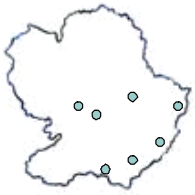
Angus Restorative Justice Service

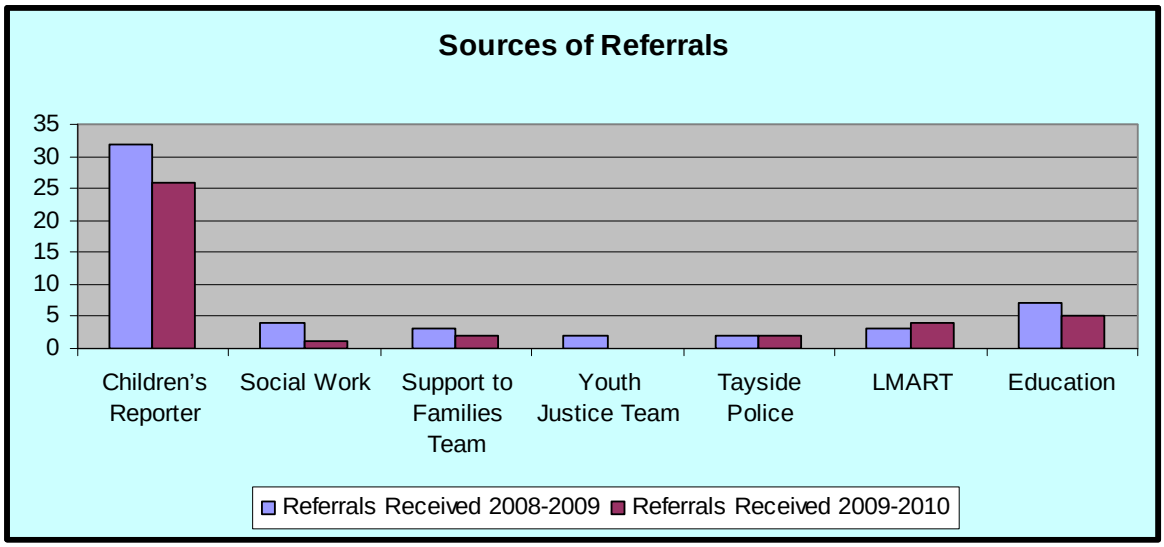


Mediation & Reparation

Annual Report
April 2009 – March 2010

Activity Summary

The Project year 2009-2010 has seen a slight decrease in referrals to the service, as compared to the previous year. This appears to be a result of there being a decrease in the numbers of young people being referred to the Children's Reporter and an overall decrease in youth offending across Angus over the last year. This may suggest that early intervention strategies are beginning to have an impact on young offenders but more time and research is required to assess the reasons behind the decrease and examine whether this trend will continue.



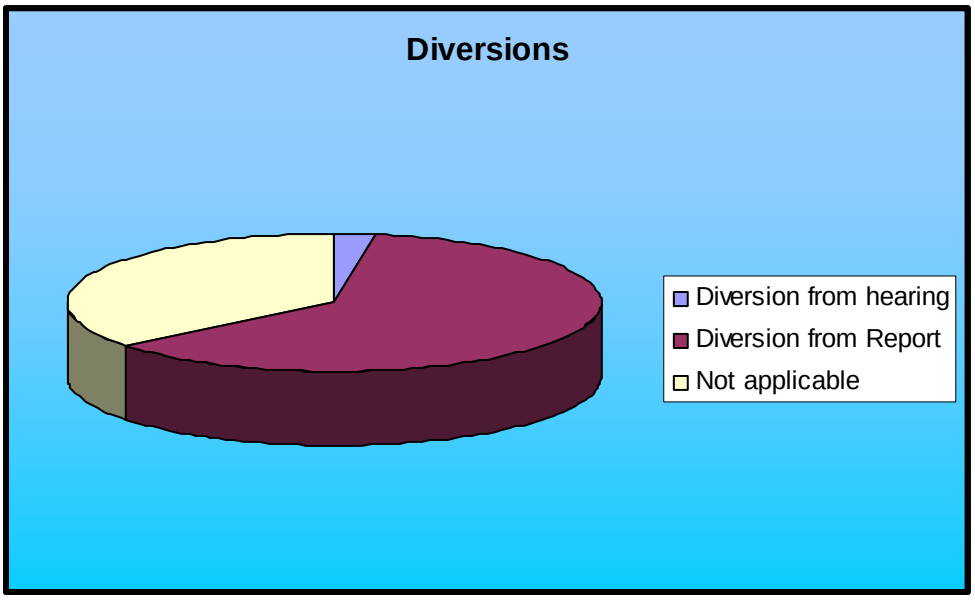
Source of Referral	Referrals received 2008/2009	Referrals received 2009/2010
Children's Reporter	32	26
Social Work	4	1
Support to Families Team	3	2
Youth Justice Team	2	0
Tayside Police	2	2
LMART	3	4
Education	7	5
Total	**53**	**40**

39 cases were completed in year 2009/2010. 3 additional referrals were assessed as being inappropriate following initial visits and were thus discontinued. The remainder of this report is based on completed cases only.

Diversion from Hearing/Report:

Of the 39 completed referrals, the pie chart below shows the breakdown:

1 - Diversion from hearing
24- Diversion from Report
14- Not applicable (not referred through the Children's Reporter)



Age Range/Sex of Young Offender:

Ages have ranged from 11-15 years this year. Similar to last year the majority of referrals were aged between 13 and 15 years. Overall, males make up the majority of referrals, however, there was an increase in female cases this year. The ratio of males referred to females has now decreased significantly from 7:1 in 2008/2009 to 3:1 in 2009/2010.

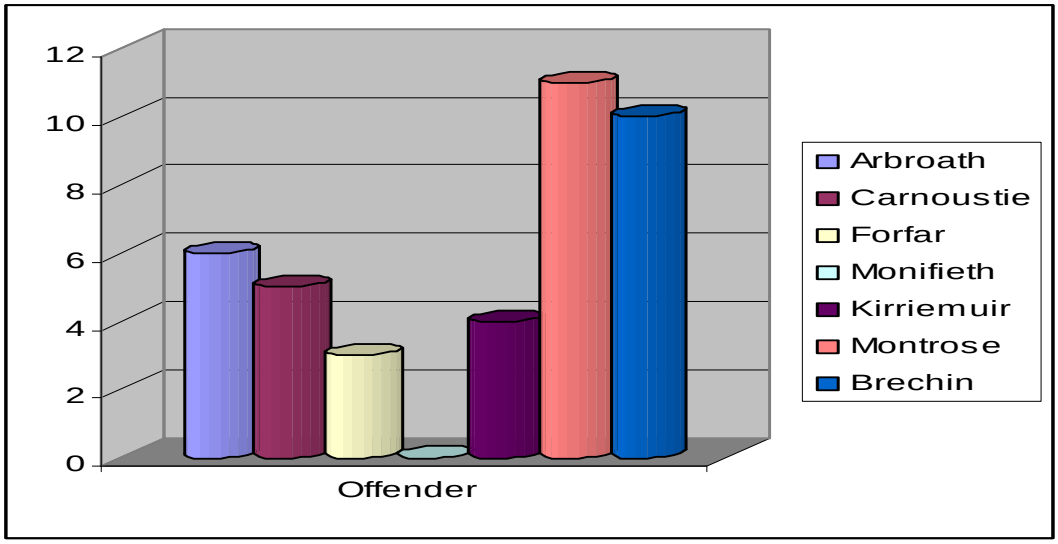
11 years		12 years		13 years		14 years		15 years	
M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
2	0	5	1	7	0	7	5	8	4

Within the Angus Youth Justice Offending Figures 2008-2010, males still populate the majority of offending figures, however in Angus overall, there was a 37% decrease in male and female offending, which equated to a 39% decrease in males and a 28% decrease in females.

Area/Locality of offenders and Victims:

The areas of Brechin and Montrose provided the majority of referrals to the Service this year. This is a change from previous years where Arbroath tended to generate most referrals and may suggest that the high level of partnership working and resources going into this area has been effective. Referral numbers in all other areas are relatively similar with Monifieth being the only town not to generate any referrals this year. There has been a slight decrease in victim involvement this year, with a number of victims using the Children's Reporter Victim Information opt out scheme. This is in addition to referrals where there were no named victims. In total 31 victims were not named. Of the 10 named victims contacted 5 chose to participate in the scheme.

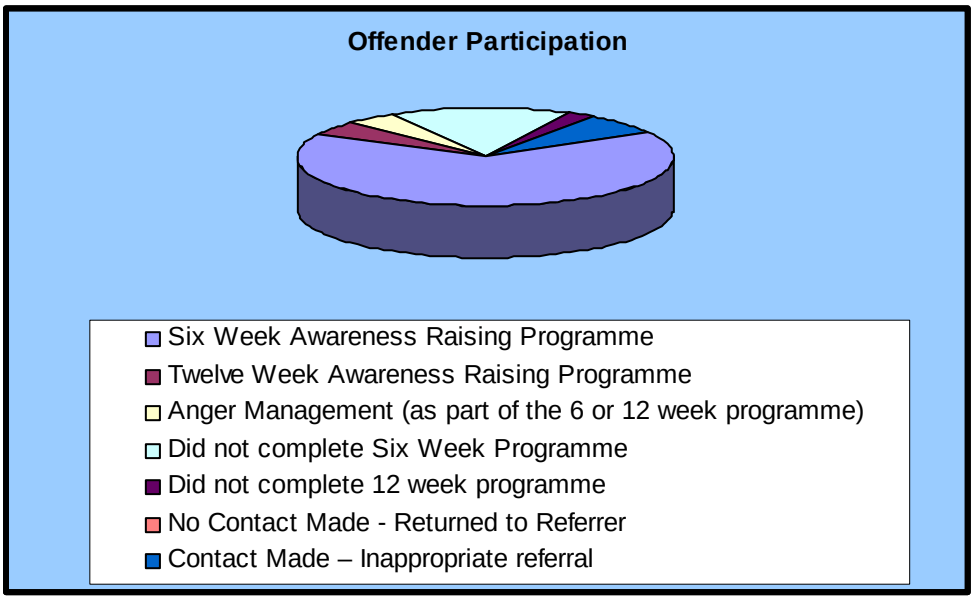
Locality of Offenders



Town	Offender
Arbroath	6
Carnoustie	5
Forfar	3
Monifieth	0
Kirriemuir	4
Montrose	11
Brechin	10

Offender Participation

Six Week Awareness Raising Programme	29
Twelve Week Awareness Raising Programme	2
Anger Management (as part of the 6 or 12 week programme)	2
Did not complete Six Week Programme	7
Did not complete 12 week programme	1
No Contact Made - Returned to Referrer	0
Contact Made – Inappropriate referral	3



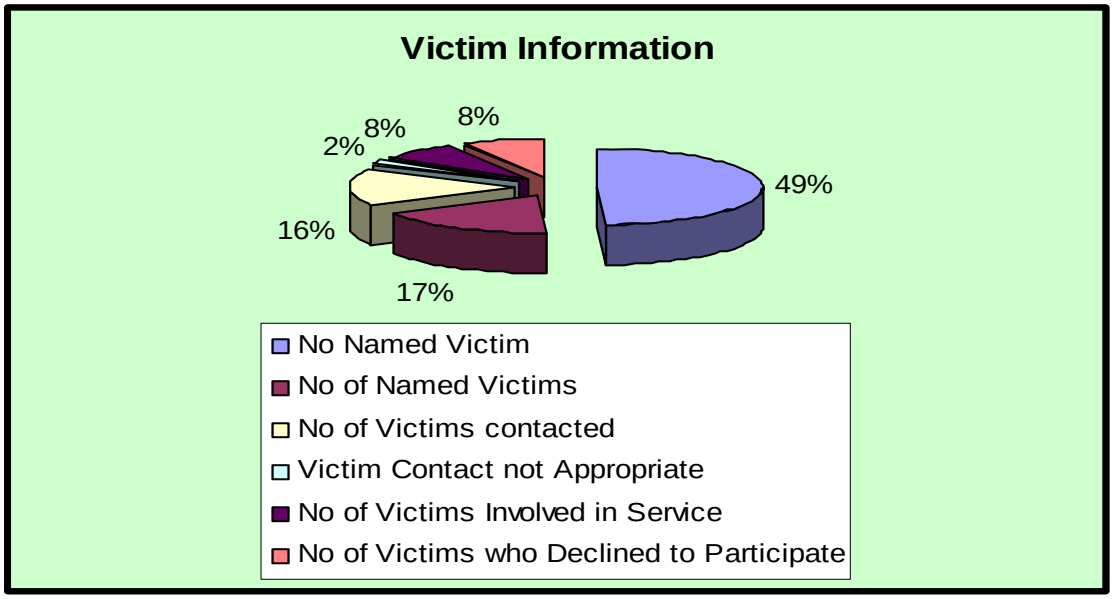
As the pie chart shows, out of the 39 completed referrals, 29 young people participated in a 6-week Awareness Raising Programme and 2 in the more intensive 12-week Programme. 7 young people did not complete the full 6-week programme and 1 did not complete the full 12-week programme. 3 referrals were discontinued after initial contact because the young people denied the offences and were therefore inappropriate for the service.

Of the 8 young people who did not complete the Restorative Justice programme, 4 did attend the majority of appointments, however because not all appointments were attended it was recorded as not completed. After an initial agreement to participate, 4 of the young people refused to attend any further appointments.

As it is only the Children's Reporter who can supply victim details a large number of referrals do not have any direct victim involvement. However, victim awareness work is completed as part of the 6 and 12-week offender programmes.

Victim Information

No Named Victim	31
No of Named Victims	11
No of Victims contacted	10
Victim Contact not Appropriate	1
No of Victims Involved in Service	5
No of Victims who Declined to Participate	5



Reparation Output

Victim Involvement		Arbroath/ Carnoustie	Forfar/ Kirrie	Brechin/ Montrose
	Victim received letter of apology	0	0	0
	Face to Face	0	0	3
	Community Task	0	0	1
	Shuttle Mediation (Victim awareness work)	0	0	2
	No Restorative Output	0	0	0
No Named Victim or Victim Declined Participation	Victim Awareness Programme	8	6	14
	No Restorative Output	4	1	3

NB. It should be noted there could be multiple outputs for individuals

Offences

Theft by Shoplifting	7
Theft by Housebreaking	1
Theft by Finding	1
Theft – Personal	5
Breach of the Peace	8
Assault	26
Vandalism/Malicious Mischief	15
Culpable and Reckless Conduct	1
Indecent Behaviour	1
Wilful Fire raising	1
Possession of a Controlled Drug	1
Carrying an Offensive Weapon	2
Racial Harassment	1
Resisting Arrest	1
Road Traffic Offences	3
Underage Sex	1
Tel. Communications Act – Sending offensive messages	1

This year there were a very similar number of recorded offences to that of last year, 76 compared to 78, despite there being fewer completed cases this year. Assault was the most common offence committed and there was an increase in these offences from last year. Vandalism, Breach of the Peace and Theft by Shoplifting were also common recorded offences but it was only Theft by Shoplifting that actually increased this year compared to last year. Resisting Arrest, Road Traffic Offences, Underage Sex and Tel. Communication Act were added this year to the list of offences.

This range of offences mirrors the Angus Youth Justice Offending Figures 2008-2010, where Vandalism, Assault and Breach of the Peace are still the most prevalent offences across Angus. In line with an overall reduction in youth offending these figures indicate that, Vandalism has seen a 43% decrease over the time period, Assault a 29% decrease and BOP a 31% decrease.

We continue to refer young people on to appropriate services when necessary and are often involved in joint working with Social Work, Education, LMART and Health.

Service Developments:

Important links with professionals within the Angus area continue to be identified and strengthened. Regular meetings are held with the Children's Reporters, supporting appropriate referrals and information sharing. However, as they have had a significant decrease in referrals over the last year this has impacted on the number of referrals coming into the Restorative Justice Service. Changes in the structure of the Community Resource Team and staffing within the Police have also resulted in a decrease in referrals from these sources. There has been awareness raising sessions delivered throughout Angus in a variety of settings and it is hoped that the following year will see an increase in referrals now that referral sources are more stable.

Future Developments:

For the coming year the Project will undertake to:

- Deliver information and updated leaflets to Social Work Departments and referrers within the Angus area
- Develop and promote a group work programme for use within schools and community groups
- Continue to build links within Education, Support to Families Team and the Police
- Develop outcome based monitoring systems which will involve reviewing data collection and measurement tools, including the service user feedback.

Service User Feedback

Person Responsible Feedback Questionnaire

18 young people returned a questionnaire after completing the programme. 13 agreed that they would encourage others to take part in the restorative justice process if offered.

Most agreed that they would not offend in the future with 1 not sure. All agreed that they understood the process and all but 1 felt the length of time was just right

Feedback in their own words included:

"will now think before I do something"

"It helped me to think about what I did"

"I wanted to take part to be able to control my anger a bit more"

"I could tell the workers how I felt and what got me angry"

"It made me understand more"

"I am making better choices"

"helpful and understanding"

Parents/Carers Feedback Questionnaire

5 questionnaires were completed and returned. 4 of the parents were satisfied with the service provided with 1 very satisfied.

All, agreed a lot, on understanding the work their son/daughter was doing with the project worker and the reasons why they were doing it. 3 felt they were kept informed a lot, 1 a little informed and 1 not at all throughout the process.

Parent/Carer Feedback in their own words included:

"*I think he has realised how much it affects the others around him"*

"He has been displaying a more mature attitude these last few weeks"

"Yes I think she does realise what she did was wrong"

"My son seems to talk more about what he has done during the day, and if any problems crop up"

ARJS Case Studies

Case 1

This 13-year-old young person was referred to the Service by the Children's Reporter after being charged with vandalism. He, along with 2 friends who were not referred to the Service, had damaged several cars that were parked outside a body repair garage, resulting in around £4000 worth of destruction. At an initial meeting with the young person and his Mum, it was discovered that his behaviour had recently deteriorated significantly and his parents were struggling to enforce boundaries and keep him away from a negative peer group. The young person admitted the offence, appeared remorseful about the situation and was willing to undertake a Restorative programme.

Because of the higher intensity of this young person's issues a 12-week programme was undertaken with him that incorporated the usual offender work but also focussed on anger management, peer choices and alcohol awareness. At the end of the programme, the young person met with the victim of the offence, who was more than willing to be involved in the process, and a sincere apology was made and accepted. To make amends for the damage he had caused the young person (along with staff from the Service) worked in the garage for several hours and was given the laborious task of cleaning tape off of one of the cars that was in for repair. By the end of the process, the young person's family reported an improvement in his behaviour at home and school, he had changed his peer group and had not committed any further offences. Although it was difficult for him to meet with the victim face-to-face, this part of the work appeared to have the biggest impact on him and demonstrated that there are consequences to his actions.

Case 2

This young person was referred into the service from a Primary School due to his disruptive behaviour in class.
I sent out a letter to his parents with an appointment date and time to visit them at home to explain the ARJS process, however, Mum cancelled the appointment and although another appointment was sent out this was also cancelled. We finally agreed over the phone that A would benefit from our input and we could meet within school.
I met with A and we worked through a programme which included bullying and disruptive behaviour within the school. A engaged well and was willing to discuss any issue raised. It was during one of the sessions that he disclosed he had been charged with theft around 6 months prior to our meeting. This appeared to bother him a lot and he often brought it up as something he was worried about. After further discussion we agreed I would contact the shop manager to gauge his opinion on the incident. I met with the manager on two occasions and we agreed a date when A could visit the store to make a personal apology. The meeting took place and A made a sincere apology to the Store manager.
Both A and his Mum felt he had benefited from participation in the programme and also the school noticed an improvement in his behaviour.

Re-offending Stats 2008-09

37 young people completed the programme and agreed to police record checks for the purpose of assessing re-offending rates for the 2008-09 cohort. There has been a reduction of 57% in offences committed 6 months after completing the programme. Taking into account the full year after completion the reduction in offences would be 43% It should be noted that a Reporter referral committed a large number of offences on one occasion in the 6 months after completing RJ. If she was excluded from the figures the reduction in offending in the 6 months after completing a programme would read 67% in red. The reduction in offences for the year stats are 51%

Children's Reporter Referrals

No of offending episodes 12 months prior to RJ	No of offending episodes 6 months prior to RJ	No of offending episodes during RJ	No of offending episodes 6 months after RJ	No of offending episodes 7-12 months after RJ
1	3	6	6	3
2	2	0	2	1
1	3	1	0	0
0	4	0	2	8
0	1	0	0	0
0	1	0	0	0
0	1	0	0	1
1	3	1	0	0
2	1	0	2	0
0	9	1	1	6
0	4	0	0	0
3	3	2	0	1
2	4	2	3	0
0	3	0	0	0
0	3	0	0	0
0	1	0	0	0
0	4	3	0	1
0	1	1	0	0
3	8	0	2	0
2	2	0	0	1
0	1	0	0	0
1	6	0	1	1
1	2	2	0	0
0	2	0	0	0
0	3	0	12	0
1	1	1	1	1
1	3	0	3	2

Social Work Referrals

No of offending episodes 12 months prior to RJ	No of offending episodes 6 months prior to RJ	No of offending episodes during RJ	No of offending episodes 6 months after RJ	No of offending episodes 7-12 months after RJ
1	1	1	0	0
0	4	0	0	0
5	2	0	0	0

Community Resource Team Referrals

No of offending episodes 12 months prior to RJ	No of offending episodes 6 months prior to RJ	No of offending episodes during RJ	No of offending episodes 6 months after RJ	No of offending episodes 7-12 months after RJ
3	2	0	4	0
0	2	0	0	0

Youth Justice Team Referrals

No of offending episodes 12 months prior to RJ	No of offending episodes 6 months prior to RJ	No of offending episodes during RJ	No of offending episodes 6 months after RJ	No of offending episodes 7-12 months after RJ
1	7	4	4	1

Police Referrals

No of offending episodes 12 months prior to RJ	No of offending episodes 6 months prior to RJ	No of offending episodes during RJ	No of offending episodes 6 months after RJ	No of offending episodes 7-12 months after RJ
4	0	0	1	4

Education

No of offending episodes 12 months prior to RJ	No of offending episodes 6 months prior to RJ	No of offending episodes during RJ	No of offending episodes 6 months after RJ	No of offending episodes 7-12 months after RJ
0	2	0	0	1
0	1	0	0	0
0	1	0	0	1

Total 35 35	Total 101 98	Total 25 25	Total 44 32	Total 33 33

Financial Benefits of the Service

When considering social investment costs related to the Restorative Justice Services contribution to reduction in youth crime within Angus, there is an estimated £294,000 cost saving on an £80,000 investment.

Using the formula:

£5,300 cost on a single crime.

101 offences before work with Restorative Justice
44 offences after work with Restorative Justice

= 57 less offences

5,300 x 57 = £302,100

£302,100 - £80,000

= £294,000