



**Title:** Early and Effective Intervention Evaluation Report

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<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Justice/crimes/youth-justice/young-people/EvaluationReport> (accessed July 11th 2010) NB. Also consider the document Consulted Ltd. (2006) *Multi-Agency Early and Effective Intervention Implementation Guidance* which is also available at this web address.

**SCS topic headings:** Partnership Working, Offending Management, Safety of Vulnerable Groups

**This report is a REVIEW of EARLY effective intervention processes.**

## **Summary of the intervention's aim**

This evaluation focuses on the **early and effective intervention processes** concerning children and young people that have been developed in different areas in Scotland (Dundee, Fife, Edinburgh City, Renfrewshire and Glasgow South areas).

The report presents evidence regarding new Early and Effective Intervention processes that intend to assist the local delivery of interventions. The main body of the report is focused on the key findings and conclusions from the evaluation specifically looking at the key overarching principles and lessons that can be utilised in other areas in Scotland.

The authors' note that the evaluation report should be read in conjunction with the effective implementation guidance that has been produced based on the key outputs from this evaluation.

The findings and recommendations contained within this report are based on **Consulted Ltd's independent review** of the processes that are currently being utilised within the Dundee, Fife, Edinburgh City, Renfrewshire and Glasgow South areas. The report was prepared on behalf of the review areas with the assistance of the professional advisory team within the Scottish Government.

## Outcomes

The report concludes that the new processes have had a positive impact on local delivery of interventions to young people. Whilst the evaluation did not specifically look at the outcomes achieved for individual children in the five areas, a number of observations and assertions from local practitioners were made which evidence that the new processes have assisted the local delivery of interventions. Key aspects of the improved delivery of services include:

- Interventions are being delivered more rapidly for a significant proportion of young people who are being engaged on offending grounds
- Not only are frontline staff engaging more rapidly with young people but they are availing of better information
- A broader range of interventions are being utilised prior to referral to the Reporter
- There has been a significant reduction in the number of referrals being made to the Reporter (using Scottish Children's Reporter Administration data)
- The levels of reduction compare favourably with the national levels of performance
- The reductions in referrals to the Glasgow South team<sup>5</sup> reflects that reductions can also be made on non-offending grounds
- There has been a reduction in the number of negative decisions being made by the Reporter
- As currently operated the new processes rely primarily on existing resources
- Inefficient administrative processes can lead to the Early and Effective Intervention process being seen as being burdensome
- The current IT systems being used will struggle to remain fit for purpose
- The Early and Effective Intervention process has the potential to release non-cashable savings
- Tayside and Fife Constabulary have demonstrated that it is possible for the police to get operational officers back on patrol more quickly
- Scottish Children's Reporter Administration are able to free up time to consider more complex and difficult cases
- Social Work Department's are able to align administrative functions more effectively to operational requirements
- Non-cashable cost savings are replicable on a national basis
- The Early and Effective Intervention process has untapped potential.

The following are elements drawn from across the areas reviewed which have delivered the benefits outlined above:

- Clear Identification or review of the partners to be involved in the Early and Effective Intervention process
- Clearly agreed terms of reference for the Early and Effective Intervention process

- Detailing of the involvement of Partners and the terms of reference of the Early and Effective Intervention process in a single protocol document
- Establishment of data sharing protocols
- Clearly established audit and quality assurance process
- Active promotion of the new process at a strategic level
- Clearly identified Early and Effective Intervention coordinator
- Logical information feed into the coordination function
- Agreed allocation criteria and interventions channels
- Logical information flows out of the coordinators function
- Consistent representation at the multi-agency meeting & establish the logistical aspects of the meeting
- Agreed and sign-off discussion and operating process
- Identify meeting recording process, decision sign-off and review process.

### Summary of evaluation conclusions

This evaluation demonstrates the ways in which the Early and Effective Intervention process delivers a range of positive benefits for the areas that have implemented it to date, including aspects such as:

- More efficient and effective delivery of interventions from the perspective of operational staff
- Development of genuine partnership working based on an ethos of problem solving
- Realisation of efficiencies particularly in the deployment of operational staff with more police officer hours being released back to operational duties
- Reporters freed to concentrate more effectively on cases of greater concern or complexity and social workers freed from what they see as artificial timescales.

Whilst improvements could be made to the process, particularly in respect of the management of information flows, it is the author's view that the principles of the Early and Effective Intervention process have informed developments (in the areas reviewed) are a positive development and that they should continue to inform new ways of working.

There is recognition in each area that the process and the delivery of services to young people can always be improved and there is evidence of elements of continuous improvement apparent in the discussions and debates in each of the areas.

### How the evaluation gathered information for findings and conclusions

The process by which data and information was collated and analysed is explained in the report, yet this is brief and lacks great detail that would support a precise understanding of decisions and actions undertaken. But besides that, the evaluation implements a robust approach to gathering data. It mixes the methods to provide

different perspectives on the same issue. This was achieved through a literature review to establish a knowledge base, practitioner interviews and a review of a national data set of referral rates.

However, the text lacks detail as to the number of interviews taken, how participants were selected, ethical considerations and elsewhere, how were the documents for review selected and what were they? Whilst a positive judgement is taken on the completion of the different methods implemented here, these decisions that may very well have been discussed, the lack of this information makes it more difficult to review the processes the researchers undertook.

**Further details about the SCS evaluation of this report are available on request.  
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