

Young People in Contact with the Criminal Justice System in Lewisham

Summary from Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

Why is this important?

In 2016, Lewisham's Youth Offending service was inspected. This emphasised the need for improvements in users physical and speech language and communication needs (SLCNs). This Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) was conducted to provide an overall picture of the rates of physical health and SLCNs of young people who come into contact with the Youth Justice Services in Lewisham.

Key Facts and Figures

Nationally, SLCNs in young offenders may be as high as

60%

Compared to (10%) in the general population

Rates of contact with the Youth Offending Services in Lewisham are high.



13%*

of Lewisham young offenders in January – February 2017 had SLCNs and 9% had physical conditions.

31%*

of Lewisham young offenders in Jan - Feb 2017 were first time entrants

Compared to the general population, young offenders have higher rates of:

- physical and mental ill-health
- sexually transmitted diseases
- early pregnancy
- injury
- SLCNs

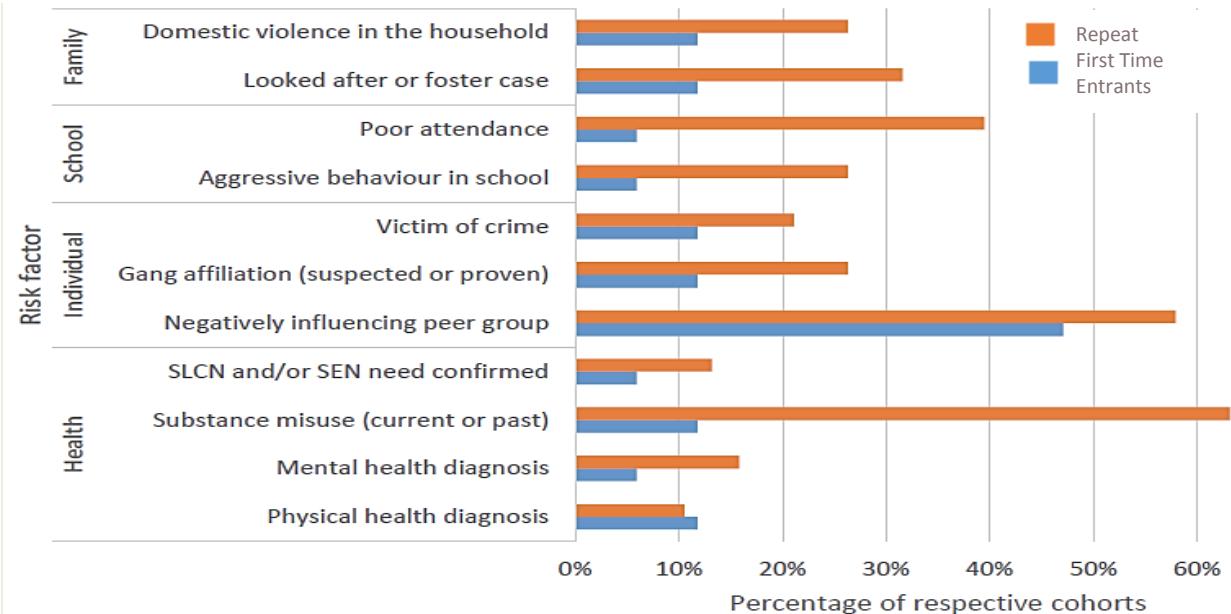


What is happening nationally?

- In 2009, the Government published *Healthy Children, Safer Communities*.
- This recognised the need to redesign services to align with an early intervention, prevention and family-based model.
- To ensure this is effective there needs to be closer working between the criminal justice system and children and young peoples services.

What is happening locally?

- Lewisham YOS has embarked on a 'trauma-informed' approach.
- In May 2017, a new [Young People's Health and Wellbeing Service](#) was launched in Lewisham to address sexual health, substance misuse and mental health. This service includes in-house support for the YOS cohort.



Proportion of the cohort with risk factors across first time entrants and repeat offenders.

What needs to be done?

To improve Lewisham YOS services, there is a need for improvements in three main areas:

1. **Strengthening initial assessment and referral** – through staff training, involving experts (such as clinical psychologists) in the assessment and gathering sexual health needs in young people presenting to the YOS
2. **Improving management of physical health and SLCNs** - through strengthening existing pathways and working in partnership to strengthen expert support.
3. **Enhancing information collection, analysis and sharing of information with key stakeholders.**

* Figures taken from an audit of 55 young offenders. The statistics are likely to be underestimated.