

Induction into the secure estate: Information giving

<p>Context</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The initial admission period is remembered by children and young people as a time of particular distress and anxiety.¹ • Less than a quarter of young males report being treated well in custody² • The quality of the induction process experienced by children and young people taken into custody has been criticised in a number of YOI and STC inspection reports³ • These criticisms have highlighted the lack of time given to the induction process and the conditions on arrival⁴ 	<p>The rights of young people, on first entering custody</p> <p>United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty</p> <p><i>‘On admission, all juveniles shall be given a copy of the rules governing the detention facility and written description of their rights and obligations in a language they can understand, together with address of the authorities competent to receive complaints, as well as the address of public or private agencies and organisations which provide legal assistance. For those juveniles who are illiterate or who cannot understand the language in the written form, the information should be conveyed in a manner enabling full comprehension’⁵</i></p> <p><i>‘All Juveniles should be helped to understand the regulations governing the internal organisation of the facility, the goals and methodology, the care provided, the disciplinary requirements and procedures, other authorized methods of seeking information and making complaints and all such other matters as are necessary to enable them to understand fully their rights and obligations during detention’⁶</i></p>
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Induction at Red bank

¹ Hazell et al (2002)

² HM Inspectorate of Prisons. (2004) Juveniles in Custody 2002- 2003.

³ http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/docs4/Final_draft_Wetherby1.pdf

⁴ <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/docs3/hmpyoilancasterfarms04.pdf>,

⁵ UN Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty, (1990) B2

⁶ UN Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty, (1990) B25

Red bank is a local authority secure community home which houses for young people up to the age of 18.

On induction young people meet their allocated keyworker, who is responsible for explaining the rules of the unit, the day to day routine, the keywork role and answering any questions or concerns the young person has.

What did the consultation do?

Young people were involved in the development and design of new induction leaflets at Red bank. Staff decided to involve the young people as they recognised that young people at Red bank could provide essential insight into the needs and experiences other young people might have on arrival.

A children's rights and participation worker from Barnardo's was asked to carry out the consultation with young people. Having the consultation led by an independent adult was felt more likely to support the young people involved to be open and honest about the services they received.

The children's rights and participation worker and a trainee social worker set up a consultation group with the young people in Red Bank. During consultation sessions young people were asked for their opinions on:

- What questions they had when they first came to Red bank
- What other questions new young people to Red bank might have
- Their experiences of the induction – these were gathered using a questionnaire (this was read to the young person when necessary)

The main findings from the consultation were that young people found their key worker helpful but that a lot of information was given on arrival, and that it was difficult to remember everything that was said. The young people involved in the consultation felt that it would be helpful to have an information leaflet for new arrivals covering issues such as phone cards, visits and mobile phones. In response to this suggestion Red Bank drafted a leaflet setting out questions and answers the young people had identified as important for new arrivals.

Review

The leaflet has recently been reproduced with a higher density of pictorial messages in order to make it easier for those with low literacy levels to understand.

Outcomes

- A booklet has been produced which is presented in easy to read and child friendly format.
- The booklet presents information which has been chosen by the young people in the consultation group and is presented from a young person's perspective.
- All young people receive the leaflet on admission and new arrivals have reported that they find this helpful.

How is this work a good example of rights and participatory research?

- The needs of the young people were taken into consideration so that they could engage positively in the consultation e.g. reading the questionnaire through with some of the young people.
- The views and ideas expressed by the young people were put into practice in the content and design of the booklet.
- The project enabled young people to participate in the development of a resource for other young people.
- The booklet helps to meet the rights of newly arrived young people to understand the environment they will be living in.

Other work

Hull YOI

Young men from Hull YOI provide a listening service for new young men being admitted into custody.

