



The Whole System Approach to youth justice in Scotland

CEP Conference 2017
Working with Juveniles and Young Adult Offenders

Deborah Nolan

CYCJ Theory of Change

Children & young people flourish



Practice and policy improvements



**Practice
Development**

Advice, peer support,
consultancy support,
trying out initiatives,
guidance, toolkits,
training, supporting
change projects

Research

New knowledge,
synthesising research
evidence, evaluating
initiatives, supporting
evidence use

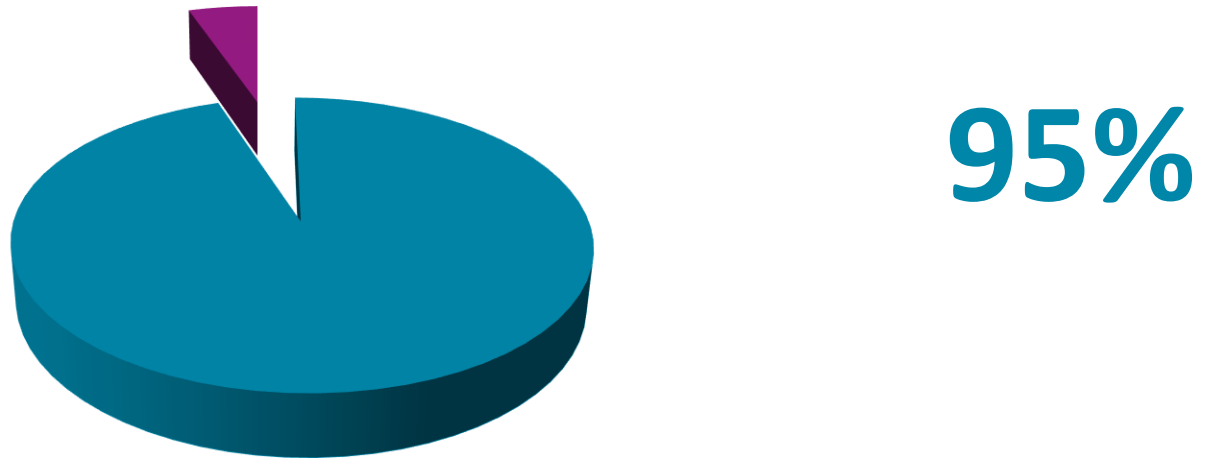
**Knowledge
Exchange**

Capturing knowledge,
promoting sharing,
disseminating, improving
access & accessibility,
integrating forms of
knowledge

What have learned about the needs of young people involved in offending in Scotland?



Low level offending is a common feature of childhood



Edinburgh Study of Youth Transitions and Crime

But

- Children who are involved in a pattern of offending, or more serious offences, are almost always our most vulnerable, victimised and traumatised young people



23%

More likely to have:

Experienced victimisation and adult harassment	Peers involved in offending/ bullying
Take risky health behaviours	Self-harm/ para-suicidal Behaviour
Be socially deprivation	Family turbulence
Weak bonds	Personality Measures

Have often experienced

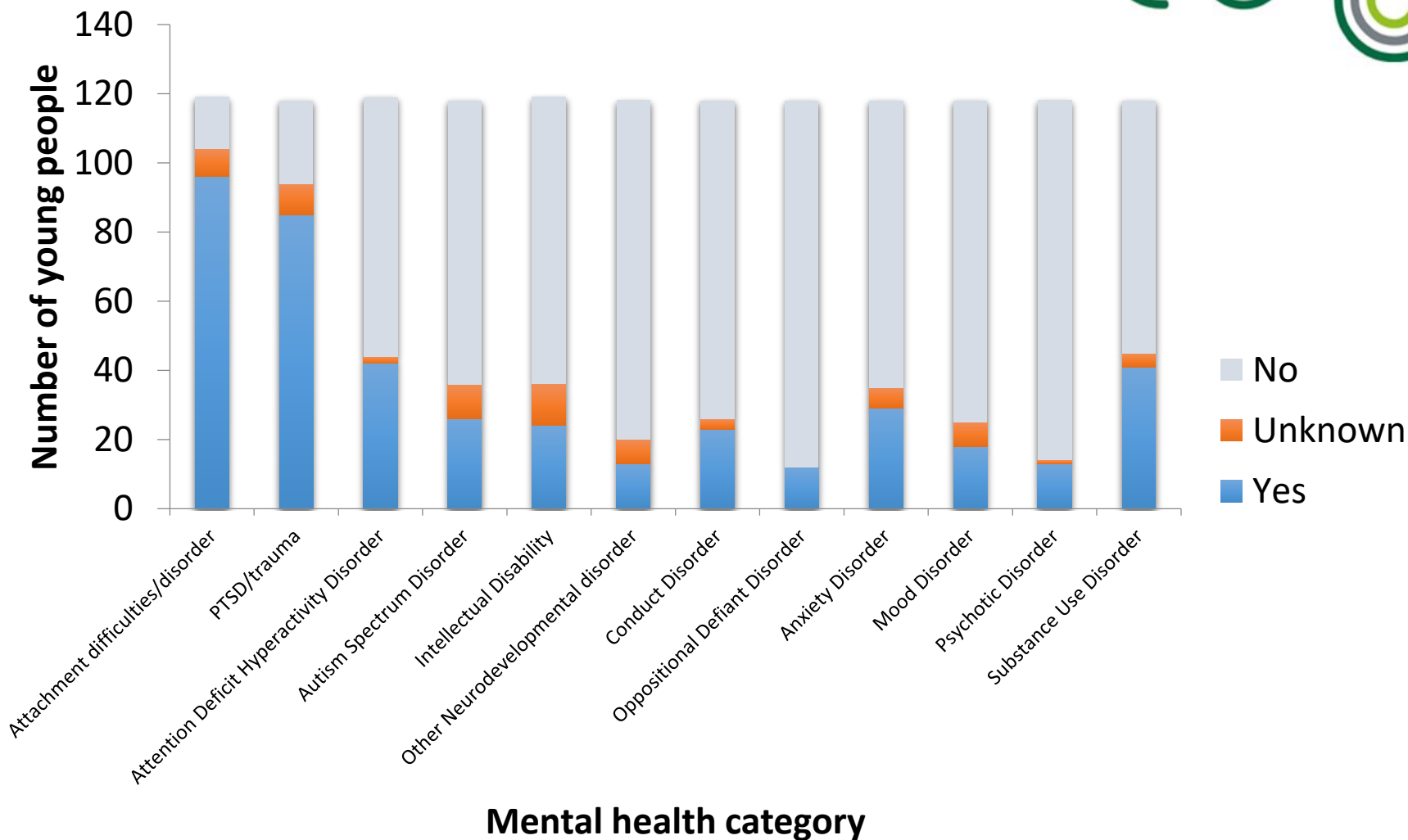
- Bereavement and loss

“How many more people do I have to see die? I’m only 19 and that’s five people died already and I keep thinking to myself ‘are the rest of them gonna die?’ And then I’ll grow up alone”
(Vaswani, 2014)

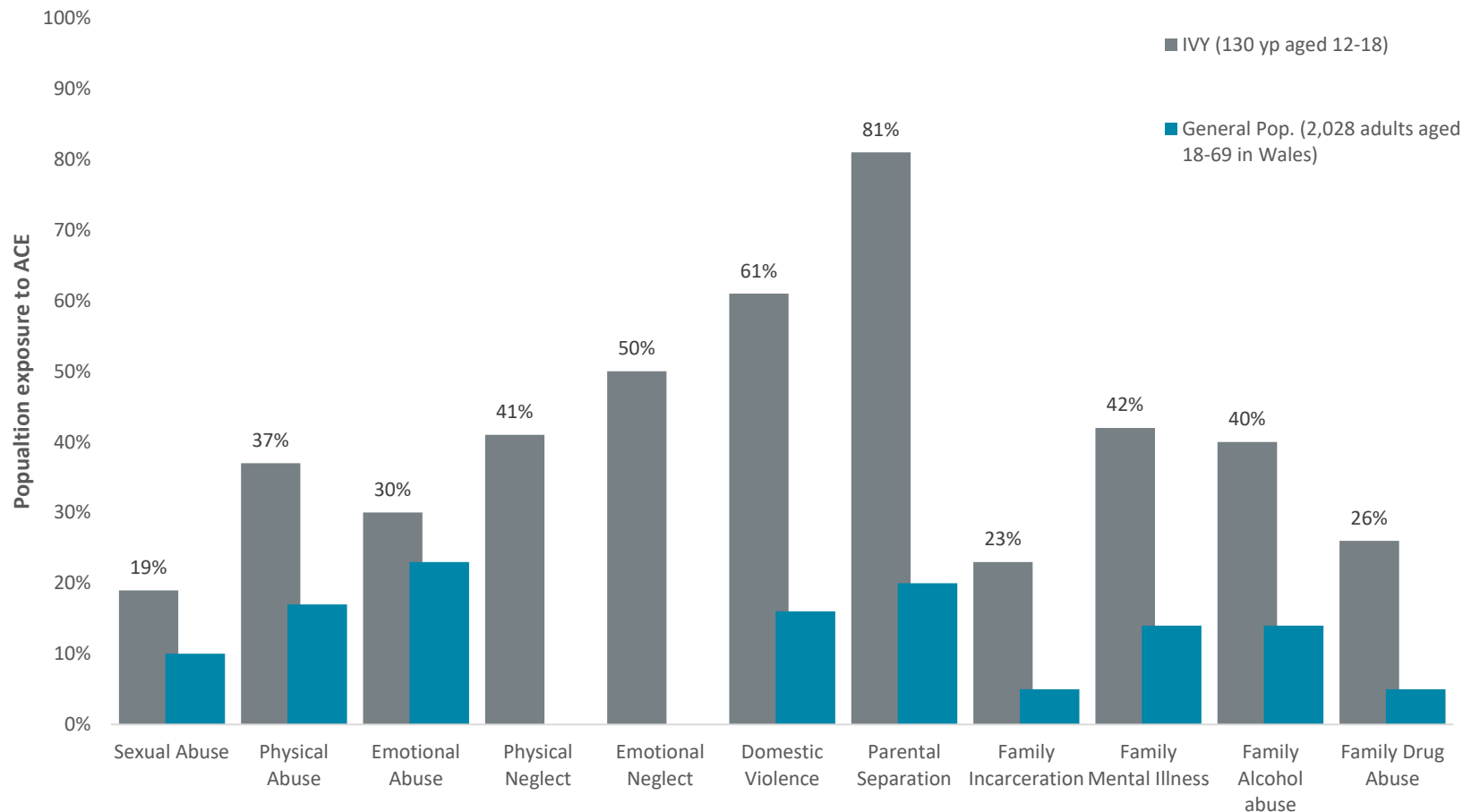
- Brain injury
- Speech, language and communication needs



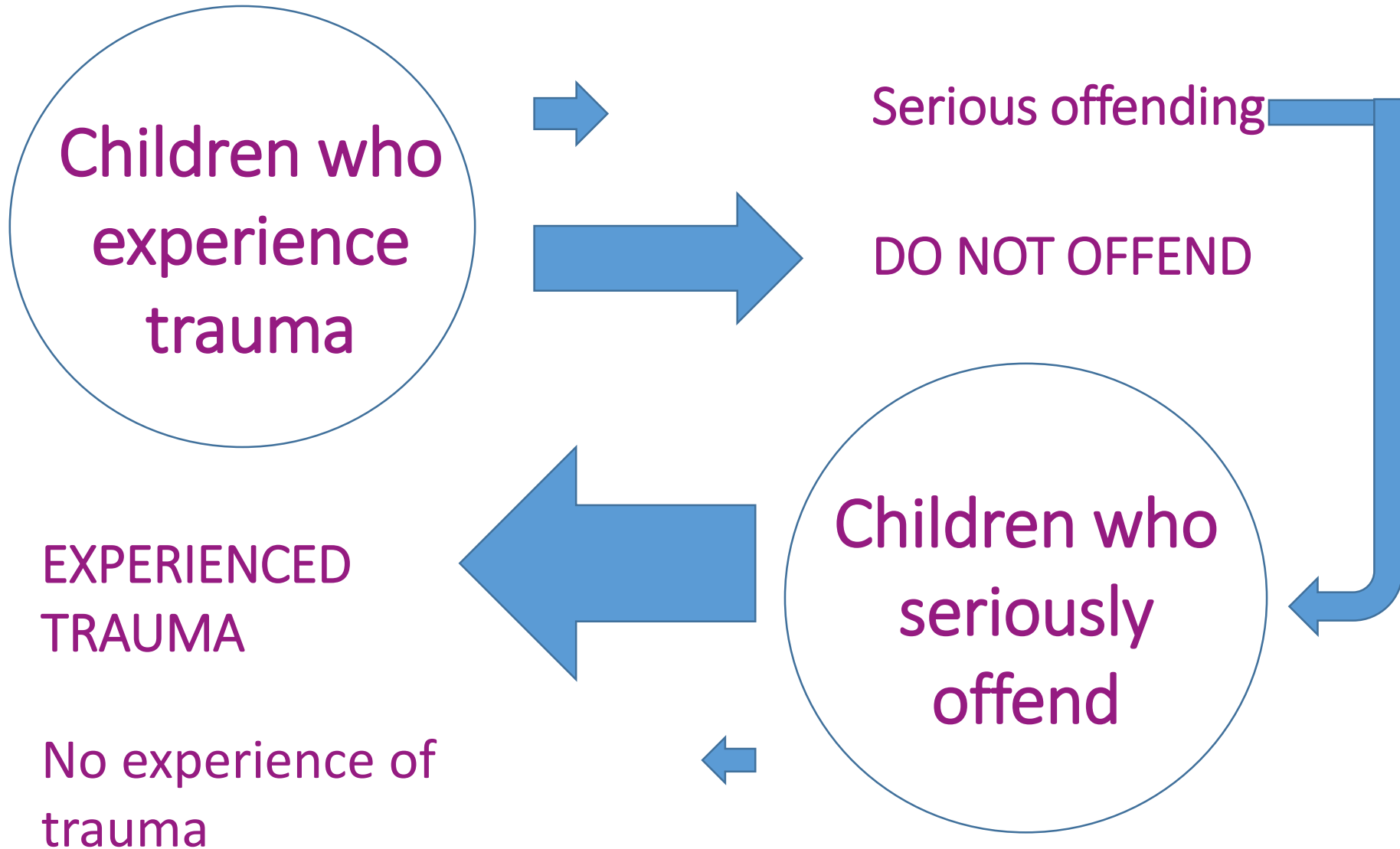
IVY-Mental Health



Adverse childhood experiences



Retrospective NOT predictive



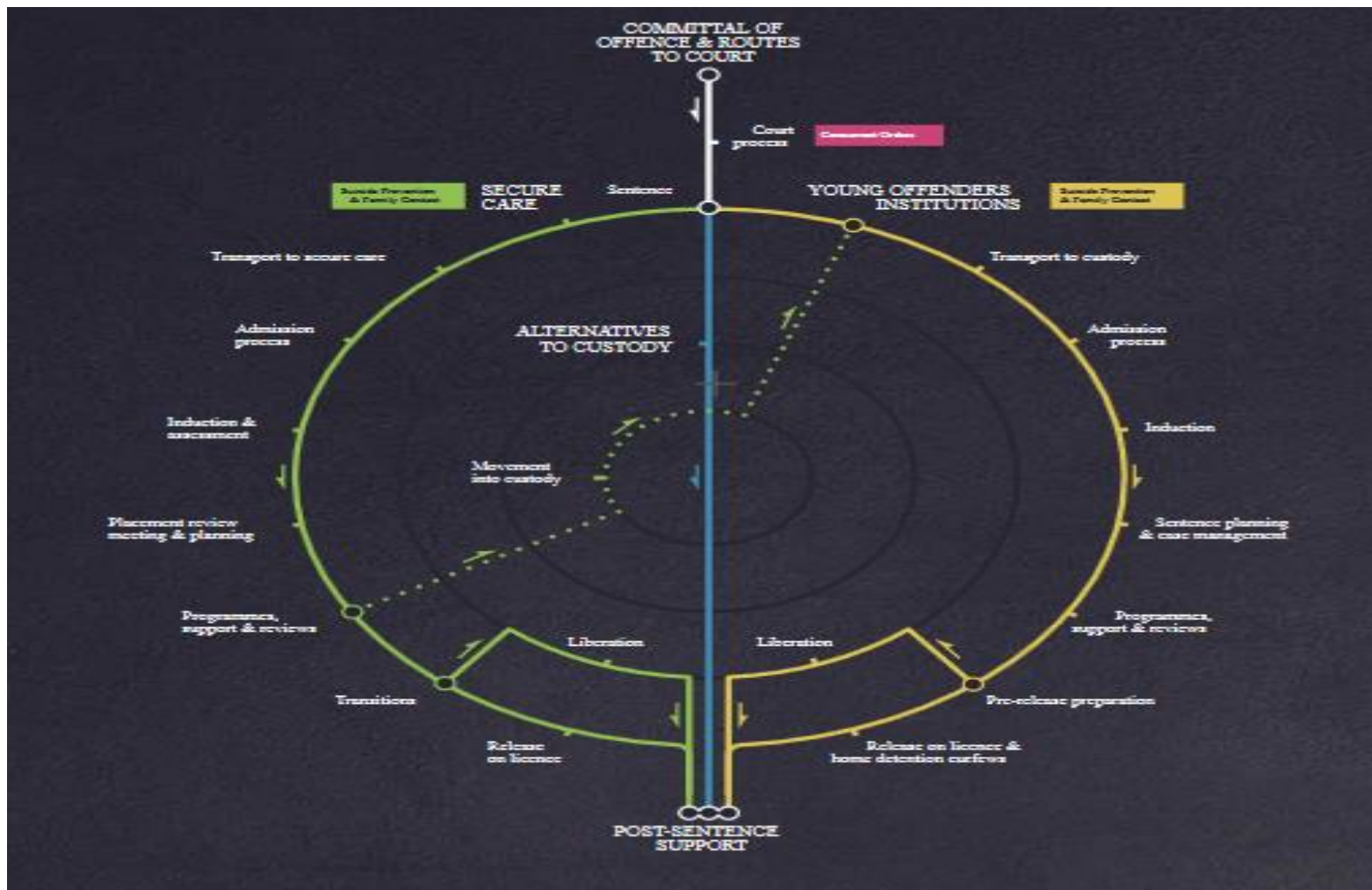
So we need an approach that can:

- Manage the risk currently posed
- Address trauma underpinning their action
- Recognises contact with the youth justice system is the biggest factor in whether someone will continue to offend

Ethos of the Whole System Approach

- Collectively 'the system' should identify when children are in trouble and respond in a coordinated way involving
- Intervening early but keeping young people out of formal systems where possible
- Support young people in the system
- Rooted in wider childcare policy

Young Person's Journey



Impact of WSA (?)

- 45% reduction in detected offences by young people
- 78% reduction in referrals to the Children's Hearings System on offence grounds
- +70% decline in young people in custody
- But...

Learning from WSA

1. The importance of a shared vision
...But the need for something more
2. Flexibility and responsiveness to respond to local needs and demands
...But the need for consistency
3. Layers of champions, within and across organisations
...Supported by cross-cutting champions

Learning from WSA

4. Working together

...Beyond the traditional youth justice workforce

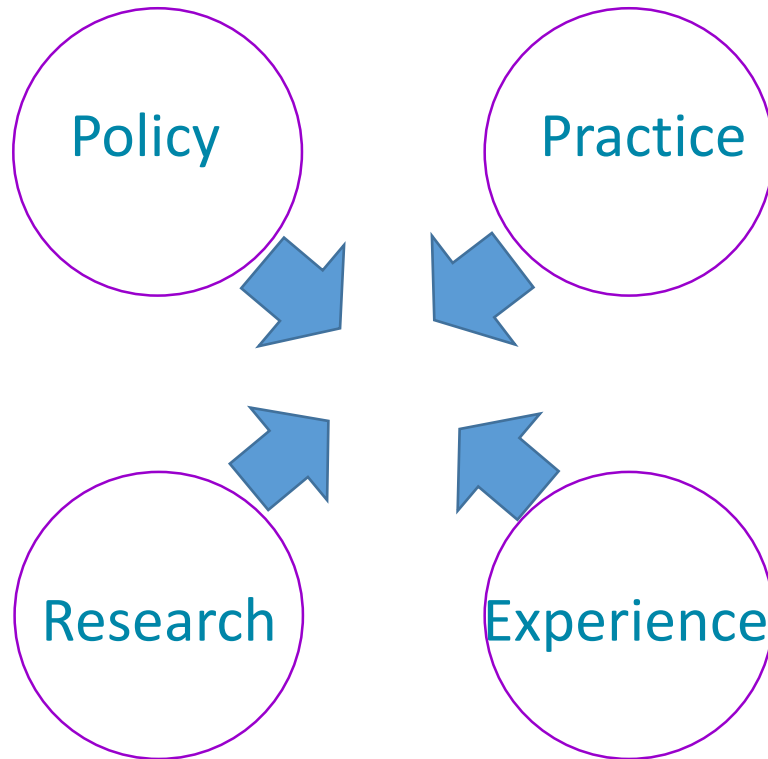
5. Supporting the workforce

...to have the skills, support and confidence



Learning from WSA

6.



7. Data and evidence

...To provide the rationale and monitor impact

8. System change

...Across legislation, policy and practice

9. Identifying where gaps remain

...And planning how to fill these

References

- CYCJ (2016) A Guide to Youth Justice in Scotland Speech, language & communication needs in youth justice, www.cycj.org.uk/resource/speech-language-and-communication-needs-in-youth-justice/
- Dyer, F. (2016) Young People in Court, www.cycj.org.uk
- Dyer, F. and Carter, K. (2017) Supporting young people involved in offending up to 21 years old: Extending the Whole System Approach, www.cycj.org.uk
- Lightowler, C., Orr, D. and Vaswani, N. (2014) Youth Justice in Scotland: Fixed in the past or fit for the future?, www.cycj.org.uk
- McAra, L. and McVie, S. (2010) Youth crime and Justice: Key Messages from the Edinburgh Study of Youth Transitions and Crime, www.research.ed.ac.uk/portal/files/8195355/Youth_crime_and_justice_Key_messages_from_the_Edinburgh_Study_of_Youth_Transitions_and_Crime_Criminology_and_Criminal_Justice.pdf
- Moodie, K. and Anderson, A. (2015) Space to Think: Lessons and Impact of the IVY Project, www.cycj.org.uk
- Scottish Children's Reporter Administration, <http://www.scra.gov.uk/>
- Vaswani, N. (2014) The Ripples of Death: Exploring the Bereavement Experiences and Mental Health of Young Men in Custody, <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/hojo.12064/full>
- Youth and Criminal Justice in Scotland: The Young Persons Journey, <http://content.iriss.org.uk/youthjustice/index.html>

Discussion

- Are there things that can be learned from what you have heard today that could be transferable to practice in your area?
- What can we learn from you?