissive at age 10

- Whether the child has no parents at age 10

- Whether the child has no father figure in the household at age 10

- Housing tenure at ages 10 and 16

- Employment status of mother and father at ages 10 and 16

- Child's reading score on the Edinburgh Reading Test at age 10 (scores were standardised to give a mean of 0 and standard deviation of 1)

- Child's maths score on the Friendly Maths Test at age 10 (scores were standardised to give a mean of 0 and standard deviation of 1)

- Mother's standardised malaise score at age 10 (calculated from the 15-point psychological Malaise Inventory. In contrast to the pupil malaise questionnaire at age 16, mothers were asked to mark the extent to which a statement applied to them along a continuous scale, and these responses were coded as a score of 0 to 100. The mother's malaise score was calculated by summing scores over the 15 questions, and standardising scores to give a mean of 0 and standard deviation of 1).

Results

We ran Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) linear regressions on malaise scores and the standardised behavioural scores at age 16, controlling for the above variables at ages 10 and 16. The results are presented below.

Model 1: Malaise at age 16

- OLS regression

- Dependent variable: malaise at 16

- Number of observations: 2,296

- R-squared: 0.2851

* and *italics* indicates significance at the 10 per cent level
** and **bold** indicates significance at the 5 per cent level

Explanatory variable	Coefficient	Standard error
Mother's age	-.0089	.0087
Birthweight (kg)	.0000	.0001
Number of older siblings (comparator: none)		
One	*.1500**	*.0883*
Two	-.0374	.1249
Three or more	.1324	.1605
Sex (comparator: male)		
Female	**.8577****	**.0787**
Household socioeconomic status at age 10 (comparator: I or II)		
III man/non-man	-.1307	.1113

IV/V	-.2488	.1526
missing	-.2789	.2354
Household socioeconomic status at age 16 (comparator: I or II)		
III man/non-man	-.0091	.1164
IV/V	.1724	.1877
missing	-.1907	.1698
Father's highest qual (comparator: none/other)		
Degree	.1166	.1364
A-level	.1924	.1268
O-level	.1024	.1066
Mother's highest qual (comparator: none/other)		
Degree	.3036	.2004
A-level	-.0996	.1430
O-level	-.0566	.0926
Free school meals at 10	.1542	.1732
No parents	.3109	.3273
No father figure in household	.2156	.3535
Housing tenure at age 10 (comparator: parents' own)		
Private rented	-.4431	.2728
Social housing	-.1770	.1215
Other	-.1685	.2327
missing	-.5036	.4040
Housing tenure at age 16 (comparator: parents' own)		
Private rented	.0228	.2849
Social housing	.0836	.1481
Other	-.0959	.2622
missing		
Father's employment status at 10 (comparator: employed)		
Out of work	-.0776	.2255
Other/missing	.1951	.3505
Mother's employment status at 10 (comparator: employed)		
Unemployed	.0397	.2586
Looking after home	-.0308	.0874
Other/missing	**.6324****	**.1823**
Father's employment status at 16 (comparator: employed)		
Out of work	.2481	.1770
Other/missing	.1940	.1574
Mother's employment status at 16 (comparator: employed)		
Unemployed	**.7269****	**.2597**
Looking after home	-.1849	.1130
Other/missing	.1795	.1214
Father's attitude dismissive at age 10	-.2229	.5146
Mother's attitude dismissive at age 10	-.5174	.4853
Father's attitude hostile at age 10	-1.2386	1.8698
Mother's attitude hostile at age 10	-.2395	.8843
Mother's malaise score at 10	*-.0834**	*.0458*
Locus of control 10	**-.3165****	**.0621**
Diff in locus of control 10-16	**-.3965****	**.0455**
Self-esteem 10	**-.8204****	**.0548**
Diff in self-esteem 10-16	**-.7677****	**.0411**
Aggressive conduct 10	.0287	.0551
Non-aggressive conduct 10	-.0444	.0549
Hyperactivity 10	*-.0838**	*.0487*
Emotional problems 10	**.1672****	**.0417**
Reading score at 10	**.1395****	**.0543**
Maths score at 10	.0575	.0575
Constant	**3.1969****	**.3577**

Model 2: Aggressive conduct at age 16

• OLS regression

• Dependent variable: standardised aggressive conduct at age 16

• Number of observations: 1,870

• R-squared: 0.1803

* and *italics* indicates significance at the 10 per cent level

** and **bold** indicates significance at the 5 per cent level

Explanatory variable	Coefficient	Standard error
Mother's age	**-.0103****	**.0042**
Birthweight (kg)	.0000	.0000
Number of older siblings (comparator: none)		
One	*-.0779**	*.0420*
Two	-.0436	.0604
Three or more	.0250	.0787
Sex (comparator: male)		
Female	-.0134	.0376
Household socioeconomic status at age 10 (comparator: I or II)		
III man/non-man	-.0504	.0541
IV/V	.0796	.0738
missing	.0969	.1095
Household socioeconomic status at age 16 (comparator: I or II)		
III man/non-man	-.0634	.0550
IV/V	-.0150	.0865
missing	-.0133	.0785
Father's highest qual (comparator: none/other)		
Degree	.0341	.0644
A-level	.0675	.0605
O-level	.0227	.0509
Mother's highest qual (comparator: none/other)		
Degree	.0035	.0965
A-level	.0260	.0676
O-level	.0306	.0433
Free school meals at 10	*.1602**	*.0830*
No parents	*.2744**	*.1610*
No father figure in household	-.0432	.1715
Housing tenure at age 10 (comparator: parents' own)		
Private rented	-.0749	.1319
Social housing	**.1626****	**.0580**
Other	.1259	.1112
missing	.0341	.1752
Housing tenure at age 16 (comparator: parents' own)		
Private rented	.0473	.1370
Social housing	-.0072	.0716
Other	-.1728	.1300
missing	.0817	.0830
Father's employment status at 10 (comparator: employed)		
Out of work	**-.2119****	**.1062**
Other/missing	.0013	.1666
Mother's employment status at 10 (comparator: employed)		
Unemployed	.0851	.1190

Looking after home	.0607	.0420
Other/missing	-.0195	.0883
Father's employment status at 16 (comparator: employed)		
Out of work	.1166	.0806
Other/missing	.0137	.0728
Mother's employment status at 16 (comparator: employed)		
Unemployed	.1374	.1209
Looking after home	.0727	.0511
Other/missing	-.0186	.0561
Father's attitude dismissive at age 10	-.3540	.2390
Mother's attitude dismissive at age 10	-.2034	.2569
Father's attitude hostile at age 10	(dropped)	
Mother's attitude hostile at age 10	.1527	.5483
Mother's malaise score at 10	-.0313	.0219
Locus of control 10	*-.0560**	*.0300*
Diff in locus of control 10-16	-.0258	.0218
Self-esteem 10	**-.0650****	**.0261**
Diff in self-esteem 10-16	*-.0379**	*.0195*
Aggressive conduct 10	**.3096****	**.0264**
Non-aggressive conduct 10	.0084	.0260
Hyperactivity 10	*.0410**	*.0230*
Emotional problems 10	**-.0532****	**.0199**
Reading score at 10	-.0136	.0257
Maths score at 10	-.0056	.0272
Constant	.1619	.1710

Model 3: Non-aggressive conduct at 16

- OLS regression

- Dependent variable: standardised non-aggressive conduct score at age 16

- Number of observations: 1,872

- R-squared: 0.2272

* and *italics* indicates significance at the 10 per cent level
** and **bold** indicates significance at the 5 per cent level

Explanatory variable	Coefficient	Standard error
Mother's age	*-.0075841**	*.004009*
Birth weight (kg)	-.0000135	.0000329
Number of older siblings (comparator: none)		
One	-.0175373	.0402748
Two	-.0066627	.0579142
Three or more	.1026854	.075524
Sex (comparator: male)		
Female	-.035776	.0360677
Household socioeconomic status at age 10 (comparator: I or II)		
III man/non-man	-.0404451	.0518636
IV/V	-.0852165	.070884
missing	.1360171	.1050999
Household socioeconomic status at age 16 (comparator: I or II)		
III man/non-man	-.0369153	.0527306
IV/V	-.0329835	.0829832
missing	.1360171	.1050999

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Father's highest qual (comparator: none/other)		
Degree	.0294288	.0618477
A-level	*.0997951 **	*.058123*
O-level	.0115683	.048783
Mother's highest qual (comparator: none/other)		
Degree	-.0478001	.092635
A-level	.0012656	.0648086
O-level	.0266743	.0415232
Free school meals at 10	-.0183711	.0796543
No parents	-.1335874	.154638
No father figure in household	.1887442	.1646721
Housing tenure at age 10 (comparator: parents' own)		
Private rented	-.1676731	.1266453
Social housing	**.1392519****	**.0556517**
Other	*.1947188 **	*.1067525*
missing	-.0511174	.1682692
Housing tenure at age 16 (comparator: parents' own)		
Private rented	.0548381	.1315041
Social housing	-.0176652	.0686444
Other	-.0762784	.1248528
missing	.0641457	.0753754
Father's employment status at 10 (comparator: employed)		
Out of work	.0693694	.1019317
Other/missing	.0055099	.0403298
Mother's employment status at 10 (comparator: employed)		
Unemployed	.1200632	.1142486
Looking after home	.0055099	.0403298
Other/missing	.0434481	.0847536
Father's employment status at 16 (comparator: employed)		
Out of work	.1181306	.0773667
Other/missing	.0283252	.0699051
Mother's employment status at 16 (comparator: employed)		
Unemployed	-.0535812	.1160542
Looking after home	-.0530959	.0490881
Other/missing	-.009686	.053821
Father's attitude dismissive at age 10	**-.4914231****	**.2294852**
Mother's attitude dismissive at age 10	.1727229	.2466447
Father's attitude hostile at age 10	(dropped)	
Mother's attitude hostile at age 10	-.1173482	.5265493
Mother's malaise score at 10	-.0205833	.0210357
Locus of control 10	**-.1097971****	**.0288303**
Diff in locus of control 10-16	**-.087259****	**.0209363**
Self-esteem 10	**-.0525211****	**.0250492**
Diff in self-esteem 10-16	**-.040516****	**.0187489**
Aggressive conduct 10	.0152924	.0253728
Non-aggressive conduct 10	.3183957	.0249392
Hyperactivity 10	**.0708814****	**.022128**
Emotional problems 10	**-.067622****	**.0190939**
Reading score at 10	.000907	.0246494
Maths score at 10	-.038392	.0261997
Constant	.1305561	.1642456

Model 4: Hyperactivity at 16

- OLS regression

- Dependent variable: standardised hyperactivity score at age 16

- Number of observations: 1876

- R-squared: 0.2695

* and *italics* indicates significance at the 10 per cent level

** and **bold** indicates significance at the 5 per cent level

Explanatory variable	Coefficient	Standard error
Mother's age	.0036	.0044
Birth weight (kg)	-.0000	.0000
Number of older siblings (comparator: none)		
One	.0208	.0442
Two	*.1185**	*.0636*
Three or more	.0341	.0829
Sex (comparator: male)		
Female	*-.0695**	*.0396*
Household socioeconomic status at age 10 (comparator: I or II)		
III man/non-man	.0027	.0571
IV/V	-.0077	.0781
missing	**.2794****	**.1156**
Household socioeconomic status at age 16 (comparator: I or II)		
III man/non-man	-.1122	.0580
IV/V	*.0141**	*.0913*
missing	-.0261	.0828
Father's highest qual (comparator: none/other)		
Degree	.0493	.0681
A-level	.0469	.0637
O-level	-.0573	.0536
Mother's highest qual (comparator: none/other)		
Degree	-.1497	.1019
A-level	-.0681	.0712
O-level	.0177	.0457
Free school meals at 10	.1011	.0876
No parents	.0116	.1701
No father figure in household	.1298	.1811
Housing tenure at age 10 (comparator: parents' own)		
Private rented	-.1038	.1392
Social housing	-.0079	.0611
Other	.1100	.1158
missing	-.3107	.1850
Housing tenure at age 16 (comparator: parents' own)		
Private rented	-.2122	.1445
Social housing	-.0327	.0754
Other	.0202	.1361
missing	.0048	.0872
Father's employment status at 10 (comparator: employed)		
Out of work	-.0192	.1121
Other/missing	-.1841	.1759
Mother's employment status at 10 (comparator: employed)		
Unemployed	-.0176	.1257
Looking after home	-.0447	.0443
Other/missing	.0015	.0926
Father's employment status at 16 (comparator: employed)		
Out of work	.0022	.0850

Other/missing	-.0505	.0766
Mother's employment status at 16 (comparator: employed)		
Unemployed	.0473	.1276
Looking after home	-.0285	.0539
Other/missing	.0871	.0592
Father's attitude dismissive at age 10	-.3684	.2524
Mother's attitude dismissive at age 10	.3457	.2712
Father's attitude hostile at age 10 (dropped)		
Mother's attitude hostile at age 10	-.2860	.5790
Mother's malaise score at 10	-.0246	.0231
Locus of control 10	**-.0852****	**.0317**
Diff in locus of control 10-16	**-.0838****	**.0230**
Self-esteem 10	**-.0697****	**.0275**
Diff in self-esteem 10-16	**-.0546****	**.0206**
Aggressive conduct 10	.0330	.0279
Non-aggressive conduct 10	.0396	.0273
Hyperactivity 10	**.4283****	**.0243**
Emotional problems 10	**-.0749****	**.0210**
Reading score at 10	-.0178	.0271
Maths score at 10	*-.0541**	*.0288*
Constant	.0068	.1805

Model 5: Emotional problems at 16

- OLS regression
- Dependent variable: standardised emotional problem score at age 16
- Number of observations: 1,871
- R-squared: 0.2065

* and *italics* indicates significance at the 10 per cent level
** and **bold** indicates significance at the 5 per cent level

Explanatory variable	Coefficient	Standard error
Mother's age	.0017	.0048
Birthweight (kg)	-.0000	.0000
Number of older siblings (comparator: none)		
One	-.0205	.0484
Two	-.0615	.0694
Three or more	-.0634	.0906
Sex (comparator: male)		
Female	**.2612****	**.0433**
Household socioeconomic status at age 10 (comparator: I or II)		
III man/non-man	-.0690	.0622
IV/V	-.0298	.0853
missing	.0791	.1262
Household socioeconomic status at age 16 (comparator: I or II)		
III man/non-man	.0215	.0633
IV/V	.0341	.0996
missing	-.1454	.0907
Father's highest qual (comparator: none/other)		
Degree	-.0677	.0743
A-level	-.0192	.0695
O-level	-.0190	.0585
Mother's highest qual (comparator: none/other)		
Degree	.0820	.1112
A-level	**.1892****	**.0777**

O-level	.0548	.0498
Free school meals at 10	-.0804	.0956
No parents	.1351	.1856
No father figure in household	.0405	.1977
Housing tenure at age 10 (comparator: parents own)		
Private rented	.0850	.1526
Social housing	-.0443	.0667
Other	.0573	.1270
missing	-.0959	.2021
Housing tenure at age 16 (comparator: parents own)		
Private rented	-.1873	.1607
Social housing	-.0112	.0825
Other	.0320	.1497
missing	-.1083	.0952
Father's employment status at 10 (comparator: employed)		
Out of work	.0131	.1224
Other/missing	-.1636	.1920
Mother's employment status at 10 (comparator: employed)		
Unemployed	-.1245	.1371
Looking after home	*.0806**	*.0484*
Other/missing	.1568	.1017
Father's employment status at 16 (comparator: employed)		
Out of work	**.1962****	**.0928758**
Other/missing	.0447	.0842626
Mother's employment status at 16 (comparator: employed)		
Unemployed	-.0733	.1393
Looking after home	-.0148	.0589
Other/missing	*.1110**	*.0646*
Father's attitude dismissive at age 10	-.1732	.2755
Mother's attitude dismissive at age 10	-.1852	.2961
Father's attitude hostile at age 10 (dropped)		
Mother's attitude hostile at age 10	.4329	.6320
Mother's malaise score at 10	**-.0873****	**.0253**
Locus of control 10	-.0257	.0346
Diff in locus of control 10-16	**-.0645****	**.0251**
Self-esteem 10	**-.1642****	**.0301**
Diff in self-esteem 10-16	**-.1199****	**.0225**
Aggressive conduct 10	-.0301	.0305
Non-aggressive conduct 10	.0046	.0301
Hyperactivity 10	.0241	.0266
Emotional problems 10	**.2977****	**.0230**
Reading score at 10	.0041	.0296
Maths score at 10	*-.0522**	*.0315*
Constant	-.0908	.1970

Table 6: Summary of findings: emotional indicators at age 10 associated with behavioural/emotional outcomes at age 16

Outcome	Emotional indicators of importance
Aggressive conduct at age 16	• **Self-esteem at age 10:** improvement in score of one standard deviation (SD) associated with 6.5% of one SD decrease. Improvement in self-esteem scores between 10 and 16 also associated with decrease. • **Locus of control at age 10:** improvement in score of one SD associated with 5.6% of one SD decrease. • **Aggressive conduct at age 10:** increase in score of one SD associated with a 31% of one SD increase. • **Hyperactivity at age 10:** increase in score of one SD associated with 4.1% of one SD increase. • **Emotional problems at age 10:** increase in score of one SD associated with 5.3% of one SD decrease. It should be noted this result is anomalous and goes in the opposite direction to what we would expect. (This may be due to collinearity with other control variables.)
Non-aggressive conduct at 16	• **Self-esteem at age 10:** improvement in score of one standard deviation (SD) associated with 5.2% of one SD decrease. Improvement in self-esteem scores between 10 and 16 also associated with decrease. • **Locus of control at age 10:** improvement in score of one SD associated with 10.9% of one SD decrease. Improvement in locus of control scores between 10 and 16 also associated with decrease. • **Hyperactivity at age 10:** increase in score of one SD associated with 7.1% of one SD increase. • **Emotional problems at age 10:** increase in score of one SD associated with 6.8% of one SD decrease. Again, this result is anomalous and goes in the opposite direction to what we would expect.
Hyperactivity at 16	• **Self-esteem at age 10:** improvement in score of one standard deviation (SD) associated with 6.9% of one SD decrease. Improvement in self-esteem scores between 10 and 16 also associated with decrease. • **Locus of control at age 10:** improvement in score of one SD associated with 8.5% of one SD decrease. Improvement in locus of control scores between 10 and 16 also associated with decrease. • **Hyperactivity at age 10:** increase in score of one SD associated with 42.8% of one SD increase. • **Emotional problems at age 10:** increase in score of one SD associated with 7.5% of one SD decrease. Again, this result is anomalous and goes in the opposite direction to what we would expect.
Emotional anxiety at 16	• **Self-esteem at age 10:** improvement in score of one standard deviation (SD) associated with 16.4% of one SD decrease. Improvement in self-esteem scores between 10 and 16 also associated with decrease. • **Emotional problems at age 10:** increase in score of one SD associated with 29.8% of one SD increase.

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