



**Creating Place-based
Youth Court Solutions
Projects in the UK**

Written by Head of Innovation, Jane Deamer



01 | INTRODUCTION

Trauma

Most recognised childhood trauma aspects and other adversities impact on the justice system.

Trauma impacts that can start from as early as seventeen weeks of age in the womb (Glover et al, 2009*) and may last a lifetime. Children and adults with experience of trauma come into contact with the criminal justice system as victims, witnesses and or perpetrators of crime. They may also interact with the civil justice 'family law' system. In fact, data clearly suggests disadvantaged and traumatised children and young people are disproportionately represented in the justice system.

The justice system therefore has a key role in preventing, reducing and, in particular, mitigating the impact of childhood trauma. In fact, attending court in itself can be a traumatic experience. In order to address some of these challenges, Northamptonshire has introduced a number of successful problem-solving iterations within the county's criminal justice system.

1. The Youth Review Panel (post-court)
2. Problem solving sentencing hearings (in-court)
3. Youth Court Solutions (at-court)

Youth Court Solutions

The Youth Court Solutions (YCS) model is now a proven cross-sector partnership initiative using hybrid methodology to transform the experience of young people, grown-ups and professionals.

The project has made a statistically relevant 36% reduction in youth re-offending within its first two years of operation (Northamptonshire Youth Offending Service data, November 2023).

Following proof of concept, it has always been our intention to transfer and scale YCS within the UK.

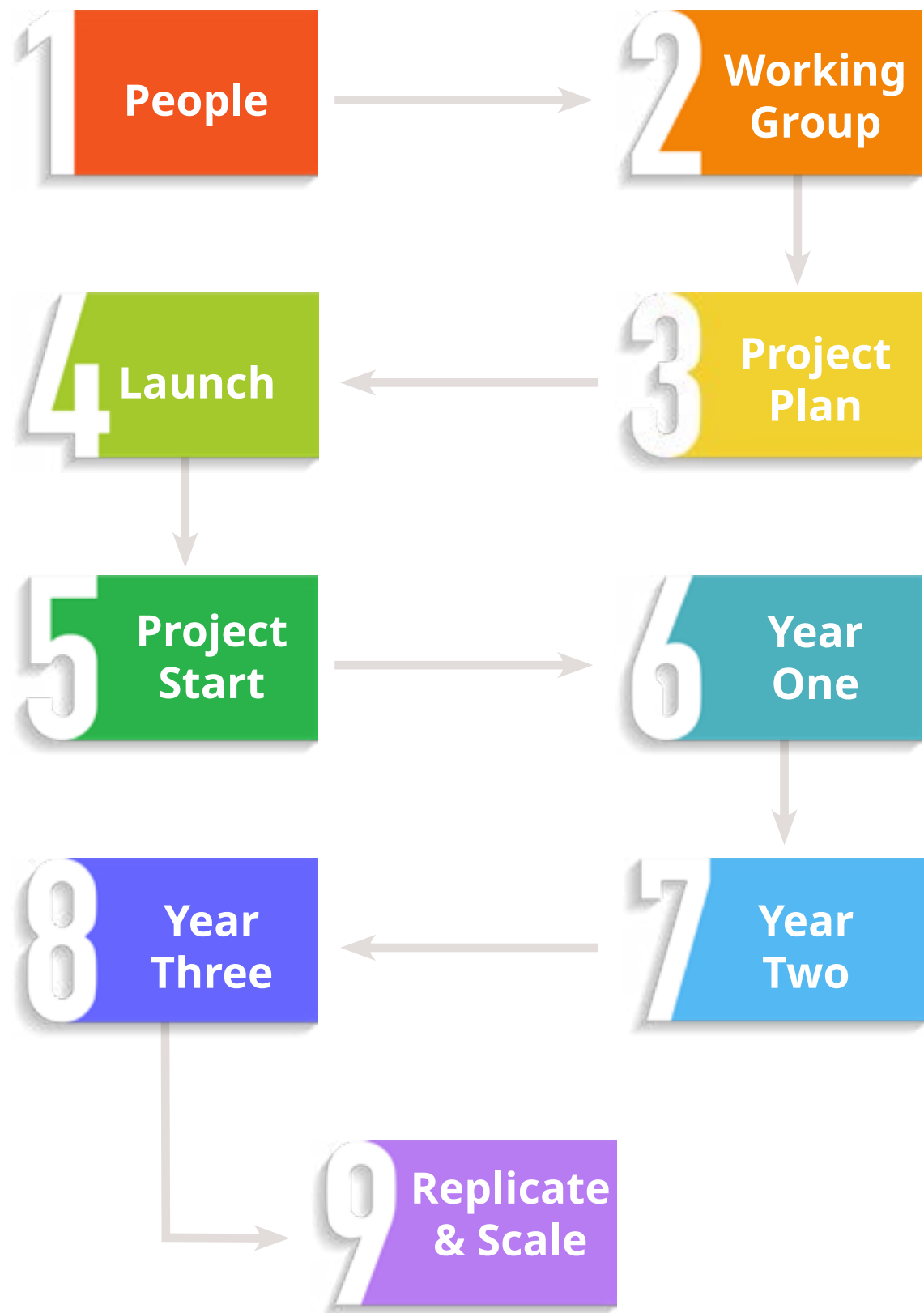
This starter pack focuses on how to initiate a place-based YCS service. Via our insights and learning we share the key elements and steps towards a successful project design, delivery and evaluation.

This pack can be used as a standalone resource and or The Crisalys Foundation may be able to assist you with your project via consultancy. We also host regular visits to our YCS project which may help you to visualise how a project may operate in your area.

* Glover, Bergman, Sarkar and O'Connor (2009) Association between maternal and amniotic fluid cortisol is moderated by maternal anxiety, Imperial College London.

02 | PROCESS

PLAN



03 | PROACTIVE PEOPLE

Much is made of funding, property and equipment but ultimately it is people that spark, create and make real change happen.

You may be reading this and thinking, I am the only person interested in making a change. Every project will need an initiator and it could be you!

Our project had two key individuals from within the criminal justice system itself, two established magistrates, who drove the project's early discussions and gathered initial resources and interest via a locally-based charity, The Crisalys Foundation, to help them to translate the vision into a reality.

When we started the dialogue about YCS Northamptonshire, we had no precedent to draw from so we had a blank sheet of paper on which to build our vision. Fortunately, you already have a robust and proven example to draw from with YCS. Also, Crisalys and this pack to help you to get started.

One of the first steps is to start to gather interested local cross-sector people around you, the idea and planning. YCS benefitted from a core group of skilled people with good hearts and great energy who came together towards a common purpose and made it happen.

Finding interested people in the community can take some time through initial individual or group meetings. Having a formal and connected chair for a group meeting was very useful for us. We enlisted the help of the serving High Sheriff of Northamptonshire in 2020, Mr Paul Parsons, to chair the initial steering group meeting, this helped to give the meeting a formal tone and created a higher profile opportunity for participants.

Initial invited community parties at YCS' first formal meeting in July 2020 included the following key representatives:

- ▶ HM Lord Lieutenant
- ▶ High Sheriff
- ▶ HMCTS
- ▶ Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
- ▶ Police
- ▶ Local Authorities
- ▶ Youth Offending Service
- ▶ Magistrates
- ▶ University of Northampton
- ▶ Community Foundation
- ▶ Centre for Justice Innovation
- ▶ Third Sector

The ultimate goal was to engage and gather those people together in a structured meeting to agree in principle to the concept of a new at-court youth intervention model. Having gathered everyone together, presented the concept and enthused everyone, we then immediately agreed to form a smaller working group who would co-produce to translate the vision into a reality. It was agreed that the working group would develop a comprehensive Pilot Project Plan to bring back to the steering group for their discussion and agreement.



04 | WORKING Group

Our working group consisted of representatives from the following organisations.

- High Sheriff (Chair)
- Chair of the Bench of Magistrates
- Deputy Chair of the Bench of Magistrates
- Office Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
- Northamptonshire Youth Offending Service Managers x 2
- The Crisalys Foundation - Head of Innovation

The working group met in July and September 2020. The meetings focused on the following standardised agenda topics.

- Purpose
- Organisational structure
- Accountability
- Name
- Co-production
- Designing the service (base, partners, costs, added values, service offer, policy, practice and consultation)



- Resources
- Funding
- Metrics and impact measurement
- Reporting
- Publicity and communications

Meeting records were distributed to the working group after each meeting with actions highlighted in the text.

At an early stage, The Crisalys Foundation agreed to undertake the consultancy actions required to innovate all aspects and create the Pilot Project Plan for the newly named initiative, Youth Court Solutions. We had no initial project funds, so to keep momentum and avoid delays in the timetable, The Crisalys Foundation via their self-employed consultant (Head of Innovation) agreed to undertake this work without payment.

During the service design phase, The Crisalys Foundation recommended introducing an independent third sector partner into the project who could lead on the key generic health and wellbeing provision aspects and represent a non-statutory partner in an otherwise wholly formal setting of public and private sector employees. The working group agreed and approved that the credible East Midland's based regional registered charity, Service Six, would fulfil this function. At this stage Service Six's CEO joined the working group.



PILOT PROJECT PLAN

The Crisalys Foundation completed the draft Pilot Project Plan in October 2020 and it was presented to the Steering Group and ratified in November 2020.

If you would like to receive a copy of the original plan please email:

jane@crisalys.org

05 | LAUNCH

PROGRESS

Needless to say, our activities were hampered throughout 2020 and 2021 due to the global Covid-19 pandemic. Obviously, we would have preferred an in-person launch event.

YCS was launched in the UK online in February 2021 to an audience of one hundred and eighty (180) invited guests including:

- Lord Alex Carlile KC CBE
- Royal Courts of Justice
- Ministry of Justice
- Transform Justice
- Centre for Justice Innovation
- Prison Reform Trust
- The Seiff Foundation and
- Children's Commissioner for England amongst many others.

Launch feedback was very positive and after the event we wrote to all the participants and invited them to join a mailing list so we could keep them updated on project progress and reporting.



06 | PILOT PROJECT START

The pilot project started in October 2021 and operated for one year until September 2022.

As we were still without project funding, The Crisalys Foundation and Service Six agreed to initiate the project without payment.

By the time the project started it had been agreed that the YCS team could use Court 2 as a base although the team spent considerable time in the court house's main reception area greeting and delivering to beneficiaries.

By December 2021, funding had been confirmed from, The Linder Foundation with a grant for April 2022 to March 2023. The grant funded The Crisalys Foundation and Service Six inputs, team training, marketing and resources.



Year one reached one hundred and eighteen (118) young people representing 48% of the total youth defendants who walked through the court door. Also, fifty-five (55) grown-ups who were mainly defendant's parents and carers.

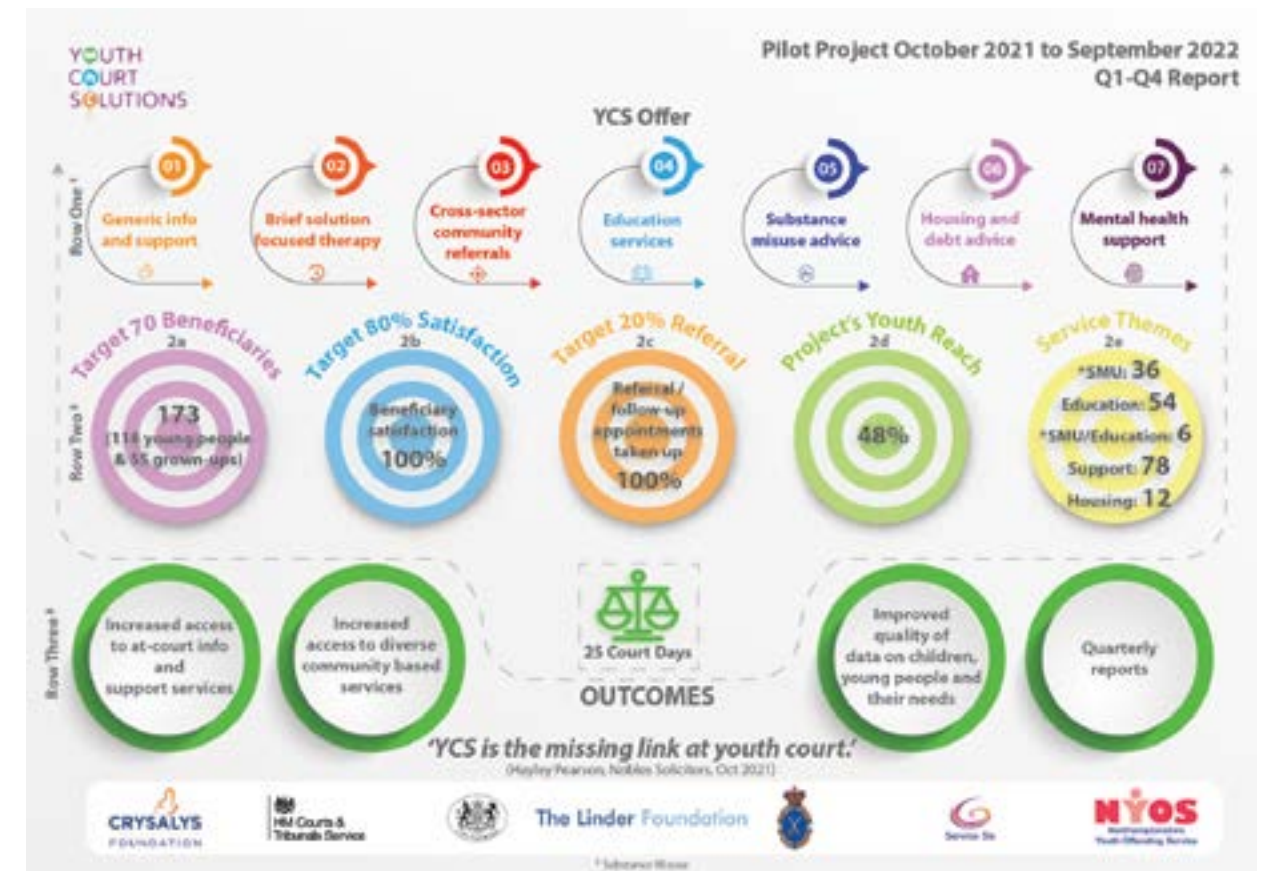
All targets were met and exceeded. All projected outcomes were met.

Year one was very successful in engaging young people and their grown-ups. The year also enabled us to test and hone the service model via a continuous improvement plan, to establish a 'one team' approach and to ascertain if we could stretch the project outcomes and impacts within year two.

Year one monitoring, continuous evaluation and reporting included:

- Quarterly review meetings
- Quarterly improvement planning
- Quarterly infographics
- Annual Impact Report

YEAR ONE(PILOT YEAR) IMPACT REPORT



Notes

1. YCS Offer row represents the various types of services available to beneficiaries each court day
2. The Targets row features over-arching annual targets for the 1-year pilot project within October 2021 to September 2022 placed within the bullseye areas.
 - 2a. Target 70 Beneficiaries is the total number of service users we projected in year one – we have met and exceeded this target.
 - 2b. Target 80% Satisfaction with the service received is measured by beneficiary feedback on the day about the YCS service they have delivered and there have been zero complaints about the service. We have met and exceeded this target.
 - 2c. Target 20% referral is the projected take up of referrals made by the YCS team for services outside of court in the community. There have only been two external referrals (a significantly lower number than we expected) and both have been completed, hence the 100% take up of referral opportunities. It is worth noting that the width of specialist services on the day at court are the likely reason for low referral requirements. Beneficiaries are getting what they need on the day or via NYOS and Service Six as follow-up actions.
 - 2d. Project Youth Reach target reflects the average percentage of youth defendants we have engaged that came through the court doors out of the potential total number of attending youth defendants. This was not an initial project target but we added it as part of our continuous coproduction / improvement plan actions. This figure is important to show the number of young people voluntarily engaging with YCS. This percentage is a lot higher than we expected and it has increased slightly each quarter.
 - 2e. Service Themes show the number of beneficiaries accessing each of the YCS Offer types of service. We added in Substance Misuse (SMU) and Education at the end of quarter 2 after we realised how many beneficiaries were accessing a combination of these two themes – which are clearly correlated in respect of their support needs.
3. Outcomes row represents the initial impacts and outputs we planned to achieve. We used a little extra space in the centre of this row to add in the number of court days completed within the year.

07 | YEAR TWO

IMPACT

Year two of the project continued seamlessly between October 2022 and September 2023, along with continued and increased funding grants from The Linder Foundation and a private donor.

Insights, learning and recommendations from year one were applied and our ambitions for a hybrid in-person and digital model were realised in January 2023. With permission from HMCTS we introduced the UK's first ever at-court QR code to our YCS marketing banners in the court reception area.

Young people and grown-ups entering the court house were invited at any point in the day to scan the code for YCS info and access to The Crisalys Foundation's Tackling Trauma website to assist in health and wellbeing opportunities at court and beyond. The code also offered an alternative opportunity for those who would not engage in-person to still have access to the service offer information.

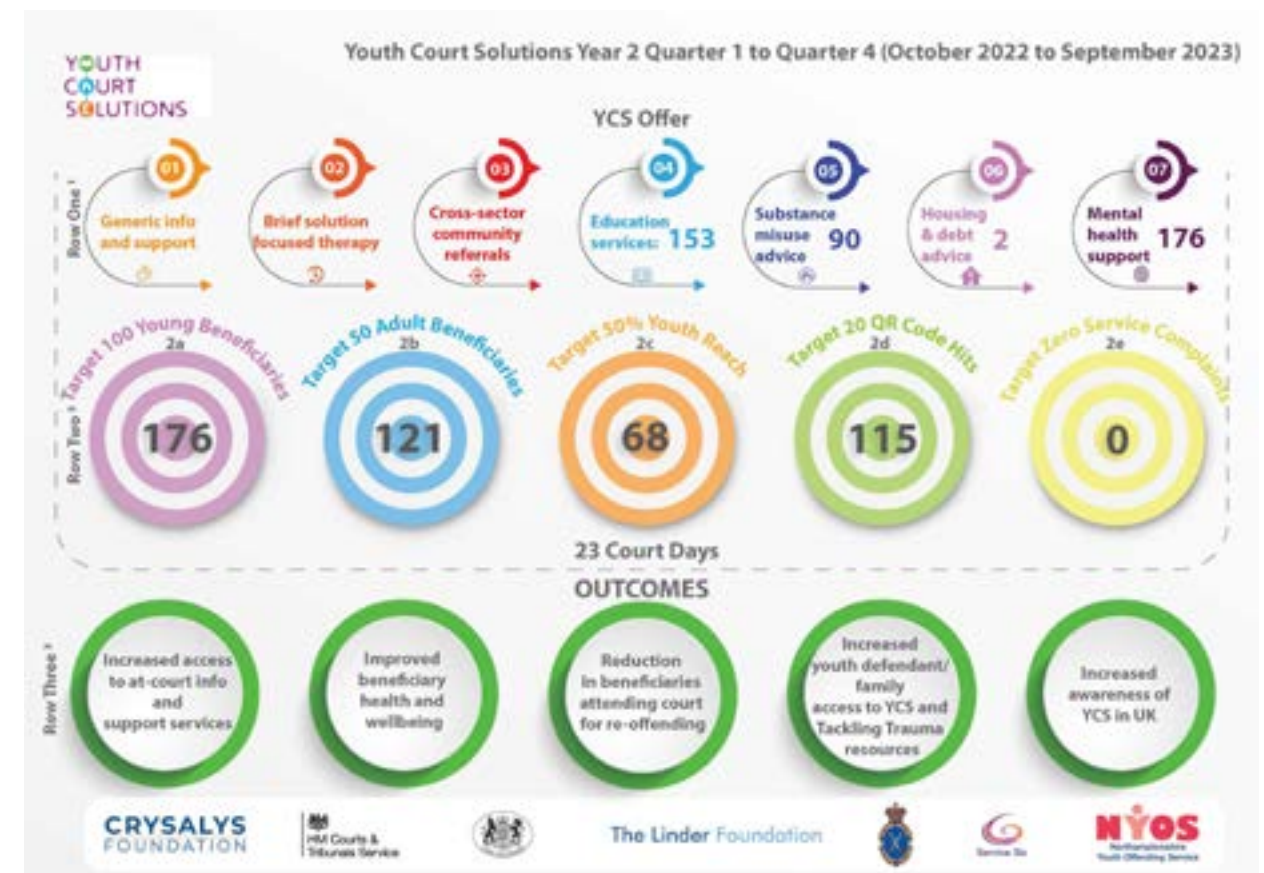


<https://tackling-trauma.com/>



YEAR TWO

IMPACT REPORT



Notes

1. YCS Offer row one represents the 7 (top number) main types of services available to beneficiaries each court day. Services 4 to 7 include a number to the right, of how many people received that YCS themed service within the report period.
2. The Targets row two features over-arching annual targets for year two within October 2022 to September 2023 with the updated data placed within the bullseye areas of each target.
 - 2a. Target 100 Young Beneficiaries is the total number of young service users we project in year two.
 - 2b. Target 50 Grown-up Beneficiaries is the total number of adult (parents / carers / family members) service users we project in year two.
 - 2c. Target 50% Youth Reach reflects the average percentage of youth defendants we have engaged that came through the court doors out of the potential total number of attending youth defendants.
 - 2d. Target 20 QR Code Hits reflects a new digital aspect of YCS introduced in year two from Q2 (January 2023) and another first in the UK with permission of HMCTS. The QR codes are featured on YCS banners at the court entrance and exit and the YCS team invite beneficiaries to voluntarily scan the code using their mobile phones to access online YCS and Tackling Trauma information and self-help resources. These can be viewed while beneficiaries wait at court and or after they leave. This enables a digital option for those who are not comfortable with accessing YCS services initially (offers a chance to look into it more before asking for a service on the day) or not at all on the day but they have the option to look later or in the future.
 - 2e. Target 0 Service Complaints
3. Below row two we have included the number of court days undertaken in the quarter.
4. Outcomes row three represents the initial impacts we plan to achieve in year two.

08 | YEAR ONE AND TWO SUMMARY

Within the first two years of the project we have achieved the following five key outcomes:

1. Supporting families and individuals impacted by a criminal event

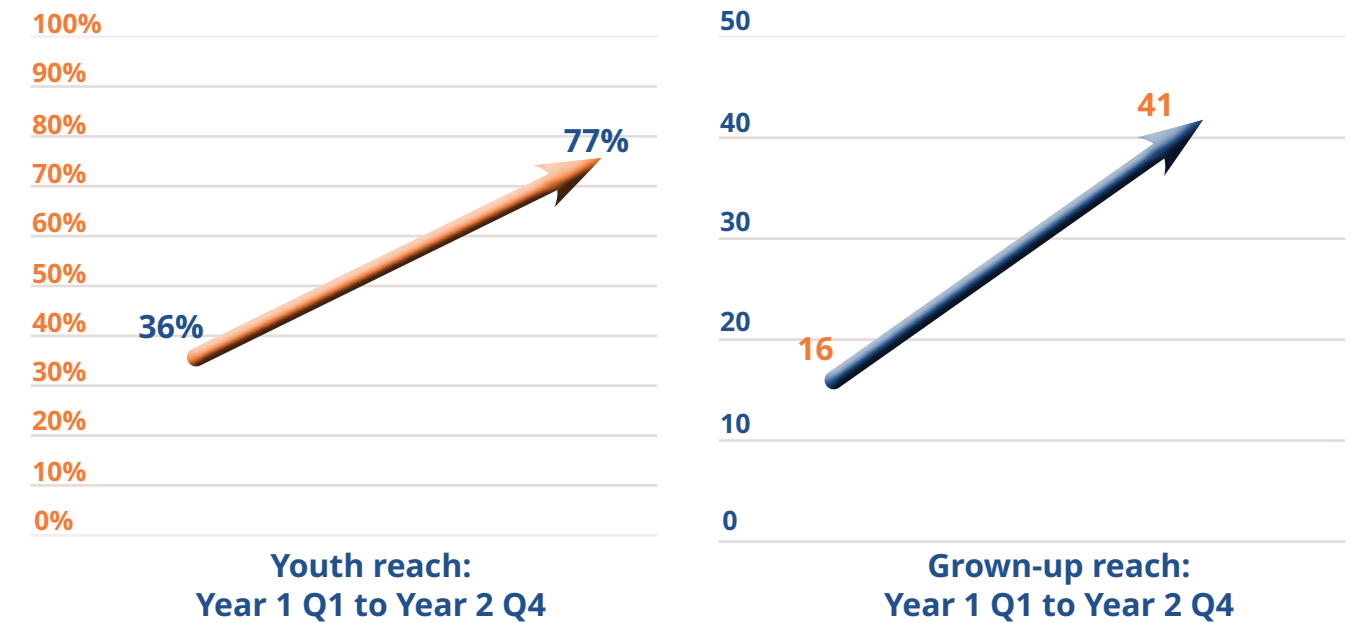
Currently over 50% of former victims become offenders

Marked increase of working with children and young people	Significant increase supporting parents, grandparents and carers	Observed highly significant reductions in reoffending
Breaking the cycle	Preventing children who observe crime becoming criminalized themselves	Supporting families

2. Improved health and wellbeing for youth and adult participants



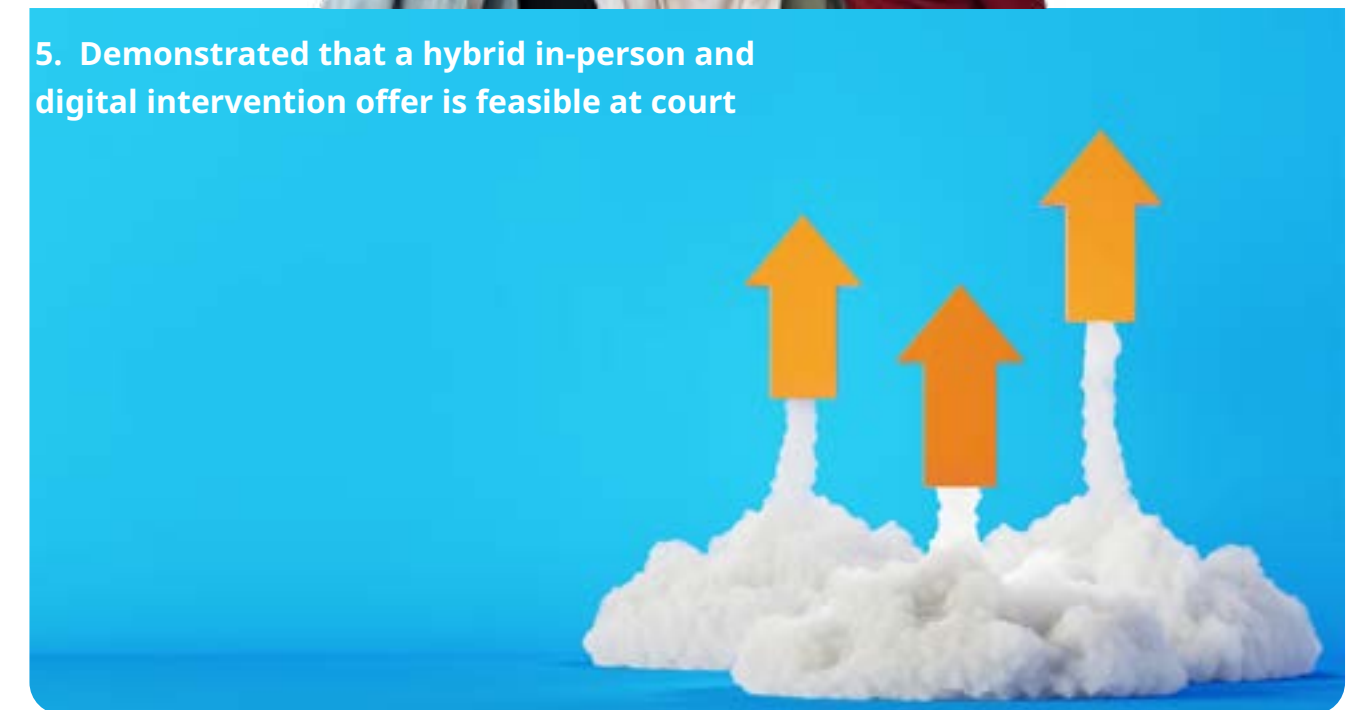
3. Increased youth and adult intervention reach



4. Demonstrated that a cross-sector multi-disciplinary at-court service is feasible and makes a statistically relevant difference to youth recidivism



5. Demonstrated that a hybrid in-person and digital intervention offer is feasible at court



If you would like to receive a copy of Year One and or Year Two Impact Reports, please email: jane@crystalys.org



09 | TESTIMONIALS

DON'T JUST TAKE OUR WORD FOR IT!

QUOTE

I didn't think I would get through the day but I did with their help.

Project youth beneficiary

QUOTE

This has made such a difference for us all.

Project adult beneficiary

QUOTE

Youth justice in Northamptonshire has always been progressive. Youth Court Solutions is the latest example of this. For those coming to court it provides a bespoke approach centred on dealing with trauma and this is making a significant difference to youth re-offending. I am delighted to be able to endorse this important project so that this initiative can be scaled up so our young people can look forward to a better future.

High Sheriff of Northamptonshire, Mrs Amy Crawford JP

QUOTE

Youth Court Solutions is a wonderful example of what can be achieved with clear purpose and direction, as trustees we look for projects that with clear objectives and measurable impact. We have been very impressed by the team at YCS and what they have achieved in a relatively short time. As such we are delighted to have been able to support their work in reducing the level of offending in young adults.

The Linder Foundation is keen to support early stage projects which have the potential to demonstrate impact and have a positive and lasting effect on society. Youth and young people remains a key strategic theme for us and we are delighted to be associated with the project.

Mr Johnny Fountain, Chair of The Linder Foundation

QUOTE

I asked the former High Sheriff what the potentially most impactful charity was that she'd come across in her years and she highlighted Youth Court Solutions. After a call with Jane Deamer we realised it had an exceptional individual running YCS, and we thought if it was an idea that worked, it could be replicated and scaled quite quickly to a large part of the country.

Private Donor

QUOTE

Youth Court Solutions is the missing link at youth court.

Hayley Pearson, Noble Solicitors

10 | TRANSFER & SCALE

HELP TO SET UP YOUR OWN YOUTH COURT SOLUTIONS

Let us help you set up your own county success story! Contact us on the details below:



Jane Deamer



**Head of Innovation / Development
Manager**



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11 | THE CRYSYLYS FOUNDATION

The Crysalyis Foundation is a UK organisation based in Northamptonshire which was initiated as a CLG in 2017 and registered as a charity in early 2020. Our main objects are to relieve disadvantage and promote the efficiency and effectiveness of charities. In practice, this means we have a standard charity identity where we can innovate, co-create, develop and deliver projects and services directly to beneficiaries, alongside, a wholesale identity acting as an infrastructure platform as a catalyst, social researcher and collaborator. Essentially, trail blazing independent strengths based solutions towards holistic innovation to challenge the increasing depth and severity of structural and social adversity and inequality. Given this dual role, we're one of only a hundred or so charities of this type in England and Wales (RR14 Promoting the efficiency and effectiveness of charities, section B5 activities).

The Crysalyis Foundation's vision is that every child deserves a happy youth and we're working with a range of partners towards a new approach to transforming disadvantaged children's experiences today for all our tomorrows. We're currently focused on preventing, reducing, mitigating and treating trauma, particularly childhood trauma and its devastating impacts. Traumatic experiences and impacts that can start from as early as 17 weeks of age in the womb and can last a lifetime. The traditional 10 adverse childhood experiences defined within research include domestic abuse, parental substance misuse or incarceration and abuse. However, we accept a much broader and constantly growing range of definitions including traumas including the impacts of living in childhood poverty, bullying, discrimination, exploitation and structural inequality.



Image featured with the permission of the artist, Banksy

Trauma is a brain injury. Repeated exposure to traumatic experiences leaves the brain responding to a constant state of perceived or actual threat, essentially, in a constant state of acute anxiety which negatively impacts a foetus', baby's, child's or young person's brain development. Current research is exploring this same impact for adults in their early twenties. Therefore, the indications are that there are various opportunities at different developmental ages to mitigate or treat existing traumatic brain damage and prevent and reduce future impacts.

CONTACT INFORMATION



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Company Number: 11080543

Registered Charity Number: 1189120

12 | THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS



HM Courts &
Tribunals Service



The Linder Foundation



Service Six



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