

Leeds YOS Race and Sentencing Study

Leeds University conducted a detailed analysis of race and sentencing in Leeds. The research covered:

- 1 Race and patterns of offending
- 2 Race and sentencing
- 3 Race and criminogenic needs

The key findings were that there are:

1. Some different types of offending by ethnic groups
2. Some differential patterns of offending - although the use of custody was proportionate to the seriousness of offending
3. Some differences in the assessed criminogenic needs between ethnic groups - white people having the highest ASSET scores and BME / Asian people having lower.

The study looked at the ethnic composition of the Leeds population, the ethnic breakdown of those young offenders sentenced to custody and the ethnic breakdown of those young people receiving 'heavy end' community penalties.

	Leeds by Ethnicity	Sentence Custody	'Heavy End' Community
White	91.8%	79.2%	83.9%
Mixed	1.4%	4.2%	4.9%
Asian/Asian British	4.5%	3.5%	3.5%
Black/Black British	1.4%	13.1%	7.6%

White and Asian young people are under-represented amongst those receiving custodial sentences and heavy-end community penalties, whilst Mixed Heritage and in particular Black young people are over-represented. The study highlighted key questions which need to be asked prior to sentencing.

1. What factors are taken into account when making a sentencing decision?
2. Do members of different ethnic groups display: (i) different levels of need, and (ii) different types of need?
3. Are there any other differences in case characteristics between members of different ethnic groups?

In answering these questions consideration needs to be given to the following need categories, which are used by youth justice workers when conducting the Asset needs and risk assessment:

- Living arrangements
- Family and personal relationships
- Education, training and employment
- Neighbourhood
- Lifestyle
- Substance use
- Physical health
- Emotional and mental health
- Perception of self and others
- Thinking and behaviour
- Attitudes to offending
- Motivation to change

The West Yorkshire Race Issues Group

The West Yorkshire Race Issues Group (WYRIG) is a sub-group of West Yorkshire's Criminal Justice Board with members from all agencies including Victim Support and Witness Service.

WYRIG's role is to find and implement ways of increasing Black Minority Ethnic (BME) confidence in the Criminal Justice System. We are doing this by taking a co-ordinated approach to race issues including the following:

- Ensuring that race issues are given high priority in our strategic and business plans
- Encouraging and promoting good practice on race issues
- Promoting policies of non-discrimination

WYRIG recognises the important contribution which the Youth Offending Teams across West Yorkshire makes and is confident that together we can make a difference.

Patrick Traynor - Chair WYRIG and Area Director, HM Courts Service

For more details on the any of the services delivered for young offenders and their families in West Yorkshire, contact any of the YOTs on the numbers below:

Leeds	Bradford	Calderdale	Kirklees	Wakefield
Leeds YOS Manager - Jim Hopkinson 31 Moor Road Headingley Leeds LS6 4BG	Bradford & District YOT Manager - Paul O'Hara 41 Bank Street Bradford BD1 1RD	Calderdale YOT Manager - Stephen Toye 3 Trinity Place Halifax HX1 2BD	Kirklees YOT Manager - Richard Smith 2nd Floor, Somerset Building 10 Church Street Huddersfield HD1 1LS	Wakefield YOT Manager - Stephen Crofts 5 West Parade Wakefield WF1 1LT
Telephone 0113 214 4650	Telephone 01274 436060	Telephone 01422 368279	Telephone 01484 226935	Telephone 01924 304155
Fax 0113 224 2706	Fax 01274 436061	Fax 01422 368483	Fax 01484 226938	Fax 01924 304156
E-mail jim.hopkinson@leeds.gov.uk	E-mail paul.ohara@bradford.gov.uk	E-mail stephen.toye@calderdale.gov.uk	E-mail richard.smith@kirklees.gov.uk	E-mail SCrofts@wakefield.gov.uk
www.leeds-yot.org.uk	www.bradford-yot.co.uk	www.calderdaleyot.org.uk	www.kirklees-yot.org.uk	www.wakefield-yot.org.uk

Race Audit Report

The West Yorkshire Youth Offending Teams - Race Audit Reports 2005

Introduction

All 5 West Yorkshire YOTs have embraced the use of race audits to inform the services they deliver to all the communities they serve.

Each YOT has identified individual issues for their locality which they have shared with their management boards, teams and courts. In particular, YOTs have used race audits to consider how they and their partners deliver prevention programmes, make referrals to specialist services and undertake enforcement action.

The YOTs are committed to taking every possible action to reduce, year on year, any differentials within the criminal justice system.

Jim Hopkinson
Head of Service
Leeds YOS



Young people engaged with the Leeds Youth Inclusion Project - see article inside for more information.

Why conduct a Race Audit?

There have been concerns raised about how the Criminal Justice System functions for young people from ethnic backgrounds compared to White young people. The perceived difference in treatment could be viewed as differences in individual circumstances or as a result of discrimination. The purpose of the audit was to examine the facts and see if there were areas requiring action.

This was part of a national exercise required by the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales. It reflects a number of national concerns:

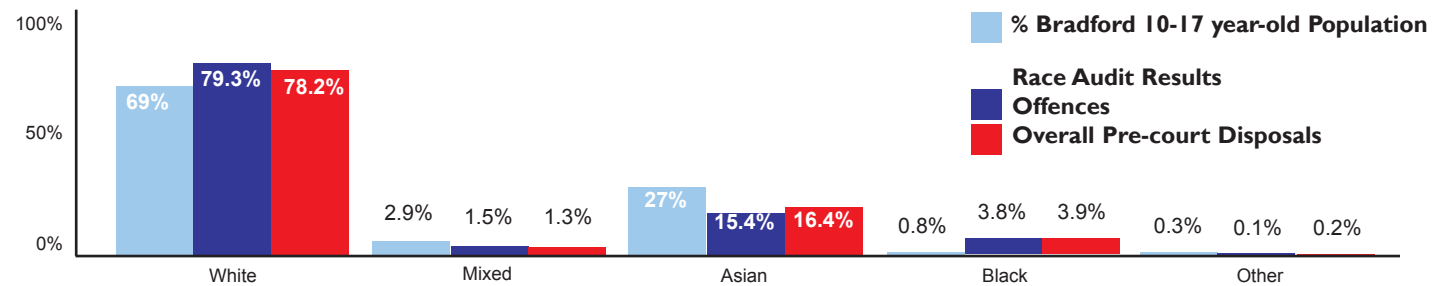
- a) Over representation of African Caribbean young people (and adults) in custody (both sentenced and on remand).
- b) Under representation of Black people on community sentences.
- c) White staff historically recommending to sentencers harsher penalties for Black and Asian young people.
- d) Recent research by YJB: "Chances of an Asian male offender being sentenced to custody were slightly higher at 1.2 times that of a White offender".

The report goes on: "there was no evidence consistent with unfair discrimination treatment of Black or mixed parentage males compared with White males" but: "Black young male's custodial sentence at Crown Court being 12 months or longer were 6.7 times those of a White male".

- e) The same reports: "There were at various points of the process differences in the way females were dealt with that were consistent with discriminatory treatment".

Bradford

- Over-representation of white young people committing offences.
- Over-representation of Black/Black British young people committing offences.
- The only offence that matched the Asian % population was motoring offences.
- Domestic and non-domestic burglary continues to be a predominately white crime.



The overall conclusions to be drawn from the race audit information in Bradford are:

- Over-representation of White young offenders in the Criminal Justice System.
- Proportionately fewer Asian young people in Remands to Custody and Custody.
- Over-representation of Black British in Remands to Custody and Custody although numbers are small and may distort figures.
- Over-representation of Black British in Pre-Court and Court disposals.

Wakefield - Action Planning

Like all YOTs in West Yorkshire Wakefield conducted a detailed audit of how it deals with race issues and ensures equality in every aspect of its operation.

This exercise has enabled Wakefield YOT to identify a number of priority actions to ensure race equality:

- NACRO Youth Crime Section have been engaged to develop practice guidance for the staff team and deliver and embed race equality and diversity training within the YOT.
- The YOT has invested in new and up to date session and programme materials that are accessible to and meet the individual needs of all young people including the black and minority ethnic communities.
- A member of staff has been identified to improve the links and interface between the YOT and black and minority groups. Our partners within the Police and Social Services are helping us build stronger relationships with community groups.

The above actions are set out in the Youth Justice Plan 2005-2006 and the YOT Chief Officer Partnership Board will be reviewing progress against these actions in March 2006.

Leeds YOS - Chapeltown Junior Youth Inclusion Programme (YIP)

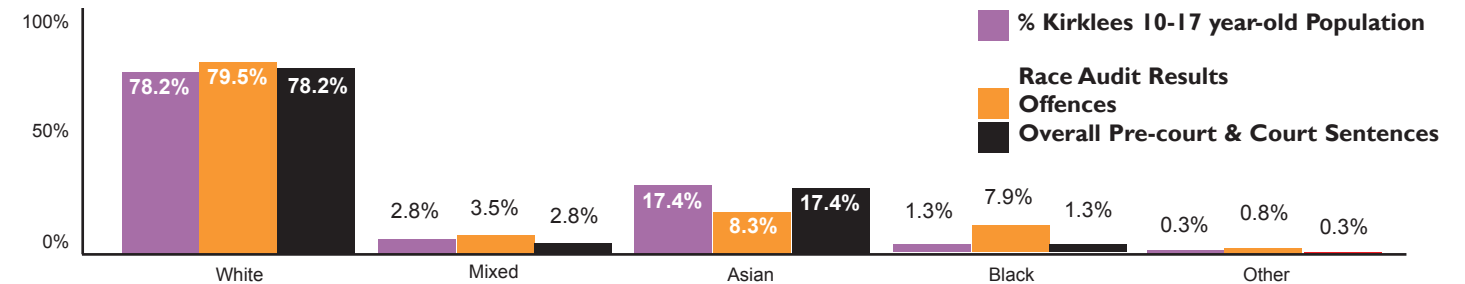
Leeds Junior Youth Inclusion Programme consists of three projects funded by Leeds Children's Fund - with a primary objective of reducing the risk factors which are commonly linked to young people becoming involved in future offending and anti-social behaviour by supporting the transition between primary and secondary school. It aims to help address problems of truancy, school exclusion, lateness, problematic and challenging behaviour, disaffection, stress and underachievement.

Junior Youth Inclusion projects are community-based and seek to identify and work with the most vulnerable 8-12 year olds in the neighbourhood. Working closely with schools and other agencies, the projects aim to provide a core group of referred young people with targeted support based on identified needs. The programme of support will provide diversionary and developmental activities that include:

- Education Support
- Homework Clubs
- DJ/Music workshops
- Mentoring Support
- Sports and Constructive Activities
- Parental Support

Engagement will primarily focus on the 3.30-6pm after-school period, holidays and other non-school time.

Kirklees



The overall conclusions to be drawn from the race audit information in Kirklees are:

- Over-representation of White young offenders in the Criminal Justice System
- Proportionately fewer Asian young people in Remands to Custody and Custody
- Over representation of Black British in Remands to Custody and Custody although numbers are small and may distort figures
- Over-representation of Black British in Pre-Court and Court disposals.
- Violent crime is the most common offence committed by young people; all ethnic groups are represented and the percentages are fairly consistent with the overall 10-17 population
- Black and mixed raced young people are more likely to be convicted of breach of bail and breach of a court directed sentence
- The YOT workforce does reflect the ethnic mix of the community it serves, though there are concerns about how well it accesses the resources available within Kirklees



SECOND chance

Second Chance is a multi-racial youth inclusion project delivering education, training, individual support and positive activities for young people in Bradford.

The boys and girls the project works with come from a variety of backgrounds and have different needs - some are excluded from school, some are at risk of exclusion and many have domestic or personal problems but the staff engage with them to help them find solutions and develop as individuals.

There is a focus on learning and achievement with a qualified teacher offering support across a range of subjects and accreditation through the Open College Network.

The project has a good record of returning the young people back to school or further education.

Calderdale - Race Audit Issues

As with all the West Yorkshire YOTs, Calderdale undertook the Race Audit and addressed the following key questions:

- 1 Does your YOT have a Race Equality Policy?
- 2 Is it a manager who has lead responsibility on Race issues in your team?
- 3 Is there a policy in place to address Race discrimination and harassment?
- 4 Is your policy on Race reviewed regularly by senior management?
- 5 Does your workforce at all levels reflect the racial mix of the community it serves?
- 6 Are the appraisal forms monitored by the next in-line manager?
- 7 Are all staff given training on Race issues?
- 8 Does the training on Race issues form a part of induction training programme?
- 9 Are Black & Minority Ethnic (BME) community groups involved in your policy planning issues?
- 10 Do you develop/publish any material locally to meet the needs of BME service users specifically?

The management team looked at all these issues and, in a process replicated across West Yorkshire, produced a detailed series of Action Plans designed to improve performance or to introduce new mechanisms to meet the specific needs of BME young offenders or those at risk of offending.

In Calderdale this has seen the establishment of a RACE Evaluation Team consisting of the YOT's Information Officer/Senior Practitioner and Operational Manager. Overseen by Stephen Toye, Calderdale YOT manager, this team will conduct ongoing reviews of the planned changes and interventions.

In addition, other senior staff have been tasked with managing specific changes, to be reviewed over the next twelve months.