

Catch22 research report

Supporting Transitions

**A summative evaluation of the Transition
to Adulthood Pilots**

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Catch22

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About the Transition to Adulthood Alliance (T2A)

The Transition to Adulthood (T2A) Alliance is a coalition of criminal justice, health and youth organisations which was formed in 2008 to improve the opportunities and life chances of young adults in the criminal justice system. The Alliance encompasses: Addaction, Catch22, the Centre for Crime and Justice Studies, Clinks, the Criminal Justice Alliance, the Howard League for Penal Reform, Nacro, the Prince's Trust, the Prison Reform Trust, the Revolving Doors Agency, the Young Foundation and YoungMinds.

The Alliance was convened by the Barrow Cadbury Trust (BCT) following the publication in 2005 of *Lost in Transition*, a report illustrating the vulnerability of young adulthood and the need for interventions to recognise this as a distinct stage in life. The T2A Alliance has developed and promoted a series of policy proposals that aim more effectively to rehabilitate and divert young adults out of the criminal justice system, with responses that are proportionate to maturity and take specific needs into account.

In 2009 the Alliance published the *T2A Manifesto*, which set out ten proposals for key reforms to the criminal justice response to young adults (T2A; 2009)¹. This has recently been updated in the newly formulated 'T2A Pathway'. The T2A pathway approach outlines ways that those working in criminal justice can make their interventions with young adults more effective, and identifies the points throughout the criminal justice process at which a young adult specific approach can be taken within the existing legislative framework (T2A; 2012).

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Please note that all names have been changed in case examples given in the text.

¹ http://www.t2a.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/T2A-Young_Adult_Manifesto.pdf

Contents

Executive summary	5
Why young adults?	5
The T2A approach and pilots.....	5
T2A outcomes.....	6
Conclusion	8
Introduction	10
Why young adults?	11
The T2A pilots	15
Methodology of the evaluation.....	20
Reducing reoffending	23
Examining how effective the pilots were in reducing offending	23
Education training and employment	31
Education, training and employment outcomes	32
Routes into education, training and employment	33
Accommodation	39
Examining outcomes in achieving stable housing.....	39
Accommodation outcomes.....	40
Accommodation support.....	41
Health	48
T2A emotional wellbeing and mental health support	48
Wellbeing and mental health support	49
Specialist mental health support	52

Drugs and alcohol	55
T2A substance misuse support	55
Substance misuse support.....	56
Emotional wellbeing and substance misuse	58
Families and children.....	60
Family relationship outcomes.....	60
Family relationship support.....	61
T2A and the Probation Service	67
Advantages of the T2A approach	67
Benefits of the T2A relationship with Probation	69
Conclusion	72
References	77
Appendix.....	79

Executive summary

This summative evaluation examines the outcomes for young adults benefitting from a 'T2A approach' through three pilot projects funded by the Barrow Cadbury Trust (BCT). This approach is a new way of working with 18 to 24-year-olds in the criminal justice system which takes into account their distinct developmental needs. It is part of a wider initiative funded by the Trust – the Transition to Adulthood Alliance (T2A) – which is campaigning on this issue.

This is the third evaluation of the T2A pilots' work commissioned by the Barrow Cadbury Trust. The Oxford Centre for Criminology conducted a formative evaluation which explored the work as it developed (Burnett et al; 2010) and Matrix Evidence carried out a break-even analysis (Matrix; 2011).

Why young adults?

The Alliance argues that the transition to adulthood is in a state of flux and that the traditional markers of adulthood (such as leaving education, finding a job, living independently, or becoming a parent) are happening later in people's lives than in recent generations. Research has also shown that the adult brain is not fully developed until at least the mid-20s. In recognition of these changes young adulthood, broadly the ages 16 to 24, needs to be seen as a distinct stage in life (Transition to Adulthood Alliance, 2009a).

In addition, young adults with complex problems often have to negotiate multiple

transitions between services and systems, and can easily fall between the gaps and lose the very support or intervention that might help them make a smooth transition to adulthood.

Young adults are also the group most likely to commit a criminal offence. But with the right intervention and support, they are also the group most likely to desist from offending and 'grow out of crime'.

The T2A approach recognises that young people in the transition to adulthood require specific, tailored support through this process of change, and not an arbitrary cut-off from services at the time of greatest need. The Alliance suggests that a young adult specific approach can be adopted throughout criminal justice processes (often within the existing legislative framework) to achieve more effective results.

The T2A approach and pilots

The T2A approach is being piloted in three locations: Birmingham, West Mercia and London. These small projects provide support for young adults coming out of custody or on community sentences. The model is a holistic casework approach that is attuned to the specific needs of young adults. There is an emphasis on multi-agency work, bridging the gap between the Youth Offending Service and Probation Services, and brokering

relationships with other specialist services. The pilots supplement the work of Probation Services, providing the extra support that young adults need.

This evaluation explores the outcomes of the pilots by following a group of young adults for a six month period. It provides a detailed account of the work the three pilots are undertaking and the key features of the young adult specific model of working.

T2A outcomes

Reducing reoffending

The evaluation followed 36 young adults over a six month period, interviewing them towards the beginning of their engagement with T2A and then again six months later.

- Overall, three of 34² interviewees were reconvicted in the six month study period – a nine per cent reconviction rate
- This compares to a national (one-year) reconviction rate for 18 to 20-year-olds of 46 per cent³, rising to 58 per cent⁴ for young adults leaving custody.

None of the reconvictions were for the most severe offences, and each reoffender was only reconvicted once. There were three additional interviewees who breached their sentence. Taking into account the degree of severity, reduced frequency and low number of reconvictions, these results indicate that T2A has had an effect on reducing reoffending for this sample.

'I haven't been stopped by the police since I've come out. I haven't had no hassle from them whatsoever. I just think it's the way I

go about my things and how I behave. I'm just in my work uniform. If they stop me I'm in my work uniform, "How can I help you Officer?" and then they'll see. If they ever saw me when I was working they'll be shocked! I'm not going to lie about it, my record is long. There's just a ridiculous amount of stuff on there, and for them to see me doing what I'm doing now, they'll be thinking, "This is not the same guy." And in my opinion that's good, something has changed.'

The study examined in detail five 'pathways' that the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) recognises as having a powerful impact on reducing reoffending:

- education, training and employment
- accommodation
- mental health
- substance misuse
- families and children.

Education, training and employment

The results are positive for education, training and employment. Of the young adults that it was possible to follow up at the second stage:

- The number in employment more than tripled
- The number not in education, employment or training halved.

The London T2A pilot was particularly effective in helping service users find sustainable apprenticeships that they enjoyed, with feedback that was more positive than from those in employment. The level three Information Advice and

2 There were two interviewees for whom it was not possible to attain any follow up data .

3 MOJ reoffending bulletin 2011

4 248 Hansard HC, 17 January 2011, c653W

Guidance qualification provided by St Giles Trust also received enthusiastic feedback from those undertaking it. In general, the young adults were more positive about apprenticeships and courses with a vocational and training element than they were about the purely educational courses.

Accommodation

'Well we wouldn't have had the flat for starters, because they didn't want to give it us. And [my T2A worker] had to say, "They're fine, they're not any trouble"...

I want to stay there for a long time. It's such a nice area. No-one knows where we live, it's like we're hidden away and if we told people where we live, people on the gear, we would have people come round and it would ruin it. 'Cos as you can see, there's flats overlooking, and you can see whoever comes in, and if you do start getting people coming to the house we'd lose it.'

T2A played an essential role in helping many of the young adults in the sample to find stable accommodation. But overall, the results are ambiguous in terms of housing outcomes. The same number of service users were in urgent housing need at the second interview stage as at the first, although the specific individuals in this position had changed, and the majority of those who were homeless did not move on to stable accommodation. It is important to keep in mind that housing is a particularly difficult area on which to have an impact as T2A workers have very little control over the housing options available.

Comparing the T2A clients' different housing arrangements highlights the relative strengths of different tenancies for a cohort of vulnerable young adults. For this sample, social housing provided the most stability, and private rented housing the least stability.

Mental health

'I think there could've been a stage where I could've reoffended, I could've. But my T2A worker taught me to rise above it, ignore them, everything like that so it was going better. She was showing me positive things in life, not the negatives.'

There was evidence that the T2A model enhances the impact on the emotional wellbeing of young adults by providing service users with a feeling of safety, and building up their confidence and skills so that they are able to deal with adversity and stress. This sample indicated that T2A's role was in facilitating joined-up multi-agency work for those who were engaged with mental health services, rather than in referring young adults to mental health services. In these cases, the pilots provided practical support through working with a number of services to share information, and also by advocating effectively on their behalf. Often, the practical support had the effect of increasing the individual's emotional wellbeing.

Substance misuse

There was evidence of T2A playing a role in referring service users to substance misuse services, as well as actively supporting their clients to use these specialist services. Emotional support and work on building emotional wellbeing helped some service users move away from substance dependency and misuse.

'My T2A worker made me realise, "What am I doing?" so thank you, really, to him, 'cos I wouldn't be sitting here today. That is the truth, that is, and he knows that himself. I think I have said, "Thank you," [and] but now, I don't need him, really, but I know he is always there to point me in the right direction and guide me that way, do you know what I mean?'

As with the support to those with mental health needs, T2A was often the ‘glue’ that brought services together – filling the gaps in support. There is also evidence in some cases that T2A was a critical source of support in helping end substance misuse and dependency through providing practical help.

Families and children

‘Me and my mum we spoke about it, and my T2A worker was there actually with us. They sort of mediated and it started to get a little bit heated but they were like, “No, no, just keep calm. There’s no need to get to that point where you’re in each other’s faces because that’s not gonna achieve anything”.

So really in the long term it has helped me and my mum out because now if we do get to a point of we’re gonna be shouting my mum will say, “Go!” or I will just walk off which is probably better in the long run than getting to the stage of being in a slanging match.’

There is ample evidence that T2A was working effectively with families. In many cases it was clear that through mediation work, T2A was helping service users and their families to communicate better, bringing them closer together. This work was a particular feature of the West Mercia pilot which is run by Youth Support Services (YSS).

Overall, the interviewees’ rating of the quality of their family relationships increased over the six month study period, which in some measure can be attributed to the impact of the T2A support.

The key element of family support seemed to be the time T2A workers were able to spend building up the trust of the service user and the family. This reflects the significance that the pilots gave to the relationship with parents in the transition to adulthood, which is a distinctive feature of the T2A approach.

The T2A model of work with families is different to traditional ‘family intervention’ because the clients are young adults on their way to independence. The work is therefore best characterised as family mediation rather than intervention: working with mutually supportive but increasingly independent parties.

T2A and the Probation Service

The key advantages that the T2A model provides in working with this age group are the time and flexibility of T2A workers, the fact that they do not have to enforce sentences and that the participation of the clients is voluntary. These factors allow T2A to engage with young adults in a way that would typically be difficult for Probation Services. The interviews show that these features allowed T2A workers to be more reliable and accessible than other services. The Birmingham pilot is run by the Probation Service. It ‘fills in the gaps’, providing the extra support that young adults need in order to desist from crime.

Conclusion

For every T2A client, the transition to adulthood was harder than for the average young adult. Whilst it could still be an exciting time, it was undoubtedly a time fraught with stress, confusion and even danger. There was a clear need for specific support for each interviewee to help them to get through the transition.

Whilst small in scale, this evaluation has provided good indicators that the T2A model provides effective support for young adults, helping them to desist from crime, improving the quality of life of service users and enhancing their emotional wellbeing and self-belief. It is clear that, for many young adults interviewed, the T2A workers were providing critical support on what was a complex journey: without them,

outcomes are likely to have been very different.

The promising nature of these findings indicates that a large scale study with a control group would be a justifiable investment as the next step in examining the degree to which the T2A approach can reduce reoffending rates for young adults.

Introduction

This evaluation examines the outcomes for young adults benefitting from a T2A approach through three pilot projects funded by the Barrow Cadbury Trust (BCT). This approach is a new way of working with 18 to 24-year-olds in the criminal justice system which takes into account their distinct developmental needs. It is part of a wider initiative funded by the Trust – the Transition to Adulthood Alliance (T2A) – which is campaigning on this issue.

The study provides a snapshot of how the pilots operated over a six month period. It offers indicators of success whilst also highlighting the main issues for young adults and the projects working with them.

The report begins by explaining why the project focused on young adults. It then states how the evaluation was carried out and presents the reconviction and reoffending data from each pilot. Five key factors associated with desistance are then explored in detail: education, training and employment; accommodation; health; drugs and alcohol; and families and children. The report concludes by looking at the advantages of the T2A approach, and its relationship with Probation Services.

Young adults

The T2A Alliance argues that the transition to adulthood is in a state of flux. The traditional markers of adulthood (such as leaving education, finding a job, living independently, or becoming a parent), are now happening later in people's lives than in recent generations. Research has also

shown that the adult brain is not fully developed until at least the mid-20s. In recognition of these changes young adulthood, spanning broadly the ages 16 to 24, needs to be seen as a distinct stage in life (Transition to Adulthood Alliance, 2009a).

Within this wider context, young adults with complex problems often have to negotiate multiple transitions between services and systems, and can easily fall between the gaps and lose the very support or intervention that might help them.

Young adults aged between 16 and 24 are also the group most likely to commit a criminal offence. But with the right intervention and support, they are also the group most likely to desist from offending and 'grow out of crime'. Paradoxically, during this period of high vulnerability youth services stop, and young people who have engaged with services have to change agencies.

The T2A approach recognises that young people require specific, tailored support through transition to adulthood, and not an arbitrary cut-off from services at the time of greatest need. The Alliance suggests that a young adult specific approach can be adopted throughout criminal justice processes (often within the existing legislative framework) to achieve more effective results.

The T2A approach is being piloted in three locations: Birmingham, West Mercia and

London. These are small projects which provide support for young adults coming out of custody or on community sentences. In order to support and learn about different aspects of the projects, the Barrow Cadbury Trust commissioned three evaluations of the T2A pilots:

- A *formative evaluation* conducted by Oxford Centre for Criminology (Burnett et al; 2010), which investigated the process of delivering the pilots in depth
- A *break-even analysis* by Matrix Evidence (Matrix; 2011), which examined the levels of reduction in reoffending required at each site in order to 'break-even' in terms of costs
- A *summative evaluation* (this study) which explores the *outcomes* for a sample of young adults using T2A support who were followed for six months.

The aim of this evaluation is to inform the work of policy makers and commissioners in the field of working with young adults in the criminal justice system. The formative evaluation investigated how the work of the pilots was distinctive: this evaluation explores what a young adult specific approach can achieve.

The analysis is predominantly qualitative. Each chapter explores the outcomes achieved for a sample of young adults at each pilot, taking into account the rich detail of their lives and the part played by the T2A workers. Quantitative data further helps illustrate the results achieved by the pilots.

Why young adults?

A distinct stage in life

Changes in society over the past 30 years or so have seen many young people in western countries taking longer to achieve social and economic independence,

leading academics to argue that adolescence as a life stage has extended past the late teens into the mid 20s (Chisholm; 1995), or that a new life stage has emerged (Arnett; 2004).

Sociologists have tended to understand adulthood in relation to the following main transitions: leaving school and having full-time work; leaving the parental home; having a life partner; and becoming a parent. Since the 1970s, these transitions have been happening later. In the UK, the average age of first marriage went up seven-and-a-half years between 1970 and 2008⁵ and half of 18 to 25-year-olds still rely on parents for the cost of living (T2A Alliance; 2009; Berrington et al; 2009).

These changes appear to stem from worldwide structural changes which have transformed the youth labour market, resulting in the emergence of high youth unemployment in the 1980s (Côté & Bynner; 2008). In response, UK governments have expanded the education system, with the 'staying on' rate doubling since 1970. The American developmental psychologist Arnett coined the term 'emerging adulthood' to describe what he saw as a new life stage, a period full of possibilities that provides individuals with the opportunity to shape their own identity. But others have downplayed this aspect, noting the limited economic power young adults have during this period, and their increased dependence on the support of parents (Côté & Bynner; 2008).

Certainly, some groups of young adults are particularly vulnerable in the new landscape. The BCT report *Lost in Transition* (2005) and the Social Exclusion Unit report *Transitions: Young Adults with Complex Needs* (SEU; 2005) were amongst the first policy documents to draw attention to the implications of these changes for young adults without a safety net.

The BCT and SEU reports highlighted the increasing significance of long term education and the corresponding dependence on parents, which has led to a polarisation between those young adults on the 'slow track' or 'fast track' to adulthood (SEU; 2005). Those on the slow track remain in education and are dependent on parents for longer, and usually have a more successful transition to adulthood. The young people on the fast track to adulthood, such as young parents and those who leave education early, have a more uncertain future. A recent Joseph Rowntree Foundation report found that over half of all 16 to 24-year-olds in poverty do not live with their parents (JRF; 2011). As the Alliance put it:

'Taken as a whole, the availability of finances and support structures, along with family, individual and community aspirations and experiences of what is possible, all help to propel young adults along different routes to adulthood.' (T2A; 2009, p17)

In the current economic climate, with youth unemployment at 22 per cent, this polarisation is even starker now than in 2005. The Wolf review of vocational education is critical of the system, arguing that in the current context of a vanishing youth labour market and an increasing emphasis on the value of education, vocational options do not always leave young adults sufficiently equipped to move into employment (Wolf; 2011). Today, a young adult leaving education early is likely to face long stretches of unemployment – drifting in and out of low paid work.

Young adults who are vulnerable because of involvement in the criminal justice system, mental health needs, learning disabilities, homelessness or substance misuse are disadvantaged in a society where they are recognised neither as a child nor an adult. They are in an even more difficult position if their parents are unable

or unwilling to provide material and emotional support. This group has been described as 'the invisible early 20s' by the Social Exclusion Unit, which argued that many will simply fall through the gaps and end up in the criminal justice system (SEU; 2005).

Transitional support for young adults

The Revolving Doors Agency highlighted the problems created for young adults in the transition between children's and adult services (Revolving Doors Agency; 2010). More often than not, the switch between services will lead to a change of key professionals, disrupting relationships which have built up over time. In addition, adult services tend to have a very different culture than those for children, with a less holistic approach and greater emphasis on the responsibility of the service user. The transition can leave 16 and 17-year-olds in limbo between services which may simply be curtailed at age 18. Young adults leaving care are particularly affected by the transition. Although the Children (Leaving Care) Act of 2000 made social services responsible for assisting care leavers in the transition to independent living beyond the age of 16, the quality of this support is variable.

Young adults in the criminal justice system

Young adults are overrepresented in the criminal justice system. Whilst they make up 10 per cent of the population as a whole, they represent a third of the prison population and probation case load. The majority of young adults who become involved in the criminal justice system have acute and complex needs. Over 90 per cent of imprisoned young offenders demonstrated at least one (or a combination) of the following: personality disorder, psychosis, neurotic disorder, or substance misuse (SEU; 2005, p.28). An

analysis of 18 to 21-year-old young men in custody by the Howard League for Penal Reform (Howard League; 2006) found that:

- 76 per cent of those interviewed had problems with substance misuse
- 43 per cent experienced mental ill health
- 40 per cent had low educational achievement
- 54 per cent had been unemployed
- 20 per cent had been homeless and
- 24 per cent had been in the care system.

There is an established link between homelessness and offending, with one in three prisoners not having stable accommodation prior to imprisonment, and young adults in general vulnerable to homelessness (see Devitt et al; 2009). Young adults often receive short sentences, and there is evidence that these 'short-sentenced' offenders are two to three times more likely to reoffend if they do not have suitable housing.

Young adult offenders have well-documented characteristics that make them particularly vulnerable. In 2004/5 over half of those leaving young offender institutions (YOIs) had no recorded education, training or employment place, and 13 per cent left custody with no accommodation⁶. The reoffending rates for young adults in the criminal justice system are high, with 46 per cent of young adults being reconvicted within a year of offending, and 58 per cent of young adults sentenced to custody reoffending within a year of release.⁷

This age group has been described as the 'lost generation' by Dame Anne Owers, the

former chief inspector of prisons and former Chair of the T2A Alliance (2011-12).⁸ In her final report (HM Chief Inspector of Prisons; Annual Report 2008-9) Dame Anne summarised the position:

'Overall, this is still a neglected and under-resourced age group. Busy and overcrowded local prisons struggle to deal with their specific needs, and even specialist young offender institutions lack the resources, support and training to do so. The high rate of reoffending among young adult men is unlikely to reduce without significant changes in approach, funding and focus.'

More recently this age group has been noted as a particular concern by the Prisons and Probation Minister Crispin Blunt MP. He notes the huge cost incurred by failing young adults:

'We need to ensure that, given the colossal cost of failing to turn this particular age group around [young adults], we find ways to get interventions and investment into it, which will then deliver savings to the Ministry of Justice, because of the huge advantage of getting these people better and making them pro-social members of society.' Prisons and Probation Minister Crispin Blunt MP, House of Commons, 13 October 2011.

The Howard League for Penal Reform argues that the 'safety net' for young adults in the criminal justice system is not functioning. The League's report *Young Adult and No Support* drew on its experience of work with young people in custody who need help with potential legal problems and noted that, whilst there are statutory duties and guidance entitling young adults to suitable accommodation and support, there is a national failure to meet these needs (Howard League: 2010).

6 Hansard, House of Commons written answers, 2 October 2006, col. 2664W

7 MOJ Reoffending Bulletin 2011

8 Dame Anne Owers, quoted by the Barrow Cadbury Trust, Snapshot on Young Adults in the Criminal Justice System, (2006)

Criminal justice response

The Alliance argues that the current criminal justice response to young adults not only leaves needs unmet, but also reinforces their engagement in offending. In their *Young Adult Manifesto* the Alliance argues that:

'At this key stage of life, many of our criminal justice policies do unnecessary damage to young adult offenders, making them more, not less, likely to reoffend. They make it harder for young adults to lead crime free lives and to adopt some of the very things that would help them to mature such as education, employment, housing, stable relationships and family support.'
(T2A Alliance; 2009, p.11)

Desistance researchers have long known of the existence of an age-crime curve, irrespective of gender and population type, in which offending peaks towards the middle to late teens and declines steeply at first and then more gradually into the mid to late 20s (Farrington; 1986; Gottfredson and Hirshi; 1986 & 1990). Much criminological research focuses on the factors leading to desistance from crime and how to support this age-related process. Many of the key factors that contribute to this process are those which characterise the transition to adulthood, such as maturity and personal development, employment, starting a family, and the development of social investment and a new sense of identity (Mulvey et al; 2004; Bottoms and Shapland; 2011).

The work of the T2A Alliance is based on the premise that the current criminal justice response to young adults does not take account of the natural process of desistance. In England and Wales, as in most Western countries, all those over the age of 18 are regarded as adults and sentenced accordingly in the courts. Criminal justice responses become more punitive and there is no longer an assumption of using custody as a last

resort as there is for young offenders. Consequently, the Alliance argues:

'Young adults caught up in the criminal justice system spend their 'age of possibilities' with very limited options and even more limited support. At an age when young people develop their identity, their aspirations and their ambitions in life, young adults in the criminal justice system are immersed in a culture and a community of offending, cut off from the opportunities that could help them move on (T2A; 2009).'

From this perspective, the solutions to reducing reoffending for young adults frequently lie outside the criminal justice system itself, and instead are about supporting the development of the human and social capital needed to create a new, crime free identity.

The Alliance argues that criminal justice responses to this age group would be more effective if there was diversion for young adults at risk, along with reduced use of custody and improved community sentences. The Alliance argues for 'problem-solving sentencing' which takes the variable maturity of young adults into account. A review of international research on maturity by the University of Birmingham, commissioned by BCT, found significant neuroscientific and psychological research indicating that young adults are still maturing into their mid to late 20s (Prior et al: 2011):

'There is strong evidence that, from a neurological perspective, the human brain is not fully developed in its capacity for cognitive functioning and emotional regulation until well into the period of young adulthood. From a psychological perspective, evidence shows that psychosocial capacities and moral reasoning abilities vary considerably between individuals in the young adult age group, so that some remain immature longer than others, including after the legal age of adulthood.'

The report concludes that an arbitrary age limit as the key factor determining the criminal justice response to a young adult goes against the grain of current research in the field of maturity, and that the level of maturity displayed should be considered in the sentencing process. The Sentencing Council for England and Wales has since followed this lead, and definitive guidelines for drug offences, assault, and burglary require that 'age and/or lack of maturity where it affects the responsibility of the offender' are taken into account as one of the factors 'reducing seriousness or reflecting personal mitigation' (Sentencing Council; 2012; 2011a; 2011b).

The Alliance also recognises the weaknesses in resettlement support and community responses for young adult offenders, given that reoffending rates for young adults are higher than any other adult age group, and argues that the resettlement process must support the natural process of desistance through more intense provision – an approach that was put into practice through the T2A pilots.

The T2A pilots

The T2A approach in practice

The 2005 *Lost in Transition* report recommended 'Transition to Adulthood (T2A) teams' which would bridge the gap between services for young adults in the criminal justice system. These T2A teams undertake the practical work of the Alliance, and illustrate the T2A approach in action.

The pilots were set up in 2009 as three slightly different models of working with young adults; two were in urban areas and one in a rural area. Two were based in the voluntary and community sector and one in a statutory service. One employs qualified ex-offenders, while the other two employ

youth justice or probation staff. In the past three years they have begun to establish themselves and evolve varied local approaches to transitional support for young adults in response to local needs.

Although the pilots share a core model of working with young adults coming out of custody or on community sentences, each is also distinctive. The pilots are described in turn below, including their original objectives and how they have developed.

London T2A

Run by St Giles Trust, this service is based in the SOS project in Southwark and Croydon, mainly working with young adults 'through the gate', both inside and after release from prison. The service is delivered by ex-offenders and focuses on persistent and prolific offenders, particularly those involved in gang crime. Case loads tend to be around 20 young adults, and there is a policy of never closing cases. If a young adult needs the project's support they can get back in touch at any time, so there are numerous inactive cases on the project's books.

The pilot provides intensive support including help with housing, accessing training and employment, as well as emotional support with issues such as relationships, behaviour, self esteem and self-perception. One of the distinctive features of the London pilot is the offer of the level three NVQ in Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG). This qualification allows clients of the service to become volunteers, helping others and gaining a qualification which they can take forward when applying for jobs.

The Oxford Centre for Criminology's formative evaluation (Burnett et al, 2009) reported the project's objectives as to:

- Support the Probation Service in Southwark and Croydon to consider

different models of working, specifically creating specialist offender manager posts who will work exclusively with young adults

- Work closely with Probation to support young adults leaving Rochester YOI who are returning to Croydon and Southwark, providing holistic support to address issues likely to lead to reoffending, such as housing, income, ETE, gang or other criminal affiliations and family relationships
- Deliver this support using a mixed team of paid staff and volunteer peer advisers, demonstrating the value of this model
- Support ex-offenders to gain NVQ 3 in IAG and progress through voluntary work into paid work.⁹

The pilot's strategic goals are to:

- Influence practice and policy relating to the treatment of young adults in the criminal justice system
- Establish a model of good practice capable of replication in other parts of London and the UK
- Provide evidence on issues relating to T2A that can be used by BCT in promotion of their general policy on young people
- Provide opportunities for service users/young people/offenders to contribute to the development of policy/practice so that sustainable changes can be achieved in the provision of services
- Promote more positive perspectives of vulnerable young people that reduce stigmatisation and promote the concept of young people in need
- Create long term opportunities for a more strategic approach to the needs of

young people, involving the statutory, voluntary and independent sectors

- Clarify the role of mentors involved with young people.¹⁰

Croydon Probation makes direct referrals to the service, and the local Youth Offending Team (YOT) has invited the T2A teams to work alongside their key workers on some cases. The T2A teams have also built up good relationships with the local Police, who refer young adults directly to the T2A teams.

After three years, the London pilot has developed most of these objectives. Specifically, it supported Croydon to develop specialised posts for young adults as well as broadening their referrals to work directly with Probation, the YOT and the Police. It has developed a mixture of paid and voluntary staff and has put many young adults through the level three NVQ in Information Advice and Guidance, some of whom have now found employment.

The service has now expanded geographically, into new areas of Kensington and Chelsea, where it works predominantly with Young Prolific and Priority Offenders and also into Greenwich and Ealing where it works closely with the Serious Youth Violence Panel, with a cohort that tends to be under the age of 18.

West Mercia T2A

The West Mercia pilot is run by the charity Youth Support Services (YSS). This service receives referrals primarily from Probation and the Youth Offending Team and works predominantly with young adult offenders on community sentences with high community needs. Clients tend to be younger than at the other pilots, ranging from age 17 to 25, and they focus on

9 London T2A Project Proposal.

10 Ibid.

vulnerable groups such as female offenders. Case loads are between eight and twelve cases, and typically involve four months' intensive support plus another four months of less intensive support.

The pilot offers a one-to-one support and mentoring service, using a mixture of paid staff and local volunteers. Support workers provide intensive community-based support, often working with families and brokering access to services supporting housing, substance misuse, and education, training and employment. Each young person develops their own action plan with smart objectives, and support is flexible according to the needs of the young adult.

The formative evaluation outlined the project's planned outcomes and outputs as:

- A well established multi-agency advisory group to influence and change local policy/practice
- Evidence of policy and practice changed at both a local strategic and operational level with a particular emphasis on Probation and YOS
- A clearly defined West Mercia T2A strategy post BCT funding
- Fully developed T2A referral, assessment and case management systems
- Service user toolkit for T2A teams, Probation and YOS
- Police Engagement Forum best practice
- T2A staff training programme and guidance materials
- T2A Probation/YOS staff training programme and guidance materials
- Range of statistical data recorded and evidenced
- Lower rates for breach within the target group.¹¹

West Mercia T2A has established a multi-agency T2A steering group with senior management representation from across the criminal justice system, and the T2A pilot encourages regular discourse between the West Mercia Probation Trust and the Youth Offending Team. Key workers are regular visitors at team meetings and will often meet up to discuss T2A referrals.

After three years YSS has developed the service, with workers now in Telford, Herefordshire, Shropshire and the whole of West Mercia. They have also secured funding from Lloyds TSB to focus on supporting young people in the transition from the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) to the Adult Mental Health Service (AMHS). With a partner organisation, the pilot works with young adults and also raises awareness of mental health issues for this age group locally.

Looking forward, the pilot will be affected by the merger of Youth Offending Teams (YOT) in West Mercia, and by the fact that the relationship between Probation and the YOT is likely to change, which will affect the transition for young adults. However, this gives the pilot the opportunity to advocate for strategic changes which recognise young adults as a distinct group. The pilot is also looking to develop the T2A Alliance's work on maturity further by creating an assessment tool.

Birmingham T2A

Unlike the other pilots which are run within voluntary and community sector organisations, the Birmingham pilot is managed and delivered by the Staffordshire and West Midlands Probation Trust. It is aimed at young adults with a medium risk of reoffending. Referrals all come through the Probation Trust. Case loads tend to be around 15 to 20, and the

11 Taken from West Mercia T2A project proposal

length of supervision is 12 weeks, although in practice it is often longer.

Since this pilot is based in a statutory service it was essential for them to make relationships with the voluntary and community sector (VCS) as the work developed. The pilot provides tailored help with accommodation, education and training and substance misuse, using relationships with VCS organisations to tailor the support offer from other services.

The pilot had the following four aims when the formative evaluation was written:

- Motivate selected participants to become confident citizens
- Effectively work in partnership to support participants to complete their planned actions
- Adopt a structured process and project management approach to managing the quality of the work to reduce reoffending
- Develop an approach that ensures all participants complete their planned objectives consistent with their sentences.¹²

After three years, the Birmingham pilot has now established and developed each aspect of its model, with some developments since the formative evaluation. The pilot now supports the transition between the Youth Offending Service (YOS) and Probation Trust for every young adult in the Birmingham area, managing the administrative transfer of paperwork and ensuring that the Probation Service receives complete information on every young adult. It also organises joint meetings between T2A, Probation and the Youth Offending Team – even for young adults who do not receive one-on-one support from T2A. This support bridges the gap between the services and irons out issues arising from a lack of information

sharing and limited contact between services.

The pilot has developed its partnership work with the VCS significantly in the past few years and has initiated group work programmes in partnership with VCS organisations for young adults on T2A and in Probation as a whole. It has also embarked on ambitious projects such as a five-day residential programme with Tall Ships Adventures, a sailing project which provided the young adults with sailing qualifications.

The formative evaluation of the pilots emphasised the pilots' dual function in working directly with young adults on practical and strategic levels – modelling for statutory services and other partner organisations how to work with young adults, and acting as a 'torchbearer' for the needs of this group (Burnett et al; 2010).

The Oxford team characterises the T2A model of working with young adults as holistic, contrasting this with the current risk-focused statutory practice typical of criminal justice interventions today. As they put it:

'While there is detailed attention given to the specific issues presented by the service-user, and the importance of working with other services to address those needs is stressed, it is the person as a whole and their plans in the round which are important, unrestricted by the 'tunnel vision' that might result from services focused on particular outcomes.' (Burnett et al: 2010).

The Oxford report highlights best practice across the four focal points of 'diversion', 'sentencing', 'custody' and 'resettlement' identified by the Alliance as the areas where provision of young adult services should be channelled. There were plans in West Mercia and Birmingham for

12 Information from Power-Point presentation at the Birmingham T2A Launch.

prevention work involving engagement with young adults at pre-court disposal. Both these pilots were involved to some extent in court work, influencing sentencing decisions by increasing magistrates' awareness of the additional needs of young adults. London T2A also benefitted from the 'Through the Gate' St Giles project which bridged the gap between prison and resettlement into the community.

On a more strategic level, one of the starting points for the T2A initiative was creating a more unified criminal justice service for young adults, bridging the gap between youth and adult systems and bringing together statutory and voluntary sector services. The Oxford report draws this out, highlighting the work being done on the ground in each pilot to achieve this aim.

What works and how?

The Oxford report sums up the practical work with service users, alongside the more strategic work of the pilots, as together forming 'the provision of a local inter-agency system for guiding young adults into better lives' (Burnett et al, 2010) – a model that is 'goal-based' and rooted in a 'person-centred' approach.

The work of all three pilots work was identified as offering 'good value for money' by Matrix Evidence in its break-even analysis (Matrix; 2011, p.8).

The Oxford team employed a participatory, theory-oriented approach to identify implicit theories or reasoned arguments that explain why the T2A interventions 'work', or are expected to work. Drawing also upon the wider evidence base of rehabilitation and desistance research, they identified seven key precepts (Burnett et al, 2010):

- Formation of a working alliance based on mutual respect and agreed goals, which increases self-worth of service

users and motivates them to remain engaged

- Use of strengths-based principles emphasising what a service user can achieve rather than focusing on weaknesses or mistakes, motivating engagement and readiness to change
- An action plan determined by the client, encouraging co-operation because what is required of them is what they want anyway, respecting and promoting the agency of the service user in making changes
- The development of a respectful, empathetic relationship so there is a readiness to work together
- A client-led model of work, giving the service user a taste for being in control and thereby building up self-efficacy
- Connecting service users to material resources and opportunities, promoting changes in self-concept and identity
- Through referring and connecting the service users to the material resources and social opportunities they need to 'get on' in life, their sense of self-efficacy and agency is sustained.

The formative evaluation recognised that these features had been marshalled into a casework approach that is 'highly attuned to the transitional needs of young adults' (Burnett et al, 2010, p.94):

'Each of the T2As have applied a model of working with young adults which provides holistic support, rather than being focused on offending, and which is geared to their immaturity and need for guidance through crossroads of experience which are new to them.'
(Burnett et al; 2010, p.27)

This summative evaluation takes into account the young adult focus and the seven key precepts identified by the formative evaluation in the assessment of

the effectiveness of the T2A approach in reducing reoffending.

The T2A approach three years on

Three years on, the 'goal-based' and 'person-centred' approach identified by the Oxford team as at the heart of T2A provision is still the basis of the work of the pilots. In the interviews for this evaluation, the seven key precepts as to why the pilots work came up repeatedly as key factors behind current effective practice:

- The 'working alliance' and a 'respectful empathetic relationship' between the service user and the T2A worker: This evaluation found that these two factors remained essential to the current work of the pilots in both engaging with service users and their families, and in improving the clients' emotional wellbeing
- The client-focused and client-led model: This person-centred approach was one of the main contrasts between Probation Services and T2A provision. It seemed to allow T2A to engage with young adults in way that was difficult for Probation. It also enabled the T2A work to dovetail well with the probation supervision, as an added extra
- Promoting changes in self-concept and identity through access to material resources: The education, training and employment and housing outcomes in this evaluation showcase the connection highlighted in the Oxford report. Service users who received practical help and opportunities were generally more confident and stable at the second stage of interviews
- The use of 'strengths-based' principles: This approach was most apparent in the support provided in relation to emotional wellbeing, mental health and substance misuse. Service users frequently explained that the positive attitude of their T2A worker, with a

focus on what they were capable of achieving, increased their confidence and self-belief.

Methodology of the evaluation

The summative evaluation examines the effectiveness of the pilots both qualitatively and quantitatively. It explores both the type of support provided by T2A workers and the effect on the lives of the young adults who are receiving this support. The qualitative analysis provides rich detail of the journey of service users over six months of T2A support. In addition, we have collected quantitative information on a number of outcomes which aggregate the effect of T2A support in each area.

The key research questions were:

- Are young adults provided with dedicated T2A services less likely to reoffend than young adults who do not have access to this support?
- Does a dedicated T2A approach impact on young adults' access to employment, training or education?
- Does a dedicated T2A approach impact on overall quality of and satisfaction with life?

To answer these questions, the evaluation had to take into account the key factors linked to desistance from crime alongside the main areas of work of the three pilots. The National Offender Management Service (NOMS) defines seven 'pathways' to reducing reoffending based on the current research on factors linked to desistance. These pathways are: education, training and employment; accommodation; drugs and alcohol; health; finance, benefit and debt; children and families; and attitudes, thinking and behaviour. The Birmingham and West Mercia pilots both base their work around these pathways so the key

desistance outcomes assessed were an adapted version of the pathways, designed to best reflect the work of all three pilots:

- education, training and employment
- accommodation
- drugs and alcohol
- health
- children and families.

The evaluation had a longitudinal design to provide a detailed picture of what happened to the service users over a six month period. This entailed interviewing a group towards the beginning of their engagement with T2A and then again six months later. A group of young adults who were on probation but did not have T2A support were also interviewed. This group provided information on how T2A support differs from probation support, and although not providing a comparison of outcomes, nonetheless illustrated how T2A provides added value to probation supervision.

The first stage of interviews had a sample of 36 young adults, 15 from the London pilot, 10 from the Birmingham T2A pilot and 11 from the West Mercia pilot. The numbers reflect the majority of new starters on the pilot programme within a one month period. In each pilot, the sample represented a substantial proportion of the caseload at that time. On average, participants were interviewed eight weeks after their first meeting with a T2A worker. Each interviewee was selected by the T2A project, but choice was constrained by the need to select clients who were at the beginning of their engagement with T2A. Participation in the interviews was also voluntary, which introduces the possibility of a slight bias in favour of the projects.

At the second stage it was possible to follow up with key data on 95 per cent of the interviewees, and to carry out full qualitative interviews with 27 of the 36 interviewees. There were only two

interviewees for whom it was not possible to collect data at the second interview stage – both had lost contact with their pilot.

The comparison group consisted of 10 young adults on probation supervision in Birmingham, drawn from a number of different Probation offices around the city. These interviewees (aged 18 to 24) were randomly selected from those who had been on probation supervision for at least six months and were prepared to be interviewed. In addition, the T2A Service Manager and a T2A worker at the Birmingham pilot were interviewed to provide an expert view on the differences between T2A and Probation and how the services worked together.

Background of the sample

Table 1 sets out the composition of the sample as a whole, and within each of the pilots. The sample offers a picture of the make up of each pilot rather than being representative of the young adult offender population as a whole. It also reflects an attempt to engage the most vulnerable, diverse and 'hard to reach'. For example the proportion of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) young adults, and the proportion of women, are higher than in the population of young adult offenders as a whole. The sample could be said to represent those most in need, and ready to accept help, during the transition to adulthood.

The composition of the sample in each pilot varied considerably: over half those in West Mercia were female, and all those interviewed in London were male. The ethnic make up of each sample varies according to area, as Croydon, Camberwell and Southwark have a higher minority ethnic population than West Mercia. However, in Birmingham and London the proportion of minority ethnic young adults in the sample was greater than within the local area, or within the criminal justice system as a whole.

Table 1: The composition of the sample*

		Total	London	West Mercia	Birmingham
Sample size		36	15	11	10
Average age		20 y (Median 20)	20y 1m (Median 21)	19y 8m (Median 19)	20y 4m (Median 20)
Gender	M	29 (81%)	15 (100%)	5 (45%)	9 (90%)
	F	7 (19%)	0 (0%)	6 (55%)	1 (10%)
Ethnicity	White	21 (58%)	4 (27%)	10 (91%)	7 (70%)
	BME	15 (42%)	11 (73%)	1 (9%)	3 (30%)
Referral	Probation/ YOT	25 (69%)	7(47%)	10 (100%)	8 (80%)
	Prison	4 (11%)	2 (13%)	0 (0%)	1 (10%)
	Self referral	4 (11%)	4 (27%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
	Other	2 (6%)	2 (13%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
	Court	1 (3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (10%)

The study collected key data from the interviewees on education, training and employment background; accommodation status and type and mental health and substance misuse needs; plus information on the quality of family relationships. This data provides some quantitative background for assessing progress along the key pathways to reducing reoffending.

The table below lists the key reason given by each of those interviewed for why they were engaging with the T2A pilot.

Overall, employment, training and education and housing came out as the key reasons the young adults interviewed wanted to engage with T2A.

Accommodation support was the most frequent reason given in London and West Mercia, but this did not come up at all in Birmingham where many of the interviewees lived with family.

Other characteristics of the sample are covered in later chapters.

Table 2: Reasons why interviewees were engaging with T2A*

Why they wanted to engage	Total	London	West Mercia	Birmingham
Housing	14 (39%)	8 (53%)	6 (55%)	0 (0%)
Employment, training, education	15 (42%)	7 (47%)	1 (9%)	7 (70%)
Offending behaviour	1 (3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (10%)
Finances	2 (6%)	0 (0%)	2 (18%)	0 (0%)
Mental health	2 (6%)	0 (0%)	1 (9%)	1 (10%)
Alcohol/drugs	2 (6%)	0 (0%)	1 (9%)	1 (10%)

* Percentages exceed 100% due to roundings.

Reducing reoffending

Examining how effective the pilots were in reducing reoffending

This chapter outlines the offending background of the young adults in the sample for each pilot. It then looks at the reconvictions and reoffending within a six month period, and concludes with the interviewees' self-reported explanations as to why they were able to desist from offending.

Offending background

The table below sets out the general offending background of the cohort, summarising the key data from their current and past sentences, including how long they had been offending.

Ministry of Justice data for 2010¹³ tells us that 131,433 young adults (aged 18-20) were sentenced in the courts. Of these, 13,224 (10 per cent) were sentenced to immediate custody; 24,718 (18 per cent) were given community sentences; 5,453 (4 per cent) were given suspended sentences; and 69,974 (53 per cent) were fined. Although this is only part of our age cohort, it gives an idea of the proportion of young adults that receive custodial sentences compared with other disposals. Our cohort includes a significantly higher proportion of young adults coming out of custodial sentences, and a higher proportion on community sentences.

Overall, 25 (69 per cent) of the young adults in the sample had community sentences, and 10 (28 per cent) had just left custody. One person had received a final warning

Table 3: General offending background of the cohort

		Total	London	West Mercia	Birmingham
Sentence	Community	18 (50%)	4 (27%)	9 (82%)	5 (50%)
	Suspended sentence	7 (19%)	2 (13%)	2 (18%)	3 (30%)
	Custody	10 (28%)	8 (53%)	0 (0%)	2 (20%)
Final warning		1 (3%)	1 (7%)	3 (27%)	3 (30%)
Past custodial sentence(s)		16 (44%)	10 (67%)	3 (27%)	3 (30%)
First conviction		9 (25%)	3 (30%)	3 (27%)	3 (30%)
Average age when first offended		13y 7m	12y 5m	14y 7m	14y 5m

13 <http://www.justice.gov.uk/downloads/statistics/criminal-justice-stats/sentencing-tables.xls>

but had no past convictions. It was the first conviction for 9 (25 per cent) of the young adults, and 26 (72 per cent) had a history of involvement in the criminal justice system. For some interviewees, their first conviction was the consequence of increasing, previously undetected, offending. However, for others, it was a one-off, the first offence they had ever committed. On average the young adults interviewed had committed their first offence at the age of 13.

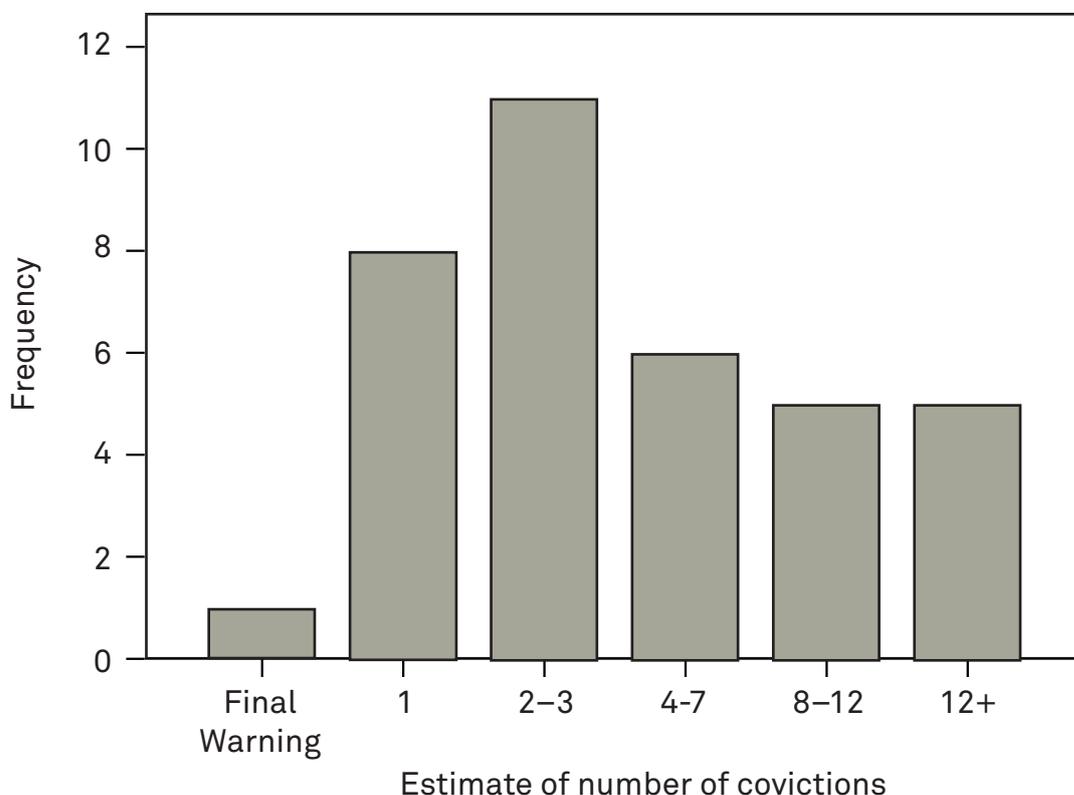
Chart 1 shows that the most common number of convictions the interviewees had was two to three. In addition, 16 of the 36 interviewees (44 per cent) had previously spent some time in the secure estate. This is relevant when looking at reoffending rates, because national reoffending rates double for those with ten

or more convictions compared to those with three to six convictions.¹⁴

National reoffending rates are associated with several factors, notably:

- Custody: Custodial sentences in general, and short custodial sentences in particular, are associated with higher rates of reoffending. In this sample, the proportion of those coming out of custodial sentences is higher than in the national young adult cohort, and there were no young adults who had received a fine, which could have the effect of pushing up the reoffending rate
- The number of previous convictions: The reoffending rate goes up with each previous conviction, especially after each custodial sentence. National data is not broken down for the young adult cohort

Chart 1: Number and frequency of convictions of the sample



14 MOJ reoffending bulletin 2011

■ The type of previous conviction: Those convicted for burglary and theft-related offences tend to have higher rates of reoffending than other convictions. For this age group (18 to 20-year-olds), national statistics only break down indictable offences by conviction type. Within these offences, theft and handling stolen goods tends to be the most common offence, followed by drug offences and then violence against the person¹⁵. In this sample, violent offences were the most common, followed by theft and burglary.

Table 4 presents the data on the last conviction of everyone in the sample, indicating the range of the different offences.

Violence against the person was the most frequent last conviction – 31 per cent of all convictions. Robbery accounted for 19 per cent of convictions and theft for 11 per cent.

However, gender is a factor here as the majority of women were convicted for

violent offences. Convictions for men were more evenly dispersed, with violence against the person and robbery both accounting for a quarter of convictions.

Chart 2 illustrates the last convictions of the sample in each pilot, showing the proportion of community and custodial sentences.

All the pilots described the risk of reoffending for their overall intake as medium to high. However, there was clear variation between the pilots.

■ In **London** only three of the 15 interviewees were on their first conviction; and the age of first offence was 12 years and five months compared with around 14 years at the other two pilots. The profile of London T2A clients is illustrated by the fact that 10 out of the 15 interviewees had spent time in the secure estate in the past

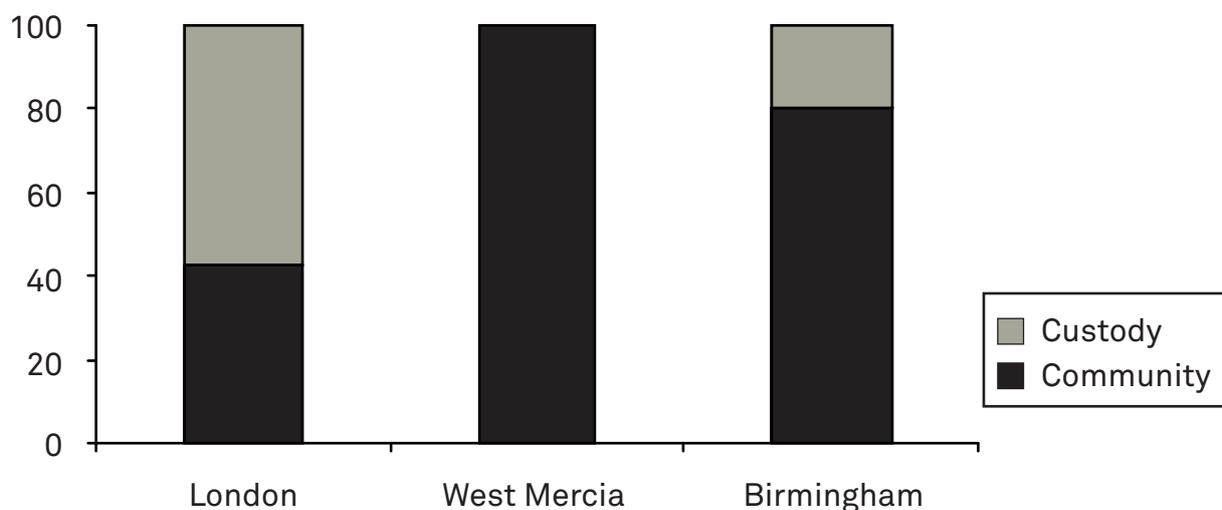
■ The intake at **Birmingham** T2A was medium risk, with two interviewees having been referred after custodial

Table 4: Data on the last conviction of the members of the sample

Type of conviction	Total	London	West Mercia	Birmingham
Violence against the person	11 (31%)	4 (27%)	3 (27%)	4 (40%)
Sexual offences	1 (3%)	0 (0%)	1 (9%)	0 (0%)
Robbery	7 (19%)	4 (27%)	0 (0%)	3 (30%)
Burglary	4 (11%)	1 (7%)	3 (27%)	0 (0%)
Theft and handling	4 (11%)	1 (7%)	1 (9%)	2 (20%)
Drug offences	3 (8%)	2 (13%)	1 (9%)	0 (0%)
Breach	1 (3%)	1 (7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Affray	1 (3%)	1 (7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Criminal damage	1 (3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (10%)
Other offences	3 (8%)	1 (7%)	2 (18%)	0 (0%)
Total	36 (100%)	15 (100%)	11 (100%)	10 (100%)

15 <http://www.justice.gov.uk/downloads/statistics/criminal-justice-stats/conviction-tables.xls>

Chart 2: The last convictions of the sample in each pilot



sentences. Three people were on their first conviction, and less than a third had spent time in the secure estate in the past. However, at least three of the interviewees had been referred to T2A as an alternative to a sentence, and possibly a custodial sentence

- The offending background of **West Mercia** T2A interviewees was on average less extensive than at the other two pilots. Three of the eleven interviewees had previously spent time in the secure estate, which was nearly a third less than at the other pilots. The age of first offence was the highest at 14 years and 7 months. However, only three were on their first conviction, so the majority had some kind of offending background.

Reconviction outcomes

The study was able to follow up 34 of 36 interviewees after the six month interval and the table below shows the reconviction data for the group.

Reconviction rates following contact with T2A

Overall, three of 34 interviewees were reconvicted in the six month study period, a nine per cent reconviction rate. This compares to a national (one-year) reconviction rate for 18 to 20- year-olds of 46 per cent,¹⁶ rising to 58 per cent¹⁷ for young adults leaving custody.

Table 5: Reconviction data for the interviewees

	Total	London	West Mercia	Birmingham
Reconvictions	3 (9%)	3 (23%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Breaches	3 (9%)	1 (8%)	0 (0%)	2 (20%)
Total interviewed	34	13	11	10

¹⁶ MOJ reoffending bulletin 2011

¹⁷ 248 Hansard HC, 17 January 2011, c653W

Breach

Three of 34 interviewees breached their sentence – two received a custodial sentence and one an extension to the time in which they were ‘tagged’. For one this was a case of missing probation appointments and being electronically monitored for an extended amount of time. For another it was a case of making a decision not to undertake community service (because prison was ‘easier’) and receiving a short custodial sentence.

Severity

None of the reconvictions were for the most severe offences.¹⁸ This is consistent with the national severity rate for 18 to 24-year-olds, which is 1.1 to 1.7 severe offences per 100 offenders.¹⁹

Frequency

Of the three people who were reconvicted, each had one reconviction. This rate is significantly better than national figures for 18 to 24-year-olds, given that in 2009 there were between 3.3 and 3.4 reconvictions per reoffender, although the latter figure relates to a complete year rather than six months as in this study.²⁰

Reoffending and confidence in desistance

The study also investigated self-reported reoffending. Six further young adults self-reported an offence that had not come to police attention during the six month period. Confidence in not reoffending shows a good improvement over the course of the pilot. Taking into account only those who were interviewed at both stages (27 people), those who said they were ‘very confident’ that they would not reoffend rose from 13 at stage one to 18 at the second stage.

Self-reported understanding of desistance

The remainder of this chapter focuses on the interviewees’ own explanations at the second interview as to why they thought they had not reoffended. Five main themes emerged:

- peers
- drugs and alcohol
- children
- coming out of prison
- being occupied.

Peers

The most frequent reason people gave for not reoffending was that they were no longer in the same peer group and therefore were not being influenced by others to commit crime. This came up in all three pilots to some extent and has been highlighted in desistance literature as ‘knifing off’ (Maruna et al; 2007). Many of the interviewees from the London pilot explained the need to disassociate from street gangs, and also from small peer groups.

‘Knifing off’ was achieved in different ways. For some people it meant finding new accommodation, for others it was just about the willpower to say ‘no’ when asked if they wanted to be involved in something illegal. For some it was a case of getting a job and finding a routine which prevented them having too much time on their hands.

‘Since I’ve grown up I’ve realised that everything I’ve done in the past is based on peer pressure. People that I hang around with – everyone wants to do what everyone is doing. But now I’ve realised that’s not what you have to do in life. So now I’ve got away from all that, stopped hanging around

18 As defined by MOJ reoffending classification

19 MOJ reoffending bulletin 2011

20 MOJ reoffending bulletin 2011

with the people I used to. Before that I didn't have anything to do, see a friend, he's like, "Come with me" – 'cos I ain't got nothing to do. But now I've got things that I do everyday, planning, looking for a job, doing things that is going to benefit me, now I'm doing positive things.'

(T2A client, London)

For those in the London T2A pilot serious youth violence was pervasive, and those interviewed had experienced victimisation as well as being perpetrators. A large proportion had been victims of knife and gun crime which raised the stakes in relation to desistance because their life as well as their freedom was at stake.

Lloyd, 21, London

Having come to the UK as an unaccompanied asylum seeker at a young age Lloyd became heavily involved in gangs. He had been both a victim and a perpetrator of serious violence and had a number of jail sentences already at the age of 21. At the first interview stage he had just come out of custody and was committed to changing his life:

'I've got a lot to lose, I probably have more to lose than my friends. I've done my time in jail, sitting in prison, in the detention centre. Made me think a lot about where do I see myself in 5 years time, how my life's going to end up turning up, so if I don't stop what I used to do, and getting involved with gangs' activity and that. I feel that I would probably be killed within a few years, or I would be in jail for killing someone or for doing something bad like that. So that's what I'm trying to avoid.'

By the second interview stage he had been out of trouble for six months and had moved away from many of the people he used to know:

'And now, are you still friends with people you were friends with before?'

'Not friends in the same way, there's people I see on the streets, they ask me how I'm doing... Since I've been out, people have tried to speak to me to get me, but I haven't, that's the way I want to keep it...'

I used to have hundreds of friends, now I don't have so much friends, but I know a lot of people. I've got a handful of friends, some of them are working, some of them play football, and things like that.'

For Lloyd, desisting from crime meant dropping out of the extended network of a gang that he had been part of for a number of years. It was not a question of cutting off a few people, but disassociating himself from hundreds of people in a process that made him very vulnerable.

Drugs and alcohol

The next most frequent reason for desisting was no longer being dependent on drugs and alcohol. This only came up in Birmingham and West Mercia, and was not mentioned by anyone at the London pilot. A number of young adults saw a direct connection between substance misuse and the offending they had been engaged in. However, for many of these young adults, wider mental health issues were at play which had led to substance misuse.

In West Mercia, the young adults tended to have an array of issues which many dealt with through frequent substance misuse. For them, desistance was about sorting out a complex array of problems.

'I am pretty confident about not reoffending. Well, then again I said this at the beginning of the year and then obviously this has gone on, but I've noticed it's more – every time I've got arrested it's to do with my drinking, so'

I've cut down. I used to drink every night, and it weren't just having a drink, it was getting absolutely paralytic and now like 'cos I'm on this course, I just don't see the point in it to be honest. So it's just my drinking and I am quite confident that I'm not going to, like So the amount of people that come up to me now and they're like having a lot of fun and I'm just "Get like a life." Whereas before I'd be like "Rawr rawr rawr", all up in their face. But I've calmed down a lot.'

(T2A client, West Mercia)

For this young adult there is a complicated relationship between mental wellbeing, problems with drinking and offending behaviour. This is typical of the profile of the West Mercia clients, and there were similar cases in Birmingham. The needs profile of these young people contrasts significantly with those in London.

Children

By the second interview stage three young adults were mothers and two were fathers. They all lived with their child, or saw them regularly, and said that their child was the main reason they had not offended again.

'I was a hothead, but like I said you grow up, and I've always had a good frame of mind. I've always known what's good and what's bad... Obviously I've got a son now, you know what I mean, who's two and I think that's changed things.'

'Why has it made a difference?'

'It's the responsibility, and if he can't look up to me who's he going to look up to?'

(T2A client, Birmingham)

The focus for this young adult is the need to become a responsible adult for his child. In this case his child is his motivation to change and T2A provides the support needed for him to make that transition.

Coming out of prison

A number of the young adults who had completed long prison sentences said that it had given them time to think. These interviewees ascribed their motivation to a change of perspective and priorities through spending time in a different environment. This was a factor for a number of those in the London T2A pilot, and the 'through the gate' work done by St Giles. Going into prisons to recruit clients capitalises on this changed state of mind.

'I've had more time to reflect, because it's the longest sentence I've ever got. So I've had more chance to look at life and see what I want to do. And obviously the people that I used to hang around with don't help. And just the area, as bad as it is, I'm known around here, I don't wanna be hearing that. When they say (my name) it will be for a different thing instead of something bad.'

(T2A client, London)

This young adult had come out of a long prison sentence that was not his first. He identifies the time spent in prison as critical to his decision to desist from crime and be known for doing something positive with his life. It is this young adult himself who has to make the change, and the pilot has to take advantage of this motivation and nurture the belief that he can move away from crime.

Being occupied

Interviewees from all the pilots said that being occupied and having a routine was a crucial factor in their desistance. This clearly links to the next chapter which focuses on education, training and employment, and shows the importance of these elements as a pathway to desistance:

'I don't see any problems in life right now, I'm just on track. I know what I'm doing, and I know what I want to do. So I won't just

go out on the street and dilly dally... I'm not going to do that. These days if I ain't got nothing to do, I stay at my house and play Playstation, or invite my friends round.

A while ago I used to run round with my friends, they'd be, "Are you coming out today" and there's nothing to do except walk around the streets and end up getting into trouble. These days when I look at it I think, "What's the point?"

(T2A client, London)

This young adult saw having nothing to occupy him as one of the key reasons he got into trouble. For him, and some of the other young adults interviewed, T2A support was not about dealing with complex and deep-seated problems, but about providing something constructive to do and a routine.

The interviewees also identified other factors that helped the move away from offending including the support of friends and family. Some reacted to specific personal experiences such as being the victim of gun crime. But overall, the five factors above were the key themes, and provide the fullest picture of the interviewees' own interpretations of why they were able to desist.

Discussion

Taking into account the degree of severity, reduced frequency, and low number of reconvictions, there are indicators that T2A has had some effect on reducing reoffending for this sample. It is notable that there were only three breaches of a sentence. The young adults' confidence in not reoffending in the future also increased over the six month interval.

The promising nature of these findings indicates that a large scale study with a control group would be a justifiable investment as the next step in examining the degree to which the T2A approach can reduce reoffending rates for young adults.

The data also shows the adaptability of the model because the issues facing the young adults in each pilot were very different. The London T2A pilot has to deal with the influence of peer groups and gangs, and the risks many of these young adults are taking by moving away from particular peer groups and crime. The model of using ex-offenders as staff is designed specifically to counteract these issues.

The West Mercia pilot is affected much more by mental health issues and substance misuse problems. For many of these young adults it is not the influence of peers, but a lack of ways to deal with stress and complex emotions which have led to offending. The T2A pilot is therefore tailored to find ways of creating stability in the young adults' lives, and their style of working is through small case loads and very intensive support.

There was more variation within the Birmingham cohort, and this reflects the diversity of the young adult experience in Birmingham in general, as found in research by the Centre for Crime and Justice Studies (CCJS) (Dorling et al; 2011). The Birmingham sample was affected by a range of issues including substance misuse and group offending, although not necessarily gang offending.

Education, training and employment

This chapter presents the results of the T2A intervention over the six month study period in relation to education, training and employment. It begins by examining the educational background of the young adults in the sample to assess the extent of their educational needs.

Educational background

Table 6 summarises key factors in the educational background of the sample as a whole and includes separate data for each pilot.

In the overall prison population (all ages), 41 per cent of men, 30 per cent of women and 52 per cent of young offenders have experienced being permanently excluded from school (Stewart, 2008).

Looking at the sample as a whole is the most reliable way of comparing the interviewees to the wider population of young adult offenders. From this sample, 24 (67 per cent) of the young adults had been excluded at least once, which is fairly high in comparison to the national cohort (52 per cent).

In *Out for Good*, the Howard League study of the resettlement needs of a group of young adults in custody, 40 per cent had no qualifications (Howard League; 2006). The T2A young adults were not all coming out of custody, and were slightly more qualified than the *Out for Good* sample: nine (25 per cent) of 36 interviewees had no qualifications, and a third had at least one level one qualification as their highest qualification. Level one was the median level of qualification for the whole group.

The data indicates that the levels of educational need varied between the pilots with the sample of London clients having marginally the highest level of need, with a high proportion excluded from school and the highest proportion of NEET young adults in the first stage of interviews. Birmingham had the lowest proportion of NEET young adults, which was partly the result of the fact that some of the young adults had already started educational courses with T2A very soon after starting the programme.

Table 6: The educational background of the sample

	Total	London	West Mercia	Birmingham
Permanently excluded at least once	24 (67%)	12 (80%)	7 (64%)	5 (50%)
Ave. years in mainstream education	4y 3m	4y	4y 7m	4y 4m
No qualifications	9 (25%)	5 (33%)	1 (9%)	3 (30%)
NEET	25 (69%)	12 (80%)	8 (73%)	5 (50%)

Education, training and employment outcomes

In order to get a reliable measure of the outcomes of the T2A intervention over the six month study period, it was important to compare only those who had been interviewed twice. The young adults who could not be contacted, or who were in custody at the second stage, have not been included.

Of the young adults that it was possible to follow up, 18 were not in education, employment or training at the start of the six month period. Chart 3 shows that the number of NEET young adults halved over the six months – decreasing from 18 to 9, with the biggest change in those who had gained employment:

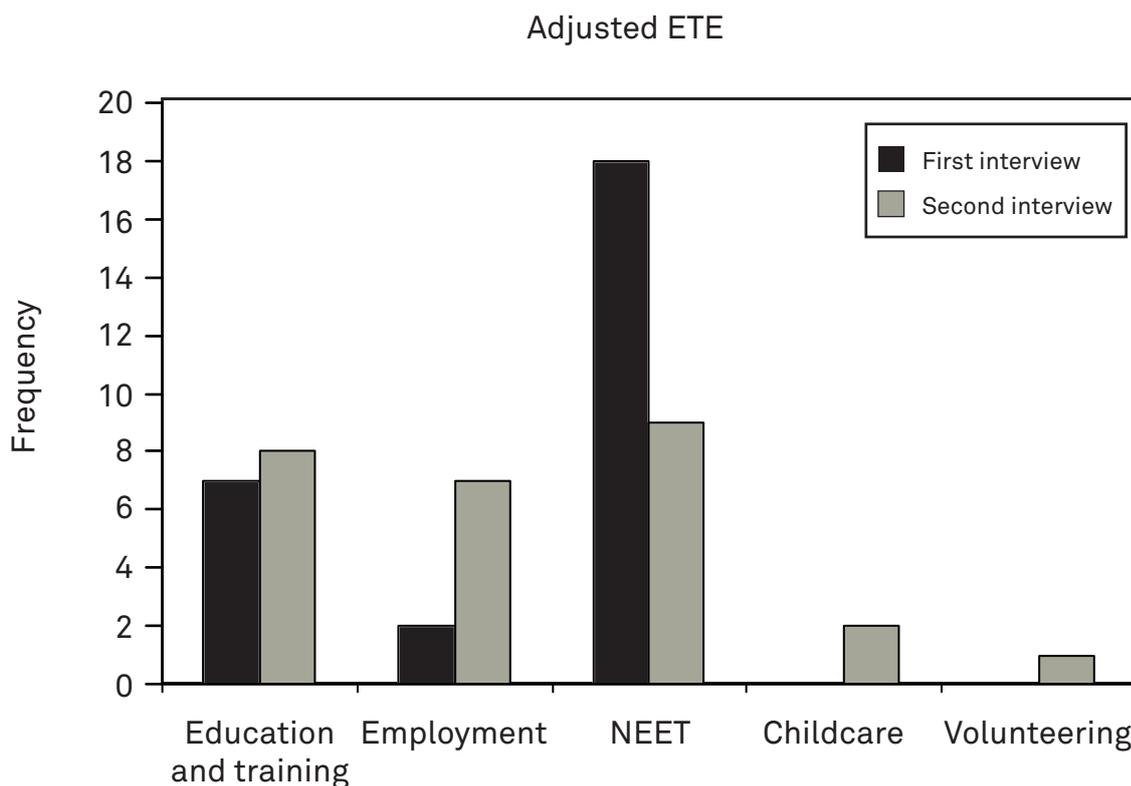
- Initially, only two were in employment. This number had increased to seven by the second stage

- Seven were in education and training at the start, and this number had increased to eight by the second stage.

Although the changes show progress over the six month period, they do not indicate that T2A was exclusively responsible for the second stage outcomes. Equally, a number of those in the first interviews had already accessed education or training through T2A at the first stage of interviews. In total, half of all interviewees were given direct help which allowed them to access education, training or employment, and more were given indirect support, empowering and motivating them and giving them the skills to access education training or employment.

This chart provides a snapshot and so does not take into account changes during the six month period in terms of qualifications received or courses started and then stopped. Overall, ten people out of 27 had finished a course, three had started and

Chart 3: The education, employment and training status of interviewees at both stages



then stopped a course, and nine had received a qualification at the second interview stage.

Looking at the six interviewees who were reconvicted or breached by the second stage, five of these young adults were NEET at the first stage of interviews. This suggests that there is possibly a link in this sample between not being in education, training or employment and reconviction or breach.

Despite the caveats given above, it seems reasonable to conclude that these results show that T2A has worked successfully here in finding education, employment and training for this group of young adults.

Routes into education, training and employment

The T2A pilots helped the majority of interviewees with education, training and employment and were directly responsible for half of all interviewees accessing better arrangements. Finding education, training and employment options for young adults with convictions is a particularly difficult area of work for the pilots, more so with the youth unemployment rate currently at 22 per cent. The analysis below investigates how the pilots went about this, tailoring their work to the distinct needs profiles of the young adults they were working with.

Although the numbers in this study are relatively small, the outcomes for the individuals, and their feedback about their experiences, give a sense of what was happening in each pilot.

The London pilot produced encouraging results with the interviewees securing sustainable apprenticeships that the young adults enjoyed, and interestingly, feedback was more positive than from those in employment. The level three Information Advice and Guidance

qualification provided by St Giles Trust received enthusiastic feedback from those undertaking it.

In general, the young adults were more positive about apprenticeships and courses with a vocational and training element than they were about the purely educational courses. Those who did take part in courses without a vocational or training element seemed to drift in and out of them, often without completing the programme.

Education and training

Eight out of 27 young adults were in education and/or training at the second stage of interviews. Of these, two were undertaking courses with no employment or training element and the other six were in training or apprenticeships. The majority of interviewees wanted to find employment rather than education or training, and qualifications were frequently seen as 'something to do' rather than a productive use of time. One young man from Birmingham was asked if he thought qualifications would make a difference to him:

'No. I was going to do some warehouse course thing but I couldn't be arsed. I'm tired of all this training, training, training. Just give me a job.'

(T2A client, Birmingham)

The educational courses that the young adults undertook were frequently very short term and there was a flow in and out of education which means that a simple 'before and after' snapshot does not capture educational attainment fully.

Half of the interviewees at Birmingham T2A attended an educational centre which provided literacy and numeracy qualifications, and vocational qualifications such as a forklift license. The T2A pilot, which was located in a

statutory service, had made this arrangement relatively recently with a third sector organisation.

The majority of the young adults that went to the centre were motivated by the promise of the forklift license and a Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) card which would help them find work:

'Why did you decide to get involved with it?'

'Because there are opportunities in it, basically. So that's why I did it, to help myself... For support and learning things like literacy... And they do forklift courses and CCS card courses... things to help me get on in life and get work, basically.'

(T2A client, Birmingham)

Although half of the interviewees attended the centre, only one had achieved qualifications through it at the second stage of interviews. In the interviews the young adults gave the impression that they were not getting what they wanted. One 21-year-old male had been to the education centre for a short amount of time. At the second interview he was happy in a training placement in a warehouse that he had found himself:

'I was there about two, three weeks. I've done more in the last two weeks than I did there in a week... I mean that other place felt like a school environment. This feels more, it actually does feel like I'm working because if this works out, I'll be doing the same thing anyway.'

(T2A client, Birmingham)

In London, there was more of an emphasis on training than at either of the other pilots, and the project directly provided a level three NVQ in Information, Advice and Guidance. Five people were in education or training at the second stage of interviews, four of whom were on some kind of training or apprenticeship.

Level three NVQ in Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG)

Three interviewees from London were on the IAG course, offered and run within the pilot, at some point during the interview period. It is rare for organisations to offer this qualification to service users and particularly to such young trainees, as it is a demanding qualification. The course is taken very seriously by those undertaking it, and to get a place it is essential to have completed some work experience. The course itself includes written work and voluntary work mentoring service users.

The IAG was particularly useful for the young adults because it gave them experience and training for employment as well as training on negotiating services for themselves.

'It's going to be really useful because I've done all the written work, and I know the theoretical side behind it, but 'cos it's an NVQ, I've actually been hands-on as well. I've done practical things, I've housed people, so I know what I'm doing. So hopefully if I go for it, someone will be able to see that as well.'

(T2A client, London)

The IAG was also an opportunity for T2A clients to draw on their own experiences for the benefit of others:

'I loved it. It's just something I liked doing. I've been in gangs and things like that, so I know what it's like to be down there, and to not really have no-one care about you. And I know most young people don't know about opportunities, they don't know what's out there for them, and how easy they could be helped. And you know, it's good to pass on the knowledge and show people.'

(T2A client, London)

The IAG provided a chance for young adults to feel that they had something to offer

others educationally. Those who undertook it built their own self-confidence as they gained skills and achieved a recognised qualification.

Karim, 23, London

Karim was a London service user receiving T2A support after coming out of custody. He had been involved with gangs and had become a victim of gun crime on leaving prison. The stakes were therefore extremely high in his path to desistance. He was focused on education, training and employment and was committed to achieving qualifications and getting involved in projects during the six months after coming out of custody.

The T2A pilot found him a personal training apprenticeship and he achieved a level two qualification. The project then supported him to build up the work experience he needed to undertake the level three NVQ in Information, Advice and Guidance. He had been working on the qualification for five months by the second interview and it had kept him in regular contact with the T2A pilot; he explained what he had been doing:

'Just helping youths, helping people that were in my position... (it's) just good, everyone's cool there, there's no bad tension anywhere in the whole place. It's just good, a good place to work, just laid back.'

By the second interview he had also been part of a project with ITV creating a gang prevention video reconstructing the incident in which he was shot; his confidence had improved and he had not been arrested since leaving prison. He was a determined young adult, and T2A was there to provide him with the opportunities he needed at the right time in his life.

Apprenticeships

There were three people on apprenticeships at some point during their time with T2A. All three came from London T2A and found the apprenticeship through their T2A worker. Two of these were personal training apprenticeships and one was an apprenticeship with an IT company that was found in conjunction with Connexions.

St Giles Trust, which was already providing a resettlement service to young adults, had established partnerships and the necessary knowledge to find apprenticeships for service users. There was less emphasis in London on attending short courses, and more on employment and long term training opportunities.

The IAG qualification is directly offered by St Giles Trust, so the only constraints were the number of people they were able to support to go through this demanding qualification. Apprenticeships were found through brokering relationships with other organisations; one young adult described the process of finding an ICT apprenticeship:

'(My T2A worker) put me through to Connexions, because he already saw I had my ICT diploma from school, so he thought, "Let's see if he can do it", and then he sent me to Connexions and then got me in touch with a woman.'

She sorted it out for me. (My T2A worker) helped me with my CV, took me there, showed her my CV and then sent it to them.'

(T2A client, London)

In the following example, the young adult's T2A worker saw that he had the potential to do a particular apprenticeship, and had a specific contact at Connexions to put his client in touch with. The worker then supported the young adult throughout the process of getting on to the apprenticeship, rather than just signposting him,

continuing this support through the period of the apprenticeship.

Nicky, 24, London

Nicky had come out of a long custodial sentence for a drug related offence. He had had time to consider his options in prison, and was determined to find employment, and make sure he did not get involved in offending again. As soon as he came out his T2A worker found a Personal Training Apprenticeship for him and he was accepted on to it.

Six months later he had finished level two of the apprenticeship and saved up some money to pay for a deposit for the insurance he would need to start level three. He was not arrested in the six month period, and his apprenticeship had helped to keep him out of trouble:

'I haven't been stopped by the police since I've come out. I haven't had no hassle from them whatsoever. I just think it's the way I go about my things and how I behave. I'm just in my work uniform. If they stop me I'm in my work uniform, "How can I help you Officer?" and then they'll see. If they ever saw me when I was working they'll be shocked! I'm not going to lie about it, my record is long. There's just a ridiculous amount of stuff on there, and for them to see me doing what I'm doing now, they'll be thinking, "This is not the same guy." And in my opinion that's good, something has changed.'

(T2A client, Birmingham)

The apprenticeship gave a structure to his days and a new identity centred on his employment. When he thought about himself from the perspective of the Police, he can see how different he is, and the fact that he has not been arrested in six months confirms this new identity for him.

Employment

Seven people were in employment at the second interview stage, a significant increase given that only two had been employed six months previously, and notable in an environment where youth unemployment was at 22 per cent. Five people had found employment over the six months between the interviews. One young adult in London had found casual work through their T2A worker, and the others had found work through other means. One young adult in West Mercia had found work through the Jobcentre, and the other three, one from West Mercia and two from Birmingham, had found work through friends and family.

The T2A workers could provide support but it was difficult for them to go any further than this without explicit relationships with employers. For some people, this meant help with writing CVs, and for others the T2A worker literally helped them give their CVs to cafes in the city centre. This support mainly involved preparing them to find employment – working on the soft skills needed to apply for and sustain employment, plus encouragement and information on where to go.

One 24-year-old male from Birmingham came out of custody and was determined to find employment. He had friends and family who were in employment and managed to find work three weeks after coming out of prison.

'I got my job in February, three weeks after I got out of prison I think... I seen one of my friends that lived a few doors down from me, gave me the number and I phoned up and I got an interview and they give me the job on the day.'

(T2A client, Birmingham)

He was living with his family, and had only been in frequent contact with a T2A worker for a few months. This young adult needed

less help than many of the other interviewees. For him, support was more emotional than practical:

'[My T2A worker] just kept me going. She just told me to keep looking for jobs and stuff, and don't stop, if you know what I mean.'

(T2A client, Birmingham)

T2A played a role for each of the young adults who found employment, but it is difficult to assess exactly how much can be directly attributed to T2A in terms of outcomes. Over half of those who found jobs had to go through friends and family, so the most influential factor seems to be whether they had friends or family in employment that could help them. In order to assess fully how much can be attributed to T2A it would be necessary to carry out further research and include a control group.

Not in education training or employment (NEET)

The fluid nature of young adults' experiences is reflected by the fact that even those who were NEET at the second interview stage had often found employment or been on a course at some point during the six month interval. For example, of the nine people who were NEET at the second stage, four had finished courses and three of those had achieved qualifications not captured by the before and after snapshot.

In some cases a T2A worker might have put a lot of work into finding education or training for a young adult, and the case then closed, only for them to become NEET again a few months later when they were no longer in contact with T2A.

Alex, 20, Birmingham

Alex was referred on to T2A through court. He didn't have any qualifications, and that was his focus whilst with T2A.

His T2A worker had referred him on to an education centre and he was attending three times a week. He worked with T2A for just over a month, and managed to achieve level two literacy and numeracy and get a CSCS card in that time, achieving more in a shorter time than many of the other T2A clients.

Six months later his mother had died, and as he did not have a good relationship with his father, he was forced to leave the family home and became NEET. His contact with T2A had been brief and at this point he had been out of contact with his T2A worker for months.

At the second interview he had moved into a hostel and was hopeful of finding permanent accommodation and starting a course with the Prince's Trust. He had not had contact with T2A and said he wouldn't think of calling his T2A worker in an emergency.

In this case the young person did not have the support networks he needed. He did receive effective support and had qualifications which would enable him to secure work in the future, but the contact with T2A was not enough to support him through the unforeseen events which occurred after his T2A worker had closed the case.

Analysing the NEET figures more closely did not provide predictive factors for those who were NEET at the second stage. Age, referral, contact with mental health or substance misuse services, and whether they were NEET in the first stage did not seem to be related to whether or not they were NEET after six months of T2A support.

However, four of the nine young adults who were NEET at stage two had particular issues that had made getting into education, training and employment even more of a challenge. For example, Alex (see

above) was struggling with homelessness. One young woman had been heroin dependent and was concentrating on staying stabilised on methadone over the six months, and a young man from London had problems with his immigration status. He was appealing a deportation order which made participation in education, training and employment very difficult for him.

Discussion

The findings indicate that courses that did not have an employment or training element were less useful and desirable for this sample of young adults than those that did. The Wolf Report highlights the problems with vocational education in this country and points to apprenticeships as the most useful form of education, training and employment (ETE) for young adults (Wolf; 2011). This study supports that conclusion. Those who took part in purely educational courses seemed to drift in and out of them, often without completing the programmes, and even when they did finish the qualifications gained did not appear to advance their chances of employment.

The London pilot emerges in this chapter as a particular highlight in terms of ETE. It was successful in finding apprenticeships for service users which were sustainable and that the young adults enjoyed. The feedback from those doing apprenticeships also compared favourably with those who had employment, as apprenticeships also allowed the young adults to advance their skills and knowledge. The London young adults were

very positive about the IAG qualification which advanced their skills and knowledge and improved their employment opportunities. It also significantly increased the confidence of those undertaking it. For many, it was the first time they were able to turn their particular experiences into an advantage through the opportunity to educate and support others. It illustrated the T2A 'strengths-based' model in action.

Employment was a clear area of improvement over the six months and T2A's role in skills building and job preparation was likely to have been significant, but a key issue for studies of resettlement services is attribution – could successes be attributable to other factors that were not controlled for? The only way to tackle this would be to carry out further research and include a control group, which would show whether the indirect support provided by T2A was enabling more people to find employment. Without this, it is difficult to claim that success in this area was primarily the result of T2A's work.

Analysing the NEET figures more closely did not provide predictive factors for those who were NEET at the second stage, although particular individual circumstances did seem to explain why several young adults were NEET, and consequently T2A workers were focusing on these immediate issues rather than on ETE as such. It is interesting to note that five of the six young adults who were reconvicted or breached were NEET at the start.

Accommodation

Examining outcomes in achieving stable housing

This chapter examines the work of the T2A pilots in supporting young adults to find stable housing over the six month study period. Looking at before and after snapshots for housing does not paint a complete picture of the success of the pilots, as there was a continuous flow between types of accommodation. The chapter goes on to examine the challenges facing the young adults interviewed in finding stable housing, and how the T2A approach works to support them.

Accommodation background

The following table summarises the accommodation status of the interviewees at the first interview stage overall, and for each pilot.

Over half of the young adults were living

independently when they started the programme. For those not living with family the most common accommodation type was private rented housing.

Living independently is a key part of the transition to adulthood for most young people, and 14 of the 36 young adults (40 per cent) cited accommodation as the main reason they wanted to engage with T2A. This was the most frequent reason for taking up T2A's services in West Mercia and in London. Accommodation represented the promise of independence and stability for the young adults, irrespective of whether or not they were currently living with their parents.

Overall, there were seven people in urgent housing need at the first interview stage; five people were homeless, and two were in temporary accommodation. The housing need was concentrated in the West Mercia and the London pilots. There was a lower level of housing need at the Birmingham

Table 7: The accommodation status of each interviewee (stage one)*

	Total	London	West Mercia	Birmingham
Family	17 (47%)	6 (40%)	3 (27%)	8 (80%)
Private rented	6 (17%)	4 (27%)	2 (18%)	0 (0%)
Supervised accommodation	2 (6%)	1 (7%)	0 (0%)	1 (10%)
Temporary accommodation	2 (6%)	0 (0%)	2 (18%)	0 (0%)
Social housing	4 (11%)	0 (0%)	3 (27%)	1 (10%)
Homeless	5 (14%)	4 (27%)	1 (9%)	0 (0%)

* Percentages exceed 100% due to roundings.

pilot, with a higher proportion of young people living with their parents.

Accommodation outcomes

The chart below compares those who were interviewed in the community to assess the changes in accommodation status over the six month study period. Changes in accommodation were mainly due to external circumstances beyond the reach of the T2A pilot, and the T2A workers tended to take a reactive role.

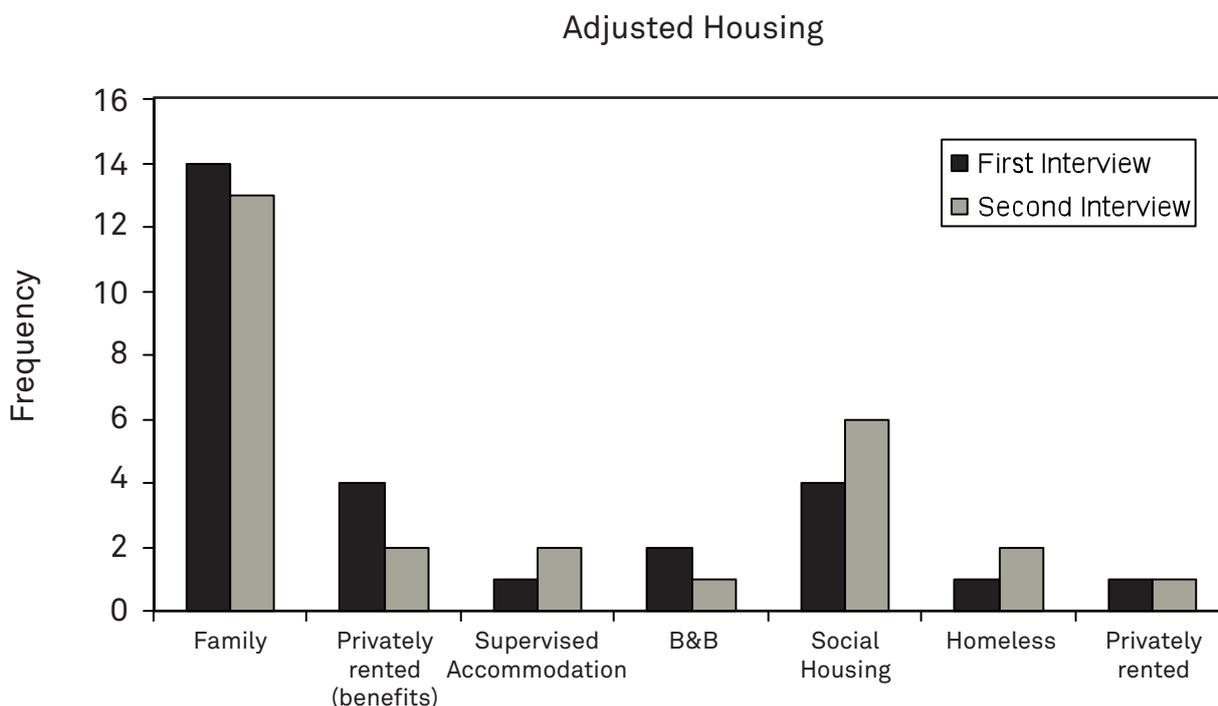
Looking only at those where research follow-up had been possible (27), the number of young adults in social housing increased, and those in temporary accommodation decreased. There was also an increase in the number of young adults who were homeless. There is more detail on homelessness later in this section. However it is worth noting here that there

were different individual young adults in urgent housing need at the first and second stages of interviews.

Of the 27 people in the study group at the second interview stage, sixteen had remained in the same accommodation. None of these had previously been in urgent housing need. The majority were living with family, and four were in social housing.

The remaining eleven young adults had moved into different accommodation six months after starting T2A. The degree of instability varied, from some who had moved around repeatedly to others who had only moved once into stable accommodation. Three of these young adults had moved into urgent housing need, with two becoming homeless and one moving into a B&B. More positively, three people moved in with family, two into supported accommodation and two into social housing.

Chart 4: The accommodation status of interviewees at both stages



Satisfaction with accommodation increased over the six month period of engagement with T2A, and this may be the best measure of the effect T2A has on housing outcomes. Looking only at those who were in the community at the second stage, satisfaction went up 26 per cent from 41 per cent to 67 per cent.

Nine young adults were housed as a direct result of T2A workers' support. Five of these people were housed before the first interview and four by the second interview. Looking at the whole original sample in more depth shows the complexity of accommodation issues for this group:

- Four of the five young adults who had been housed before the first interview were followed up at stage two – none of them were still in the same accommodation, and three had been reconvicted
- The four who were re-housed by the second interview were accommodated in a range of forms of accommodation: social housing, private rented accommodation, B&B and hostels
- Two of the six young adults who were reconvicted or breached were homeless – a higher proportion than in the sample as a whole.

Accommodation support

Young adults typically move in and out of accommodation faster than other age groups because they tend to leave the parental home without the resources to settle down and move on to the housing ladder. This makes a before and after snapshot over a six month period difficult to assess for objective outcomes, let alone for success or failure of the pilots.

However, qualitative analysis is valuable here as it captures the richness of the information on movement between the places where the young adults were living,

and illustrates the work of T2A in securing accommodation for the service users. This section highlights why accommodation was a key concern, and examines different housing types, assessing their strengths and weaknesses.

Although the quantitative data does not provide a clear picture of success with housing outcomes, the qualitative evidence shows, that, for many of these young adults, T2A played an essential role in finding them stable accommodation. Research including a control group would make it possible to show conclusively whether the outcomes as a whole are better than they would have been without T2A. It is also essential to keep in mind that housing is a particularly difficult area on which to have an impact, as T2A workers have very little control over the housing options available.

Comparing the different housing tenancies occupied by T2A clients highlights the relative strengths of these tenancies for a cohort of vulnerable young adults. For this sample, social housing provided the most stability and private rented housing offered the least stability.

Why was accommodation a key concern?

Housing was the second most common reason given for engaging with T2A (see Introduction, Table 2), irrespective of whether or not those interviewed were in urgent need of new accommodation. The key concerns were:

- homelessness
- desire to move out and be independent
- overcrowding
- desire to move out of the area to avoid being involved in offending.

The majority of interviewees said they had plans to move in the near future even if this

was not the main reason for engagement with T2A. This applied particularly to those living with parents and members of their family, where overcrowding was frequently a concern. The desire to get out of the area was expressed on a few occasions where it was felt to be a negative influence, holding them back from getting out of crime:

'I just want somewhere where it's hard for anyone to find that I live there to be honest. I do not want anyone to know where I live, and when I say anyone, I mean anyone. I don't want no-one to know... I've found out when people know where I live, it's problems for me.'

(T2A client, London)

There was frequently a feeling that trouble would find them, and moving to an area where they didn't know anyone was the only way of escaping it. It was also about getting away from peer groups:

'What do you think it would take to stop you from (reoffending)?'

'If I got my own accommodation, like out of the area, I wouldn't have to hang around with them lot – the kids that I was hanging around with. 'Cos that's the main reason that I really get into trouble.'

(T2A client, London)

Housing comes up as a key factor in desistance, both in providing a key source of stability, and having the potential to move people away from the negative influence of peers. For young adults who were involved in gangs, moving area was frequently seen as the only way to cut ties.

The desire for independence through moving out of home was also frequently expressed. Moving out is a key part of becoming an adult for most young people and even those who were relatively settled at home tended to express the need to move in the near future. The promise of

housing frequently acted as a way to interest young adults in the programme, and one service user said they had made contact with the project because they had heard this was a way of securing housing.

Social housing

T2A can only have a limited impact on young adults' ability to access social housing. The crucial factor is whether a young adult has a 'priority need' which would move them to the top of the housing waiting list. In these instances, T2A has a role in advocating for that person, proving their need and the necessity of social housing provision. However, the chance of success is also very much affected by the availability of housing stock in a particular area.

The young adults with social housing were a very stable group which increased over the six months. None of these young adults was reconvicted and they all stayed in touch with T2A throughout the study period.

Those with social housing were concentrated in West Mercia and Birmingham. No-one in the London pilot was in social housing at either interview stage. This is partly linked to the needs profile of the service user in each pilot, as all of those in social housing either had mental health problems or were mothers with young children.

Toby, 18, West Mercia

Toby had been referred from the Youth Offending Service on to T2A. He had been receiving intensive support from a number of key workers at the time he was referred.

He was living in a homeless hostel and had been in temporary accommodation for six months when he started T2A. The hostel had been a negative environment for him, and his main aim was to find accommodation where he could feel safe.

Six months later he was living in social housing in a flat where he felt comfortable. His T2A worker had worked with the Council to find him the accommodation, and although he had other support workers, T2A had enabled him to get the flat.

'What do you think was the most useful thing about having (your T2A worker) there to support you?'

'Getting my flat, I wouldn't have been able to get it otherwise, 'cos she had to write a statement and everything, because I was in a homeless hostel before, so she wrote loads and loads of things, saying he has to have this, if you don't do it then he's going to reoffend... I'm less likely to offend now. I've got stability... if it wasn't for the flat I would still be offending.'

This is a good example of where T2A can bring together different services and sources of information and bring about a result for the young adult. Toby was receiving support from different sources when T2A came into the picture, and through the multi-agency approach of the pilot, his T2A worker was able to argue successfully to the Council that he had a priority need.

Although social housing was a very stable form of accommodation, it would be misleading to paint it as without problems. For a number of interviewees, although the housing they had was stable, they did not always feel safe, and it was not always completely suitable.

One young adult from West Mercia with a baby had a council flat at the top of a high rise block. The lift in the building was not reliable and would sometimes be out of order for days at a time. When this occurred she was unable to leave the flat with the baby and this made her very vulnerable and dependent on those around

her. She was desperate to move and T2A staff were working with her to change her accommodation.

Housing estates were also problematic for some young adults, bringing them into contact with pervasive drug dealing and local crime:

'It's a rough area, but you've just got to keep yourself to yourself, because there's loads of drugs going round.'

'Do you feel safe?'

'Yeah, there's loads of cameras, it's like big brother. There's two cameras in the lift, one behind the mirror, so yeah.'

(T2A client, West Mercia)

In the above example, the housing situation provides the young adults with the benefit of stability which might be all they need to stop offending. However, the difficult environment might make it harder for them to stay out of trouble, and adds to the challenges the T2A projects face in supporting them.

Private rented accommodation

Private rented accommodation is the only option for many of the young adults on the T2A project. Without a convincing case for a recognised priority need it is sometimes the quickest way for T2A to house people and in London private rented housing was frequently used.

For some young adults private rented housing can work very well and provide quick accommodation options with some choice over location.

Kim, 21, West Mercia

Kim was recovering from heroin dependence and was receiving support from a number of sources. Her T2A worker provided intensive support for

her, but the most important achievement was in supporting her to access accommodation.

'What do you think would have happened if you hadn't had your T2A worker?'

'Well we wouldn't have had the flat for starters, because they didn't want to give it us. And [my T2A worker] had to say, "They're fine, they're not any trouble"...

I want to stay there for a long time. It's such a nice area. No-one knows where we live, it's like we're hidden away and if we told people where we live (people on the gear), we would have people come round and it would ruin it. 'Cos as you can see, there's flats overlooking, and you can see whoever comes in, and if you do start getting people coming to the house we'd lose it.'

The intervention of her T2A worker was essential for Kim to find stable accommodation with her boyfriend. Private accommodation was a good option for her because it meant she could live with someone she trusted in an area in which she felt comfortable. The choice of location provided by this form of accommodation was also critical for her to desist from crime and end her drug habit. It meant she could move away from previous influences and gave her a chance to start again.

Overall however, private rented accommodation was not a stable form of accommodation for this group. Of the four young adults who were originally in private rented accommodation (and who it was possible to follow up), only one was still in the same flat six months later.

Young adults under the age of 25 are only entitled to housing benefit for bed-sit accommodation or for one room in a shared house. For those who were younger and had a lower level of maturity, this could be

problematic. Living independently with others, without supervision, demands a certain level of responsibility.

The St Giles Trust made use of private rented accommodation extensively at the beginning of the London T2A project but subsequently changed their policy. They found that service users tended to favour private rented accommodation over supported accommodation when given the choice, but that for young adult offenders, independent living was not always the best option, particularly when groups were housed together, because the arrangement increased the young adults' vulnerability as well as the likelihood of anti-social behaviour.

The project now favours supported accommodation and the proportion of young adults housed in private rented accommodation has decreased. The vast majority of service users are now housed in statutory accommodation, especially supported hostels.

Temporary accommodation

Some young adults were housed in temporary accommodation as a stopgap when they were in need, but the interviewees' experiences tended to be very negative. It was not felt to be safe, and exposed them to negative influences:

'Now, I'm in some squat hole, with alcoholics, in a smelly room, it stinks.'

It's temporary accommodation, but it's a B and B, so you can understand, people in and out. Obviously they say it's up to standard, but I wouldn't say it was, but it's just for the meantime, just got to bite the bullet.'

(T2A client, London)

Another young adult had similar concerns:

'I've made a couple of mates in every hostel I've been in. But like, yeah there was a couple of people who helped me out here and there, but, I didn't really wanna get involved with them, because they still knew the crackheads whether they were crackheads or not. But I didn't really wanna get involved with anyone in there, so I never really stuck by anyone in there really. I always tried to stay out.'

(T2A client, London)

In each of these situations, temporary accommodation was the only fast option to avoid a young person becoming homeless. For the two in temporary accommodation at the first interview stage, this was a brief phase until they both moved into permanent and suitable accommodation during the six month study period.

For the only young adult in temporary accommodation at the second interview stage it was the best option at the time:

Paul, 21, London

Paul was living in private rented accommodation which his T2A worker had found for him after he came out of custody. After a few months he was involved in a gang related incident in which he became a victim of gun crime. After this incident he could no longer stay in the area he had been living in. T2A then stepped in to find temporary accommodation for him in another area on the other side of London.

At the second interview stage he was therefore living in temporary accommodation, so it could be seen as a negative outcome. However, although it was not ideal accommodation, in this situation it was the best and safest option to get him out of the area.

Where there are gang issues involved, temporary accommodation can play a useful role as it provides a refuge for a young adult who would otherwise be victimised.

But as in the following example, a young person struggled in temporary accommodation and a move to a more supported setting brought significant benefits.

Anna, 17, West Mercia

Anna had a difficult relationship with her mother, and had been living in a number of different B&Bs when she was referred on to T2A. She was only 17 at the time, and had been misusing substances, needing intensive support to move away from offending and become stable. Without supervision she had been repeatedly evicted because of excessive noise and coming back late at night.

Her T2A worker found her supported accommodation where she could have easy access to a key worker. This meant she could make the transition to independent living in her own time, rather than risking the sudden isolation of living alone.

At the second interview she had been living in this accommodation for three months and was taking part in a Prince's Trust course:

'I love it here. The support they give you is great. Like, they've got me back into education, like doing Prince's Trust and that. They've just been really understanding and things like that. So it is just good. Just another month or two until I can properly calm myself down and everything. They'll move me onto a flat then and I'll still get support when I get a flat. I can have support for up to two years after – when I get my flat.'

T2A worked for this young person by finding her stable accommodation which suited her level of maturity. The supported accommodation was welcome after a long period of homelessness and temporary accommodation, and provided the support she needed on the way to independent living.

Anna's experience illustrates why temporary accommodation is often particularly unsuitable for younger people in the age group. Without supervision, Anna was disruptive and asked to leave. For a young adult at this level of maturity, supported accommodation with an available key worker is the only other viable alternative to living with family.

Homelessness

To assess the outcomes for homeless young adults using T2A, we need to consider all those who were homeless at the first stage. Of the five young adults who were homeless:

- Two were reconvicted
- Two cut themselves off from the project and no outcomes were collected at the second stage
- One found permanent accommodation.

None of the homeless young adults were living on the streets at that stage, but each of them had no secure accommodation and moved from place to place each night. This made life very difficult for them:

'At the moment, it's upsetting; it's so upsetting. I don't have a fixed address, I really don't. I'm waiting for a placement, my permanent placement, I was in a bed and breakfast, my bed and breakfast got cancelled. Now, I'm staying at my little cousin's, couple of friends, couple of girls. No other routine.'

'There's not much anyone can do, I'm on the waiting list and that's it. I'm supposed to be getting my placement soon. My key worker said that I'm next on the list. So, it should be a matter of time – a couple of weeks. A placement should be found and then I can get back on with my life. I think that's probably why I'm so stressed out as it is. I have too much to think about and that, I can't really get things going if I don't have somewhere permanent to be at, so it's a bit hard.'

(T2A client, London)

Housing was the first concern of all the young adults without permanent accommodation. They all felt that, without sorting out accommodation, they could not begin to address any of the other problems they had. Housing provided the foundation to people's lives from which other outcomes seemed to follow.

At the second interview stage, two young adults were homeless. Both had had stable accommodation at the first stage and became homeless during the six-month interval. One of them became homeless by moving out of the family home, the other had spent time in custody and lost accommodation because of that:

Don, 23, London

Don was living in private rented accommodation that had been found for him by his T2A worker at the first interview stage and was looking for an apprenticeship. He had been given a community sentence with 180 hours of community service but had not committed the hours that were expected of him. He was subsequently reconvicted for breach and given a short custodial sentence.

By the second interview he was out of custody on licence again. He had briefly moved in with his father, but had been told to move out after a few weeks and

became homeless. He had been sleeping on the sofa at a friend's house for a month. The reconviction meant that all the work put in to finding the initial accommodation by the T2A worker was lost. When he came out of custody he was back to square one.

Homelessness seems to be one of the most difficult outcomes to influence, and one of the most important. Those without permanent accommodation were some of the least stable young adults. However, for many young adults, homelessness indicated a number of problems, often including difficult family relationships.

Discussion

The housing options available to the pilots were determined by the needs of the young adults they were working with and the housing availability in the areas in which they worked. The West Mercia sample was dominated by particularly vulnerable young adults with identifiable 'priority needs'. In London the sample was all male with fewer identified mental health or substance misuse related needs. In Birmingham, the majority of young adults lived with their family at the first interviews so housing needs were not so acute. These differences correspond to the different types of housing provision used by the services; notably the predominance of private rented housing in the London service, and social housing in the West Mercia service.

Living independently requires a level of maturity and responsibility that not all young adults have. For those who do not have the option of living with family, T2A services are responsible for finding the right accommodation option that will be sustainable for them. Looking at the different housing arrangements highlights the relative strengths and weaknesses of the different tenancies for this group of young adults. Social housing provided the most stability for the interviewees in this

sample, and private rented housing provided the least stability.

Overall, the results in terms of housing outcomes are ambiguous. For those it was possible to follow up, there were still the same number of service users in urgent housing need at the first and second interview periods, although the specific individuals in this position had changed. Also, the majority of those who were homeless did not move on to stable accommodation. However, there is clear evidence that for many of the young adults, T2A did play an essential role in helping them gain stable accommodation, a step that could prove to be the change enabling them to move away from offending and become independent adults. The accommodation found by T2A was generally the most suitable for that particular situation, and temporary accommodation was used as a last resort for preventing homelessness.

Homeless young adults are likely to be those with a number of complex issues and a limited existing support network when first referred to T2A. In this context, the pilots had difficulties with those who were homeless at the first interview stage and it is only possible to ascertain that one homeless person moved into permanent accommodation.

A study with a control group would make it possible to show more conclusively whether the outcomes as a whole are better with T2A input. It may well be that, without T2A support, a large proportion would have had urgent housing needs at the second interview stage: however, it is only possible to speculate on this.

Health

T2A emotional wellbeing and mental health support

This chapter examines the interviewees' mental health and wellbeing needs. It then goes on to examine how the T2A approach supports young adults' mental health, particularly through multi-agency work.

Mental health needs

The table below summarises some key quantitative data relating to the mental health needs and background of the sample.

A key study of offender mental health found 39 per cent of sentenced males and 75 per cent of sentenced females exhibited a common mental disorder (Singleton et al; 1997).

In our sample, eight (22 per cent) out of the 36 young adults interviewed had been in contact with mental health services in the past, and more had previously been referred to mental health services but had

not followed the referral through. Just over a quarter (28 per cent) of the sample (10 of the 26 interviewees) had taken antidepressants in the past.

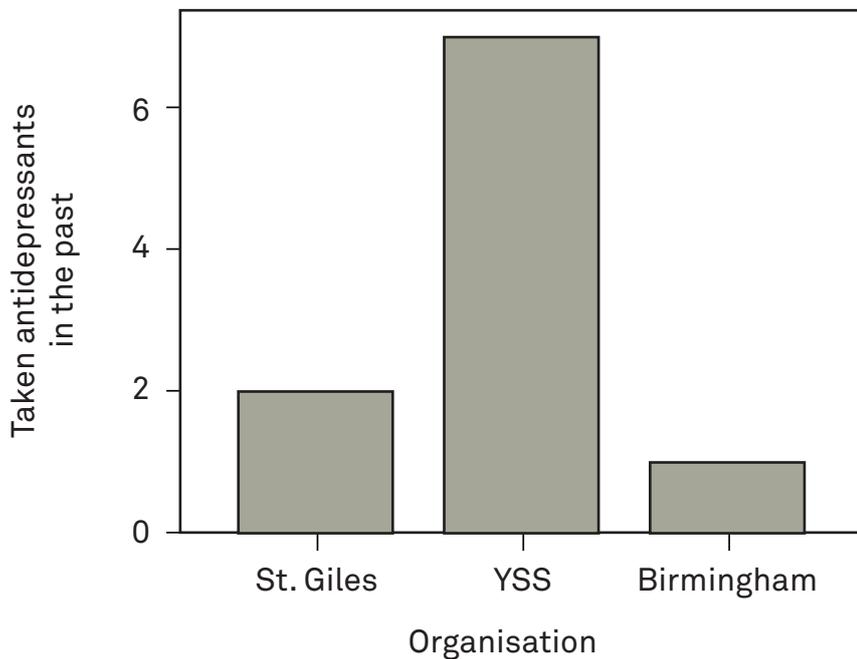
As stated in the introduction, looking at contact with mental health services and antidepressant use together, the interviewees at the West Mercia pilot had significantly greater mental health needs than the other pilots.

To put the information about contact with mental health services in context, a study of 13 to 18-year-olds in custody identified 35 per cent of girls and 13 per cent of boys as having depression (Harrington et al; 2005). Although this is a younger age group, it suggests that the sample at West Mercia T2A has high mental health needs. It also confirms the gender differences in relation to the diagnosis of depression (Hsia & MacLennan; 2009) which is likely to be reflected in the greater proportion of women in the West Mercia sample compared with the other pilots. The variation in the mental health background of the young adults at the different pilots is clear from Chart 5.

Table 8: Key quantitative mental health data for the sample

	Total	London	West Mercia	Birmingham
Contact with mental health services in the past	8 (22%)	2 (13%)	4 (36%)	2 (20%)
Taken antidepressants in the past	10 (28%)	2 (13%)	7 (64%)	1 (10%)

Chart 5: Antidepressant use at each pilot site for the sample



The services that had been used in the past by those who had had formal contact with mental health provision included Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), Adult Mental Health Services (AMHS) and NOMS accredited courses. Three young adults at the West Mercia pilot and one at the London pilot had received prolonged support from CAMHS in the past two years for depression and problems with anger and aggression.

Two of the young adults in the sample were referred to mental health services by hospital staff after suicide attempts. In both cases this had happened within a year of being referred on to T2A, and whilst one service user was in intermittent contact with mental health support whilst with T2A, the other had not received mental health support at either interview stage. Both of these young adults were service users at the West Mercia pilot.

Wellbeing and mental health support

This evaluation indicates that the T2A model enhances the emotional wellbeing of young adults by providing service users with a feeling of safety. T2A also builds their confidence and skills so that they are able to deal with adversity and stress. This sample did not provide evidence that the role of T2A was in referring young adults on to mental health service, but rather that it was about providing joined-up multi-agency work for those who were engaged with mental health services. This multi-agency work allows T2A to provide practical support and to advocate effectively for service users, which often has the effect of increasing the emotional wellbeing of a service user.

Wellbeing and emotional support

The National CAMHS Support Service has used the following definition of emotional wellbeing:

A positive state of mind and body, feeling safe and able to cope, with a sense of connection with people, communities and the wider environment (NCSS; 2011, p4).²¹

The T2A model of working involves a close one-to-one relationship, with flexible meeting times and a focus on building up confidence and skills. The formative evaluation highlights 'the formation of a working alliance' and the use of 'strengths-based principles' as key aspects of the T2A approach (Burnett et al; 2010). This model of working allows T2A to support service users to 'feel safe and able to cope' through building up confidence, skills and support networks.

There is evidence to suggest that the flexibility of the T2A approach was instrumental in creating a feeling of safety for service users interviewed. Contact is not based on a rigid appointment structure, meetings happen where convenient for the client, and many T2A workers make themselves available at any time. A service user from Birmingham pointed to the security this provided as a key advantage of T2A:

'I always know he's there, he is always there. I can just pick up the phone and he is there and he will come. I mean, he has done it before. Before, as I phoned him and that, you know, he would come out of his way, come and help me, do you know what I mean?'

(T2A client, Birmingham)

In this sense, T2A provides a security net for service users, which is linked to an increase in emotional wellbeing. In addition, T2A works to provide service

users with a feeling of being 'able to cope' with life. The use of 'strengths-based principles' is fundamental to giving service users the confidence and skills to be able to cope with adversity. For example, one service user who was recovering from heroin dependency had to deal with being evicted from her home:

'She's helped me with my confidence... just helped me to step back and look at the situation instead of going, "Oh no we're going to get kicked out". It sort of calmed me down – what is it, rationalise? Just showed me that I can do it if I put my mind to it. 'Cos obviously being on the gear you don't really think that you can do it. Her having such a positive attitude, it rubs off on you. It's nice.'

(T2A client, West Mercia)

The quotation refers to practical help, but the practical help is achieved through providing emotional support and confidence building. Another young adult from West Mercia directly linked these strengths-based principles to the ability to desist from crime:

'I think there could've been a stage where I could've reoffended. I could've, but [T2A worker] taught me to rise above it, ignore things, everything like that so it was going better. She was showing me positive things in life, not the negatives.'

(T2A client, West Mercia)

Six months is a short period to observe a general increase in the confidence and skills of interviewees and there was no observable wholesale increase in confidence for young adults supported by T2A. However, when looking at plans for the future, and at confidence in managing their own life after T2A, there were some clear examples of where young adults' confidence significantly increased:

21 Taken from the World Health Organisation 2007, and the American Psychiatric Association 2000

- Plans for the future: The key difference in confidence levels came from the practical differences in the lives of interviewees. Those who had managed to get onto a course or apprenticeship that they found fulfilling were very positive about the future. Those on apprenticeships and the IAG had the most observable rise in confidence. These young adults had more focus and optimism about the future than even those who were in full-time employment.

Nicky, 24, London

Nicky was on license after a long custodial sentence; he was planning an apprenticeship but had not started it at the first interview. Asked about where he would be in six months, he was understandably unsure:

'And where do you want to be next time I speak to you in May?'

'Next time... hmm, that's a bit far away. Hopefully my apprenticeship will have started by then, and my housing. I'm praying it will be sorted.'

Six months later he had completed level two in his personal training apprenticeship and was doing very well. The increase in optimism and focus for the future was clear:

'So what are the main things you want to achieve in the next year?'

'Well work is always going to be top of my agenda, but that's more than likely going to be there. Next thing, finish off my level 3. That should be done, and housing really, either taking my dad's house or getting my own place, one of those two.'

In this case, the practical help that he received allowed him to build up his confidence during the six months of

support. The statement that work is 'more than likely going to be there' indicates a belief in his abilities which is crucial to emotional wellbeing and the ability to deal with adversity.

Those who were NEET at the second interview stage were understandably those who had the least confidence. Many of these young adults had been applying for jobs consistently and had no luck. One interviewee sums this up:

'Some days I have more ambition than other days. Some days I wake up and think "I'm getting a job today no matter what", other days I get up and I just think, "I can't be bothered, nothing ever comes back for me". I do try though, I do try.'

(T2A client, Birmingham)

A number of interviewees said they had been empowered by T2A, and had the confidence at the second stage of interviews to negotiate problems without the support of T2A. These were all young people who had been given the skills to negotiate services themselves. The IAG was a good way of improving confidence and all the young adults on this programme had increased confidence:

'It's taught me about loads of things, and it's beneficial for your own self, because you can never know what situation you could be in ... It's good to have the information, not just to provide it for your clients but for your own self, because there's things I learned there that I didn't know. There's rights and legislations that I can go by that will help you get the best out of services.'

(T2A client, London)

The IAG increased confidence because it gave the young adults the information and skills they needed to be independent. The training meant T2A workers were not simply doing things for the young adults, but supporting them to deal with problems

themselves. T2A also provided this type of support outside of the IAG. One young woman at West Mercia outlined the main way T2A had helped her:

'Other services basically. That's what a lot of it's been to do with really, because with my problem with housing at the moment, my T2A worker got me in touch with the Basement and I actually went down on my own without her – shocking! But I did go, and basically the Basement now have helped me. I wouldn't have known to go to the Basement if it wasn't for my T2A worker.'

(T2A client, West Mercia)

There is no clear increase in confidence for every interviewee, and six months is a very limited amount of time to measure this. However, for those young adults who felt they had some control over their lives at the second interview stage, confidence increases came through clearly

Specialist mental health support

Two people who had been accessing formal mental health services at the first stage were no longer doing so at the second stage. One had been on an accredited anger management course with Probation and the other had been using Adult Mental Health Services. At the second stage there were two people who had both been intermittently in contact with mental health services in the past year through qualified workers attached to the Youth Offending Service and Probation.

Of those who were reconvicted, contact with mental health services did not come up as a factor. None of the six who were reconvicted were in contact with mental health services at the first interview stage, and only one had ever been in contact in the past.

The gateways to mental health support for this group of young adults during the first and second stage of interviews were through GPs, Probation and the Youth Offending Service. No-one at the first or second stage of interviews was in contact with Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, although some had been in the past.

The mental health difficulties cited by the interviewees included depression, anxiety and problems with anger and aggression.

Support with problems of anger and aggression was often through NOMS accredited programmes with the Probation Service as part of a license. One young adult was attending a Controlling Anger and Learning to Manage it (CALM) programme through Probation during the first interview stage, and felt strongly that this was very important for him:

'I am with CALM... it is something that I have needed for so long but I just haven't (done it) I don't know why I didn't... because I know I have got an anger problem. This is acknowledged, I have got a son to look after and just the way I have been going on is getting me a new life. I just want to better myself as a man, you know? I want to better myself and learn and so on. I just want to get on with it.'

(T2A client, Birmingham)

Multi-agency work

In this sample T2A did not play a key role in referring young adults to mental health services. The model of working has been to play a brokering role, working as the 'glue' between services, as well as providing key practical support.

Two young adults interviewed had accommodation needs and T2A helped them to find accommodation. In one case the flat they moved into was directly

attributable to T2A support. Both of these young adults were initially living in hostels, and their dissatisfaction with housing was adding considerably to their distress. The practical help provided by T2A therefore had a positive impact on their mental health.

One of these young adults was a service user at the Birmingham T2A pilot. He was receiving support from Adult Mental Health Services at the first interview and had been prescribed antidepressants. His T2A worker provided informal emotional support, and worked with his hostel to help him secure permanent accommodation, move in, and sustain the tenancy. As he states:

'When I moved out of the hostel I was happy anywhere. When I was living in the hostel I was depressed just from being there. I don't think it was anything pills could help me with.'

(T2A client, Birmingham)

Toby, 18, West Mercia

Toby had been receiving intermittent mental health support for over a year after an attempted suicide. At the time he was referred to T2A he was no longer receiving counselling from CAMHS, but had mental health support from the Youth Offending Service. He was living in a homeless hostel and had been in temporary accommodation for six months when he started with T2A.

The T2A project worked closely with all of his support workers sharing information to ensure joined-up working without overlap and confusion. This meant his T2A worker was able to advocate for him to the Council and make a convincing case that he had a priority need for stable accommodation

'What do you think was the most useful thing about having (your T2A worker) there to support you?'

'Getting my flat, I wouldn't have been able to get it otherwise, 'cos she had to write a statement and everything, because I was in a homeless hostel before, so she wrote loads and loads of things, saying he has to have this, if you don't do it then he's going to reoffend... I'm less likely to offend now. I've got stability... if it wasn't for the flat I would still be offending.'

In this case T2A provided an essential service by bringing other services together to make a significant difference to the life of a young adult.

Another young adult from West Mercia had also received intermittent mental health support through the Youth Offending Service. Her T2A worker again worked to fill in the gaps between different services and workers:

'Well, they all do different things, but [my T2A worker] I can rely on the most because I know she will be there. I think she's the one I can rely on more than most because I know she'll be there, kind of thing. The others are quite hard to get hold of, kind of thing. Connexions, that's the one you can go to and talk, kind of thing – she's okay, but my T2A worker, I'd say she was the one I could go to for anything. I'm not just saying that either, just because of this interview.'

(T2A client, West Mercia)

The reliability of T2A is linked to the emotional wellbeing support that T2A provides, making service users feel safe and secure. In this case, reliability is what marks her T2A worker out from other services, so in a sense she was filling in the gaps left by other services – 'she is the one I could go to for anything'. Because T2A is not specialised, the worker is flexible enough to create a unifying structure which other services fit around.

Discussion

The T2A pilots provide informal emotional support that increases the emotional wellbeing of service users. There is evidence here that the pilots are increasing emotional wellbeing through providing service users with a sense of safety, and building up their confidence and skills to be able to deal with adversity and stress. There is also evidence by the second stage of young adults' confidence having increased to the extent that they feel empowered to negotiate problems without T2A support.

The more acute mental health needs of the service users varied considerably between

the pilots. More of the service users at the West Mercia pilot seemed to have greater mental health needs than those at other services, with seven out of eleven interviewed having been prescribed antidepressants in the past.

For this sample, the role of T2A did not lie in referring young adults on to mental health services, but in providing joined-up multi-agency work for these service users. In these cases the pilot provided practical support through working with a number of services to share information, and also by advocating effectively for them. Often, the practical support had the effect of increasing the individual's emotional wellbeing.

Drugs and alcohol

T2A substance misuse support

This chapter examines the patterns of drug and alcohol misuse in the sample and looks at the background of support from substance misuse services. It then examines the support provided by the T2A approach for young adults with these problems.

Substance misuse background

Table 9 summarises the key data on the substance misuse needs of the sample.

It is essential to consider the data within a national context where young adults (16 to 24) are the group most likely to binge drink and use illegal drugs, and the 20 to 24 age group are those most likely to use Class A substances (Devitt et al; 2009).

13 people (36 per cent of the sample) said they had been in contact with substance misuse services in the past, and 14 said they had some kind of difficulty with

alcohol or drugs now or in the past, and this was quite evenly spread between the pilots. Of these, seven self-reported alcohol misuse or dependence now or in the past, and ten reported problems with drug misuse, with three reporting both.

Alcohol misuse

Between 2004 and 2005, 37 per cent of all offenders had both a problem with alcohol and/or were regular binge drinkers (Devitt et al; 2009). In our sample seven (19 per cent) of the 36 young adults reported problems with alcohol dependence or misuse now or in the past. These were concentrated in Birmingham and West Mercia, with only one person reporting problems with alcohol misuse in London.

Alcohol has been linked to offending and particularly to violent and motoring offences (Devitt et al; 2009). NOMS data has shown that between 2004 and 2005, 32 per cent of offenders felt alcohol had contributed towards them committing crime. When considering the offences committed by those in the sample, it is

Table: 9: Key substance misuse data for the sample

	Total	London	West Mercia	Birmingham
Previous contact with substance misuse services	13 (36%)	2 (13%)	7 (64%)	4 (40%)
Self-reported alcohol misuse	7 (19%)	1 (7%)	3 (27%)	3 (30%)
Self-reported drug misuse	10 (28%)	4 (27%)	4 (36%)	2 (20%)

relevant that nine interviewees (25 per cent) explicitly mentioned being under the influence when they committed their last offence, five of which were violent offences.

The association between alcohol and drugs and offending varied across the pilots, however; in fact, although those at London T2A mentioned substance misuse, only one person explicitly related their offence to being under the influence. At both Birmingham T2A and West Mercia T2A, four people mentioned being under the influence whilst committing their offence.

Drug misuse

Drug misuse is common amongst young adult offenders. For example, whilst only 15 per cent of 18 to 25-year-olds who committed a crime in 2005 reported having taken no drugs in the previous year, 40 per cent reported that they had (Home Office; 2006).²² In our sample ten young adults (28 per cent) reported issues with drug misuse or dependency now or in the past. Cannabis and powder cocaine use were most frequent in this group, which corresponds to general patterns of drug use amongst younger offenders. Heroin and crack cocaine use are more common amongst older offenders.

Of the ten young adults who self-reported problems with drug misuse, one reported a long term problem with heroin dependency and had been given a Drug Rehabilitation Requirement (DRR) as part of her sentence. Four people reported problems with cannabis misuse, and five reported frequent use of a mixture of two or more drugs including cocaine, mephedrone, amphetamines and ecstasy.

Substance misuse support

This evaluation provides evidence of T2A playing a role in referral to substance misuse services as well as actively supporting service users to access services. There were also indicators that informal emotional support and work on building up emotional wellbeing was instrumental in supporting some service users to move away from substance dependency and misuse.

As with the support provided for those with mental health needs, in most cases T2A was the 'glue' that brought services together. It also filled in the gaps in support. There is also evidence that T2A was a critical source of support in ending substance misuse and dependency in some cases through providing practical help.

Specialist substance misuse support

At the first interview eight interviewees were in contact with some kind of substance misuse support. At the second stage this had reduced to two people. One of these interviewees had been reconvicted and was in custody at the second stage, but five others were no longer receiving substance misuse support.

Looking at those who were reconvicted, only one of six had substance misuse support at the first stage of interviews and three had had contact with substance misuse services in the past, which is a fairly high proportion.

Of the eight young adults who had substance misuse support in the first stage, seven had received it through the Probation Service or Youth Offending

22 Home Office: Research, Development and Statistics Directorate. (2006). Young people and crime: Findings from the 2005 offending, crime and justice survey.

Service. Of these, three were doing accredited courses with the Probation Service and three had support workers from the Young People's Substance Misuse Service which they accessed through the Youth Offending Service. The young adult with the DRR was receiving support from the Community Drugs Team.

One young adult was receiving support from an alcohol misuse service with which her T2A worker had put her in contact. This young adult reported a problem with alcohol dependency:

Lizzie, 20, Birmingham

Lizzie had lost custody of her child to her ex-boyfriend at the first interview stage because of her issues with alcohol dependency and involvement in offending. Her T2A worker put her in touch with an adult alcohol misuse service and supported her to access it by literally taking her to the service each week.

'I am not going to lie to you, I used to sit here and drink wine after wine after wine. Bottle after bottle, after bottle. I didn't care. I didn't care if I was here, you know like that. I didn't care if I was alive or dead. That is the honest truth but all that's changed now.

I have done over 27 courses, things like that. I have been to AA Alcohol. I went to everything they threw at me, yeah. I used to go there and back to get breathalysed, do you know what I mean, but who used to take me? [My T2A worker] He didn't have to go out of his way and take me to go and get breathalysed, just so it is all logged down on paper.

Lizzie's main aim was to regain custody of her daughter, so she was motivated to be voluntarily breathalysed once a week to prove to herself that she was no longer alcohol dependent. However, after T2A

had referred her to the service, she still needed the push and the reliable support from her T2A worker to ensure that she could make the most of it.

'My T2A worker made me realise, "What am I doing?" so thank you, really, to him, 'cos I wouldn't be sitting here today. That is the truth, that is, and he knows that himself. I think I have said, "Thank you," [and] but now, I don't need him, really, but I know he is always there to point me in the right direction and guide me that way, do you know what I mean?'

By the second interview, she was sharing custody of her daughter and no longer felt the need for alcohol misuse support.

T2A practical and multi-agency support

Most of the young people who no longer had substance misuse support at the second stage were in far more stable situations with regard to accommodation, education and other aspects of their lives. T2A often provided practical support to deal with underlying issues linked to substance misuse, and co-ordinated effective multi-agency work with substance misuse services. In the case study above, Lizzie's T2A worker supported her to access an alcohol misuse service, but rather than signposting, the support is active. Her T2A worker acts as the 'glue' and brings different services together.

At the West Mercia T2A pilot, many of the clients are younger and come through the Youth Offending Service (YOS). The pilot has a close relationship with the YOS, and T2A clients often have a number of different support workers which the T2A worker will have to work alongside. Three of the clients in West Mercia were receiving support from the young people's substance misuse team within the YOS. For these clients, the role of T2A was to work with them and make sure their client was

supported to attend, and get the best out of, the service. As in the mental health chapter, here it is clear that T2A workers provide a reliable base, and fill the gaps between services. One T2A client compared her T2A worker to other support services:

'I'd say that it's a lot more supportive, like T2A are a lot more supportive. Literally it's anything, do you know what I mean? You can ask them about anything. Sometimes when I had a problem with my drugs I never admitted to other people, but if I was with my [T2A worker], I'd let her speak for me because I just used to find it awkward, and help me a lot more in other supportive ways as well.'

(T2A client, West Mercia)

T2A workers also provided key practical support which in some cases was crucial in supporting a young adult to end their dependency. For example, a T2A worker provided intensive support to the young adult who had long term issues with heroin dependency, but the key stability she provided was in supporting her to access accommodation:

'What do you think would have happened if you hadn't had your T2A worker?'

'Well we wouldn't have had the flat for starters, because they didn't want to give it us. And [my T2A worker] had to say, "They're fine, they're not any trouble". I probably would be living in some shared house now, or living back at my mum's which wouldn't have been any good for me, 'cos me and my mum get on well, but living together – it just doesn't work.'

I'd probably still be on the gear, I might have the willpower to do it, but like I said, it's having someone there to say "you can do it". I think you know what – I'd probably be either in jail, still on probation, in and out of court probably, all that sort of stuff that I used to do. I'd be quite a mess actually.'

(T2A client, West Mercia)

This young adult had the support she needed to end her heroin dependency and get back on track. This meant support from a specialist drug worker, but it also crucially required the practical and emotional support to become an independent adult. As she says, without this she would have found it very difficult to move on from her dependency.

Emotional wellbeing and substance misuse

Many of the young adults with substance misuse problems in this sample also had problems with mental health and wellbeing. The T2A pilot in Birmingham links substance misuse and emotional wellbeing, and argues that often there are underlying issues with dealing with stress and adversity which differ from the substance misuse issues affecting adults:

'[Substance misuse services for young people] are more about guidance and advising. Adult services are more about rehabilitation and addiction. We've got people here who aren't entrenched, but use it to cope with stressful situations. It comes under this whole mental wellbeing area – coping strategies. We have someone who knows a lot about drug and alcohol abuse, but we employed them under "emotional wellbeing". It's all about coping strategies to deal with things. She has alternatives. Younger people aren't so in touch with their emotions. They just respond. It's about handling their emotions. Sometimes things get confusing and complicated, and as you get older you find ways of dealing with things.'

(Service Manager, Birmingham T2A)

The support in building up the emotional wellbeing of service users was clearly linked to support with substance misuse in this sample. For many, underlying mental health issues and difficult family histories

were driving the substance misuse. Rather than being dependent, many were using substances to deal with difficult emotions.

The support T2A workers provide in building up emotional wellbeing through their 'strengths-based' model can be critical in supporting service users to cope with difficult emotions and feelings rather than resorting to drugs.

Anna, 17, West Mercia

Anna reported problems with both drug and alcohol misuse, and was receiving support through the Youth Offending Service. Her T2A worker provided her with emotional support which impacted on her substance misuse:

'I used to drink every night, but I've stopped that now sort of. Yeah I'm stopping drinking. When I first started seeing my T2A worker, that was when I first started going mad on my drugs, and I'd cut down on my drinking then. That was when I first started doing drugs... My T2A worker chats to me about them. She does help me with my drugs and that... I feel like I can chat to her more about things than like my (substance misuse) worker...'

And, to be honest, I know it sounds pretty stupid, but it was like she was a counsellor as well. I mean I could chat to her about anything and she'd never have a go at me or say, "You shouldn't be doing this". She'd try and point me in the right direction.'

In this case, her T2A worker is providing emotional support to help her cope with the issues driving her substance misuse. In addition, T2A provided Anna with supported accommodation, and by the end of the interview period she no longer had specific substance misuse support, although she was able to access such support through her supported accommodation if she should need it.

Discussion

Alcohol and drug misuse were common in this sample, which matches the general profile of young adult offenders. Many had accessed support through the Youth Offending Service or Probation, although T2A played a clear referral role in one case. In most cases, the role T2A played was to be the 'glue' bringing services together, working with Probation, the Youth Offending Service and other non-statutory services to bridge the transitions and fill the gaps in support.

There is evidence that T2A was a critical source of support in ending substance misuse and dependency for some young adults through providing practical help. This was particularly the case for those who achieved the stability they needed through T2A's support in helping them get good quality accommodation.

T2A staff linked substance misuse among young adults to wider issues with emotional wellbeing and the ability to cope with difficult emotions and stress. In this sample there is evidence that T2A workers were building up emotional wellbeing through informal emotional support. In some cases this support played a role in moving service users away from substance dependency and misuse.

Families and children

This chapter focuses on the quality of family relationships for the young adults interviewed. It then explores the family support provided by the T2A approach, including relationships with children as a number of the interviewees were young parents.

Family background

Interviewees rated their relationship with their family out of ten in each interview to see how the quality of the relationship changed during six months of T2A support (ten being the most positive rating). The table below summarises the initial ratings along with data on whether they were living with their family.

The young adults' ratings of family relationships varied significantly between the pilots, and did not appear to be related to whether they were actually living with their family. West Mercia T2A had the highest family rating and Birmingham had the highest proportion living with family.

Interviewees also stated the most important support figures in their life at that moment at both interviews. At the first

stage, just over half named a family member as their most important support figure. At West Mercia, partners were named most frequently as the key support figure with fewer mentioning a family member. It seems that although those at West Mercia had better relationships with their family, they were slightly less reliant on them than at Birmingham or London.

T2A staff also featured significantly as important support figures. At the first interview stage, a fifth of the sample named their T2A worker as the most important support figure in their life. They were most frequently placed as the second most important support figure – by just under half of the interviewees. Overall 29 out of 36 interviewees (80 per cent) put their T2A worker in their 'top three'. This clearly indicates that T2A was playing an important role for the young adults from the beginning of engagement.

Family relationship outcomes

The family relationship rating changed over the course of the six month study period

Table 10: Key quantitative data on family and relationships (stage one)

	Total	London	West Mercia	Birmingham
Initial rating of relationship with family	7.21	6.61	8.05	7.15
Living with family	17 (47%)	6 (40%)	3 (27%)	8 (80%)

Chart 6: The family relationship ratings of interviewees at both stages



for those it was possible to follow up. In the first interview stage the average rating was 7.5 and by the second interview stage it had increased to 8.2 – see Chart 6.

The family ratings for those who were subsequently reconvicted or breached were lower than for those who did not: five out of ten at the first stage compared with the 7.5 for those who were not reconvicted or breached. So it would appear that those who were reconvicted or breached tended to have poorer relationships with their families.

Family relationship support

There is ample evidence that T2A is working effectively with families. In many cases it was clear that T2A workers were providing essential mediation work, enabling service users and their families to communicate better, and bringing them closer together.

The key element of family support seemed to be the time T2A workers were able to spend building up the trust of the service user and the family, which reflects the significance that they gave to the value of

doing this. In more traditional approaches to work with adults, the relationship with parents is rarely given emphasis because the workers' practice model conceives the client as having detached from their parents. But the T2A pilots' understanding of the importance of parents in the transition to adulthood meant that much greater emphasis was given to these relationships, especially those between the young adult and his or her mother. This appears to be a distinctive feature of the T2A approach.

The West Mercia pilot featured prominently in this area, providing effective family mediation for the majority of their clients. The type of work varied from on-the-spot mediation, to merely showing a parent that their son or daughter was doing well. The T2A model of work with families is best characterised as family mediation rather than traditional 'family intervention' – working with mutually supportive but increasingly independent parties.

Living independently

Four of the young adults (11 per cent) in the study had previously been in public care ('Looked After'). The Arrestee Survey (2007) showed that 16 per cent of those arrested

had spent time in a foster home, children's home or young person's unit. However, an additional 14 interviewees had a history of living independently, having left the family home for a variety of different reasons including relationship breakdown. The story for many of them is one of moving in with friends and relatives rather than going into care:

Alf, 18, London

Alf was homeless when he was interviewed at the first stage, and described a past in which he had not had stable accommodation since the age of 13. His parents had a difficult and unstable relationship and this had impacted heavily on him from a young age:

'Because my mum and dad used to always just argue, that's the reason why I think I got in trouble a lot at school. They always used to argue before I went to school, and I just used to go to school angry, start fighting, stuff like that. I never really got on with them.'

The relationship between his parents led to him leaving his family home and having little stability in his living situation:

'My mum kicked me out with my dad, and then she had my dad back. I could have gone with him but I didn't want to, for the next time to be kicked out with him again. I just didn't want to. So I met my girlfriend and then her mum let me move in and, 'cos we knew her from when I was proper young – I've known her for like 11 years, and like her mum knew the sort of stuff that happened in my house, and she let me go and live there. And then it was alright there. But then she got a new boyfriend and he's like very controlling, and he told her to get me out. She even kicked her own daughter out 'cos of him.'

This interviewee has a complicated history of difficult family relationships and homelessness. By the second interview stage, Alf had been reconvicted.

The experiences of the young adult above were not very different from others in the sample. Although many service users did have strong and supportive families, the problems of those who did not were often entrenched by the time they had reached young adulthood. The priority for T2A was enabling the family to function in a way that supported the young person's independence.

'Where did you live when you were growing up?'

'I just used to stay with my step-mum and then I left her for my dad, went back to my mum, it wasn't working with my mum, I went to my dad, weren't working with my dad and now it's just me. I'd rather keep it that way, just me. I never really grew up basically, with either of my parents. None of my parents grew me. That's one of the reasons why I am what I am now.'

(T2A client, London)

This young adult has had a long history of family difficulties and at the point of contact with T2A, no longer has a desire to be reliant on their family. In a service working with younger people, family intervention might be essential, but for a young adult, the work is more about family mediation.

Family mediation

T2A work with families was often ad hoc conflict mediation. The essential ingredient necessary for this work was having sufficient time to make a relationship with the young person and their family, in order to build up the trust of all parties, and a belief in the value of doing so. Overall there

were nine cases where T2A worked intensively with the family at some point during the interview period.

The West Mercia pilot placed an emphasis on work with families. The pilot tended to have fairly low case loads which meant they were able to do very intensive work with each person and meetings often took place in the homes of the young adult. At the first stage of the interviews, over half of the cases involved the T2A worker getting to know the family and providing support in the relationship between the parent(s) and the young adult. This tended to happen as a matter of course, particularly where the young adult still lived with their family.

The nature of the family work varied according to whether a young adult lived with their family or not. In some situations where interviewees were younger, and still lived with parents, the T2A worker could have difficulties disassociating from their parents, and this could make mediation harder. The key factor was often the level of maturity of the young adult.

In some situations, work involved literally mediating arguments, and being there with the service user and their parent to help each see the other's point of view. In the case study below, the T2A worker was there to calm down the situation so that the young adult and her mother could communicate with one another more effectively:

Kim, 21, West Mercia

Kim had problems with drug dependence, and her relationship with her mother had deteriorated a number of years previously. Her mother also had problems with alcoholism which made it difficult for them to deal with conflict. Kim had a very good relationship with her T2A worker, who worked with her family and her boyfriend.

The T2A worker saw that her relationship with her mother was a key area that needed improvement and spent time working with them both together:

'My T2A worker just basically said, "Stop having the arguments with your mum. Just sit back and try and just see it from your mum's point of view".

Me and my mum, we spoke about it and my T2A worker was there actually with us. They sort of mediated [laughs] and it started to get a little bit heated but they were like, "No, no, just keep calm. There's no need to get to that point where you're in each other's faces because that's not gonna achieve anything". So really in the long term it has helped me and my mum out because now if we do get to a point of we're gonna be shouting my mum will say, "Go!", or I will just walk off which is probably better in the long run than getting to the stage of being in a slanging match.'

This young adult rated her relationship with her family at five out of ten at the first interview stage, and at the second stage she rated it at ten out of ten. Clearly in this case T2A made a substantial change in the relationship between her and her mother.

In other situations the T2A worker acted as a conduit between parties, keeping the parents updated and speaking to them when a young adult did not feel that they could.

In very troubled families, where the relationship has long since broken down, or where there is a history of neglect or abuse, the role of T2A might not be to bring the family together. In such circumstances, the family may not be a source of support, but the young adult might still want their family to be a part of their life:

Anna, 17, West Mercia

Anna was only 17 at the time she was referred to T2A, and she had been living in hostels for a few years. She had a very difficult relationship with her mother and Social Services had been involved. Her T2A worker played an intensive support role in her life:

'Say if we had like arguments and that, and I didn't want to speak to my mum because I used to be quite stubborn, and also my mum like, it was both of us. [My T2A worker] used to help us.

I'd say to my T2A worker, "Can you ring my mum and say this?" or "Can you speak to my mum about this because she'll understand it better coming from you?" Sometimes I'd have an argument with my mum and I'd feel like it was all her, and then I'd talk to my T2A worker about it and then I'd realise that it's partly me. She did help out a lot with my mum to be honest.'

In this difficult relationship, it was less about T2A bringing everyone to the same table, and more about making sure that they were still communicating with each other in some way.

For the interviewees with supportive and strong families, the conflicts that arose frequently stemmed from frustrations over the young adults' involvement in crime. If they were NEET, arguments were about them not being productive. In London, a number of young adults were frequently in conflict with parents over their offending, and sometimes about their involvement with gangs.

In these situations the T2A worker took a different approach in mediation, encouraging the parent to focus on the positives and what the young person was achieving:

Stephen, 21, London

Stephen was living with his mother at the first stage of interviews, but their relationship had been difficult for long periods:

'We had problems since I was young, I don't know, just problems. She just want me out of the house, nothing I can do. I really want to live independent. She don't really allow me to have a say. Anything is my fault, anything that happens. She don't want me to tell her my point of view. She just jump on anything, she don't listen to me.'

He had recently left custody for the second time and since then, their relationship had deteriorated further and they were having difficulties communicating:

'Now it's that bad, sometimes me and my mum don't even talk. She don't say nothing to me sometimes, she just ignore me. I ask her a question she just ignores me...'

By the second interview, he was no longer living at home. He had moved into private rented accommodation with a friend. But his relationship with his mother had improved dramatically:

'And how are you getting on with your family?'

'Much much better. There's no problems there, it's much much better than before. I was arguing with my mum, but since I came out I've kept out of trouble and she's been really happy. [My T2A worker] used to come to my house and speak to my mum often, so I think that helped as well, just for her to know that I'm doing something positive.'

This young adult had the potential to have a good relationship with his mother

and a part of the difficulties they had were due to her frustration and unhappiness at his involvement in crime. His T2A worker supported their relationship by taking the time to show his mother that he was making positive changes to his life. This meant she could build up trust in him again, in a way that would have been difficult without an external influence.

The family work provided by T2A workers was flexible; it took place when needed in a way that suited the individual. T2A workers deal with similar problems to those addressed by young people's services, but catch them further downstream. The work varies according to the maturity of the particular young adult, the nature of the relationship problems and the degree to which the family is capable of providing support.

Children

There were five young adults who had children at the second interview stage; two were fathers and three were mothers. Four of these young parents lived full-time with their children and one had his child to stay at weekends.

Although the pilots were not carrying out formal parenting work, their input helped some parents to care better for their children through an indirect route. For example, the work the project did on addressing substance misuse or mental health needs made a big difference where these problems had been preventing the young adult from caring for their child adequately.

The example below is an extreme case where a service user had lost custody of their child because of problems with alcohol use:

Lizzie, 20, Birmingham

Lizzie had lost custody of her child to her ex-boyfriend when the first interview took place because of behaviour related to her alcoholism and involvement in offending. Part of the support she received from T2A was in helping her see what she could do to get past these issues and get her daughter back:

'So, my issue was the alcohol. I ain't going to lie, I'll put my hands up. I was a bit of a mad head. I had an alcohol problem, and then it was [my T2A worker] that made me realise what life's about and I needed to stop. I needed to fix up my life, so I did...'

I have got my daughter took off me by my ex-partner. He got a Residence Order over my daughter. I went a bit mad because he took my baby away from me. So you know, imagine being a mother and then being nothing. Going back to being a teenager. I didn't want that. I was a Ma and when he took Debbie off me, my daughter, God, I went crazy.

Basically, it's only just gone right for me this year. We have got half and half custody, half and half each. She comes here now. I took her back yesterday. I have got her again on Sunday for two weeks, so yeah, it is really. I get on with her dad brilliant now as well.'

The T2A worker harnessed Lizzie's motivation for change and focused on helping her do what she needed to do in order to care for her daughter. The worker's persistence and knowledge of court processes were also key factors that assisted Lizzie to make the changes in her life that she needed in order to convince the court to agree to shared custody arrangements.

This young adult above would have found it extremely difficult to do everything necessary to secure joint custody of her child alone. The T2A support provided her with the knowledge, and emotional support necessary to do this. This story is unique amongst the sample, but serves as a very powerful example of how T2A is able to tailor its work to address an individual's particular needs.

Discussion

The family support work provided by T2A was diverse and varied according to the maturity of each young adult, the nature of the problems in the relationship, and the degree to which the family was capable of supporting the young adult. West Mercia, in particular, did intensive family work with many of their clients.

The key element of family support seemed to be the time T2A workers were able to spend building up the trust of the service user and the family, which reflects the significance that they gave to the value of doing this, contrasting with more traditional approaches to work with adults

where the relationship with parents is given less emphasis. The workers' understanding of the importance of parents in the transition to adulthood is a distinctive feature of the T2A approach.

This work is different to traditional 'family intervention' because the clients are young adults on the way to independence. Families could be essential as a support network, but did not have the same influence and importance for a 21-year-old as they would for a 15-year-old. The work is therefore best characterised as family mediation rather than intervention; working with mutually supportive but increasingly independent parties.

Overall, the family relationship rating increased over the six month study period, so it seems likely that T2A was having a generally positive effect on family relationships. In certain cases it is also clear that T2A workers were providing essential mediation work, providing the young adult with a support network which would aid them when they no longer had the support of T2A.

T2A and the Probation Service

The Probation Service has changed radically over the past 20 years. From ‘befriend, advise and assist,’ the goal of probation is now ‘enforcement, rehabilitation, and public protection’ (Burnett et al; 2005). Probation Officers have become ‘offender managers’ accountable to the government and the general public.

The prioritisation of enforcement, and the focus on ensuring that offenders comply with the sentences given to them, has also led to a concentration on targets and group work, which has tended to reduce the discretion given to Probation Officers. The coalition government is now aiming to reduce the target driven nature of NOMS, and Probation Trusts are talking about a return to ‘effective practice’. However, the high case loads, the focus on managing risk, and the generalised nature of statutory provision is likely to continue to limit how far discretion can be achieved.

The T2A pilots were set up to provide support, tailored to the specific needs of young adults, that the Probation Service is not able to provide – to offer something extra. This chapter investigates how T2A works with the Probation Service to support young adults, focusing on the Birmingham pilot, which is based within Staffordshire and West Midlands Probation Trust.

This chapter is based on interviews with Community Engagement Officers (T2A workers) and the Manager of the Birmingham T2A pilot, highlighting the limits of statutory work with young adults

and showing where T2A really makes the difference. It also draws on interviews with ten young people not receiving T2A support, randomly selected from several different Probation offices around Birmingham.

Advantages of the T2A approach

The Birmingham T2A pilot was set up in 2009. It is located within a Probation office and is run by the Probation Service. The manager and some of the staff had previously been Probation Officers. This puts the pilot in an interesting position, in between two different ways of working, with a unique perspective on the benefits of the T2A approach.

Within the Probation Service, age is not seen as a diversity issue. The staff at the Birmingham T2A pilot felt that although Probation staff have had training on diversity, age had not been a priority so was not ‘in focus’ as an issue to deal with:

‘The Probation Service is very generalised, it does a lot of signposting, sends a lot of people out to different places, whereas the T2A focus brings it all in and you start thinking “young adults”.’

(T2A service manager, Birmingham)

The T2A approach is specialised in its concentration on young adults alone. It supplements the work of Offender Management/Probation, filling in the gaps

where young adults might need extra support. Three areas highlight the advantages of the T2A approach:

- time and flexibility
- enforcement
- participation.

Time and flexibility

One of the key differences between the Probation Service and T2A is the time and flexibility given to work with clients. This time was seen as absolutely critical for working with young adults, who may need intensive support:

'The main difference is time to spend with individuals. It could be three days out of five if someone needs it, whereas that's not feasible as a Probation worker.'

(T2A worker, Birmingham)

For many of the interviewees on probation in Birmingham, the issue of time was something they came back to when asked about the support they received from the Probation Service. In the majority of interviews they were spending around 20 minutes with their Probation Officer each session, and this limited the amount they were able to engage.

The much reduced case load of a T2A worker is the big difference. A Probation worker could have a case load of as many as 50 clients, whereas T2A workers would normally only have up to around 15 clients. They also have the advantage of not being responsible for statutory requirements that take up a Probation worker's time.

A Probation worker may see their client for an hour a week, and much of this time will be taken up by courses that the client is required to attend. For example, in the first four weeks of probation, a client will spend many of the sessions on courses rather than building up a relationship with the

Probation Officer. In contrast, T2A workers have the flexibility to see their clients as often as they need and are able to see them in informal environments. Rather than having to spend sessions in an office, a T2A worker can spend time at the client's home, or in an environment which is neutral, like a café. The T2A worker has a degree of discretion that is not available to a Probation Officer.

Enforcement

The Probation Service is now based around the concept of risk management and public accountability. It has to be seen to be punishing offenders and protecting the public from harm. Rehabilitation work comes under the umbrella of public protection and if an offender is not complying with their order, their Probation Officer has to be stringent about reporting them for this breach.

This focus makes the relationship between a Probation Officer and a client a difficult balance, and necessarily puts a Probation Officer into a position of authority. Sometimes this can be a barrier in engaging with that client, because it can lead to a lack of trust and make a client worried about being open for fear of a breach. For some of the interviewees who were on probation in Birmingham, probation was seen as a punishment and therefore not somewhere to look for help.

'They don't always realise that probation can support them, it's always difficult, if one person says they are going to breach you one week and the next they want to help you, it's difficult to come to terms with.'

(T2A worker, Birmingham)

The staff at the Birmingham T2A pilot were very clear with the Probation Officers that in relation to supporting the young adults, 'enforcement' was not part of their role. They felt that not having to focus on this

aspect gave them the flexibility to build trust, room to share information with that young adult, and gave them time that Probation Officers have to spend on reports and risk assessments:

'We make a point of not worrying about the statutory element and we've said to Probation we're not doing that, we're not doing your job for you, we're an add-on. We're doing the extra bits that you don't have the time or resources to do, and that message has got through quite nicely now.'

(T2A service manager, Birmingham)

The relationship was seen to be important for work with young adults specifically because of the variability of emotional maturity at that age, and the susceptibility of young adults to the influence of their peers. In some senses the influence of the T2A worker is contending with the influence of a peer group. At the Birmingham pilot, the workers felt the ability to build trusting relationships with the young adults was the key way to counteract this, and this was confirmed by T2A clients:

'[My T2A worker is] someone I can trust. That's the first thing that comes to mind. And someone I class as a friend and he doesn't need to be a friend, but he acts like a friend anyway. No it's his job. This is his job. He doesn't have to answer the phone to give me advice at silly o'clock but he does. He's there when I need him.'

(T2A client, Birmingham)

Participation

The final area where the difference between T2A and Probation was marked was that of participation. T2A is a voluntary programme which means that young adults only get involved if they choose to do so. For the staff at the Birmingham pilot it was a complete contrast to the way they had been used to working as former Probation Officers, and it took time for them to

recognise the advantages of the voluntary approach. This was never truer than when bringing together groups of young adults from across Probation to attend education or employment programmes:

'We've tried to get groups of people to attend, and I'm thinking if it's statutory it would be easier, to get numbers it would be easier, to get quality it would be harder. It's about the quality.'

(T2A service manager, Birmingham)

The voluntary nature of the T2A approach is critical to its model of engagement; it relies on the motivation of the young adult, and their relationship with their T2A worker. This is what makes it different but complementary to the work of a Probation Officer. One T2A client explained when asked what she liked about T2A:

'I bet everyone says this to you, voluntary, it's voluntary. That's the best thing about it, because you know you're doing it for yourself. You know when you go in – I haven't been told I've got to do it, I'm doing it because I want to. I'm going to end up better out of this.'

(T2A client, West Mercia)

The voluntary nature of T2A does mean it does not reach all young adults. The staff at the Birmingham pilot were aware that they only worked with people who were willing to engage. However, it made the quality of the work they did higher and also offered the prospect of getting to those who might be resistant in a Probation office.

Benefits of the T2A relationship with Probation

The staff at Birmingham T2A felt that being within the Probation Service was a huge advantage for their work. They also argued that their work with young adults was

beneficial to the relationship between that young adult and their Probation Officer.

Being based in a Probation office was an advantage because it meant there was no communication barrier between T2A workers and Probation Officers. They had access to the system and this cut down hugely on time and bureaucracy. Another key advantage was that the T2A service manager held a Senior Probation Officer rank (SPO) which gave her an authority within the Probation Service. This was seen to be vital in joined-up working with Probation because it meant she could deal efficiently with any issues with Probation and make sure the work of T2A was at the top of the Probation agenda.

The T2A workers in Birmingham also see the relationship between a young adult and their Probation Officer as part of their job. This involves both sharing information with the Probation Officer and easing any anxieties that a young adult might have in working with Probation.

Court work

The relationship with Probation also helps with the work the staff do in court and the relationship they have built up with the court staff. Two of the clients in Birmingham were referred to T2A by the court, as an informal element of their sentence, and there were at least two cases of a T2A worker going into a court to prevent breach. In one case the court gave a suspended sentence because of the intervention of a T2A worker:

'He came to the court with me. If it wasn't for him I would be doing like a year and a half now. He came to the court and supported me and told them what I was doing – the things that I'm doing now. Do you know what I mean? So then they were like, "Okay, so we'll give him a two year suspended sentence".'

(T2A client, Birmingham)

From this it seems the Birmingham pilot is acting as an alternative to custody because of their relationship with court staff and the confidence magistrates have in the pilot. They are very much 'insiders' and this allows them to hold sway in court:

'Now we get regular calls from court staff, and I think the magistrates are aware of that. If it's put in a court report that the person will work with T2A they can also say we'll provide a bi-monthly report on how T2A is going and that acts as an extra bit of accountability for us. And the magistrates are more likely to give a suspended sentence for them to work with T2A. I believe it has actually contributed to them not going to court.'

(T2A worker, Birmingham)

Links with the Youth Offending Service

This pilot has also taken on the responsibility of working on every transfer that comes from the Youth Offending Service into the Probation Service. This involves making sure all information is passed over, and providing three-way meetings with a T2A worker, the young adult and the Probation Officer. This work ensures that Probation Officers have all the information they need and eases the transition between services for the young adult.

Discussion

In Birmingham, the relationship with Probation is central to the way T2A operates. The workers are providing an added extra for a group that frequently needs additional support to desist from crime. Probation is a general service that, whilst acknowledging various aspects of diversity, has not taken age and maturity properly into account. T2A was therefore essential to provide a focus on the young adult age group and their specific needs.

The Probation worker was seen as part of the relationship between a T2A worker and their client. Working with and aiding the Probation worker was part of their role, both in terms of their relationship with a client, and aiding the way a client engaged with their Probation Officer. In this sense T2A is literally an add-on to the Probation Service, as it can increase the compliance and engagement of a young adult with that service.

The key advantages that the T2A model provides in working with this age group are the time and flexibility of T2A workers; the fact that they do not have to enforce sentences and that the participation of the clients is voluntary. These factors allow T2A workers to engage with young adults in a way that would be difficult for Probation. The interviews show that these features allowed T2A workers to be more reliable and accessible than other services.

Taken to its fullest extent, the vision of T2A was similar to that of a Youth Offending Team, where workers from various disciplines combine to ensure that young offenders face the consequences of what they have done and tackle the factors which led to the offending in the first place. In a young adult model, Probation Officers would still deal with all cases, supporting the young adults to complete their orders, but T2A workers would be part of the service, providing the extra help needed. With other services such as health on site, there would be less need for the young adults to be 'signposted' elsewhere.

Conclusion

This evaluation was intended to explore the T2A model of work and examine the effectiveness of the T2A pilots in working with a specific young adult age group. Following the experiences of 36 service users over six months of contact with the pilots has provided a rich picture of the innovative work going on in each pilot. It also gives a window into the progress of service users as they embark on the transition into independent adulthood.

Three research questions provided the starting point for looking at the effectiveness of the T2A pilots:

1. Are young adults provided with dedicated T2A services less likely to reoffend than young adults who do not have access to this support?

This evaluation provides good indicators in answer to this question, although the small size of the sample prevents a definitive conclusion. The reconviction rate compares favourably to national reconviction rates, with only three reconvictions, and there were only three additional breaches of a sentence. A large scale study that incorporated a control group would be necessary in order to reach a firm conclusion on the impact of T2A services on reoffending.

Different background factors appeared to influence the offending behaviour of the young adults at the different pilots. The interviews indicated that in London, the influence of peer groups and gangs was significant. However, in West Mercia,

mental health issues and substance misuse problems were the major areas of concern. There was more variation within the Birmingham cohort which reflects the diversity of the young adult experience in Birmingham found in research by the Centre for Crime and Justice Studies (CCJS) (Dorling et al; 2011). Consequently, the young people's different backgrounds influenced the way the different pilots put the T2A model into action.

2. Does a dedicated T2A approach impact on young adults' access to employment, training or education?

The results are positive for education, training and employment, with significant reductions in the proportion of young adults not in education training or employment (NEET), and increases in employment. The London T2A pilot was particularly effective in helping their service users find sustainable apprenticeships that they enjoyed. The apprenticeships allowed the young adults to advance their skills and knowledge, and feedback on the apprenticeships was even more positive than it was from those in employment. The level three NVQ in Information Advice and Guidance received enthusiastic feedback from those undertaking it, advancing skills, knowledge, employment opportunities and self-confidence amongst those undertaking it.

Apprenticeships and courses with a vocational and training element were regarded far more positively by the young

adults than the purely educational courses. Those who did take part in courses without a vocational or training element seemed to drift in and out of them, often without completing the programme, and even when they did finish, the qualifications they gained did not appear to advance their chances of employment.

Overall, successful education, employment and training work with young adults seemed to revolve around providing options that had a clear route into employment. Outcomes that developed skills and confidence produced the best feedback, and the young adults on apprenticeships were more enthusiastic than those in employment.

3. Does a dedicated T2A approach impact on the young adults overall quality of and satisfaction with life?

The outcomes investigated in each chapter are linked to the National Offender Management Service's reducing reoffending pathways, and all provide part of the answer to this question.

Accommodation: The evidence shows that for many of the young adults in the sample, T2A played an essential role in finding them stable accommodation. Overall the results in terms of housing outcomes are ambiguous. For those it was possible to follow up, there was the same number of service users in urgent housing need at the second interview stage as at the first, although the specific individuals in this position had changed. The majority of those who were homeless also did not move on to stable accommodation. A study with a control group would make it possible to show more conclusively whether the outcomes as a whole are better than they would have been without T2A. It is possible that without T2A support, a greater proportion of young adults would have had urgent housing needs at the second interview stage, but it is only possible to speculate on this.

Comparing the different housing tenancies occupied by T2A clients highlights the relative strengths of these tenancies for a cohort of vulnerable young adults. T2A services are responsible for finding accommodation options that will be sustainable for this group, and living independently requires a level of maturity and responsibility that not all young adults have. Social housing provided the most stability for the interviewees in this sample, and private rented housing offered the least stability.

Mental health: There is evidence that T2A provides service users with a feeling of safety, and that the 'strengths-based' model builds up the confidence and skills they need to be able to deal with adversity and stress. These factors suggest that the T2A model enhances the young adults' emotional wellbeing.

This sample indicated that T2A's role was in facilitating joined-up multi-agency work for those who were engaged with mental health services, rather than in referring young adults to mental health services. In these cases the pilots provided practical support through working with a number of services to share information, and also by advocating effectively for them. Often, the practical support had the effect of increasing the individual's emotional wellbeing.

Substance misuse: There was evidence of T2A playing a role in referring service users to substance misuse services, as well as actively supporting their clients to use these specialist services. Emotional support and work on building emotional wellbeing helped some service users to move away from substance dependency and misuse.

As with the support to those with mental health needs, T2A was often the 'glue' that brought services together – filling the gaps in support. There is also evidence in some

cases that T2A was a critical source of support in helping end substance misuse and dependency through providing practical help.

Families and children: There is ample evidence that T2A was working effectively with families. In many cases it was clear that, through mediation work, T2A was helping service users and their families to communicate better and bringing them closer together. This work was a feature of the West Mercia pilot and was referred to by the majority of service users interviewed. Overall, the interviewees' rating of the quality of their family relationships increased over the six month study period which in some measure can be attributed to the impact of the T2A services.

The key element of family support seemed to be the time T2A workers were able to spend building up the trust of the service user and the family, which reflects the significance that they gave to the value of doing this, contrasting with more traditional approaches to work with adults where the relationship with parents is given less emphasis. The workers' understanding of the importance of parents in the transition to adulthood is a distinctive feature of the T2A approach.

The nature and extent of the family support varied according to the maturity of the young adult, the problems in the relationship, and the degree of support a family was able to provide. The T2A model of work with families is different to traditional 'family intervention' because the clients are young adults, and are on their way to independence. The work is therefore best characterised as family mediation rather than intervention; working with mutually supportive but increasingly independent parties.

The T2A model

The Oxford formative evaluation forwards seven theories as to why the T2A model 'works' or is expected to work (Burnett et al; 2010):

- Formation of a working alliance based on mutual respect and agreed goals, which increases self-worth of service users and motivates them to remain engaged
- Use of strengths-based principles emphasising what a service user can achieve rather than focusing on weaknesses or mistakes, motivating engagement and readiness to change
- An action plan determined by the client, encouraging co-operation because what is required of them is what they want anyway, respecting and promoting the agency of the service user in making changes
- The development of a respectful, empathetic relationship so there is a readiness to work together
- A client-led model of work giving the service user a taste for being in control and thereby building up self-efficacy
- Service users are connected to material resources and opportunities, which promotes changes in self-concept and identity
- Through referring and connecting the service users to the material resources and social opportunities that they need to 'get on' in life, their sense of self-efficacy and agency is sustained.

The Oxford study recognised that these features had been marshalled into a casework approach with young adults that was 'highly attuned to the transitional needs of young adults'. (Burnett et al, 2010, p.94), and that that the heart of the provision was a 'goal-based' and 'person-centred' approach that was critical to its success. These features also came

through clearly in this evaluation as the key factors behind effective practice.

The connection between access to material resources and change in self-concept and identity was apparent in relation to the education, training and employment and housing outcomes. The service users that were provided with practical help and opportunities were more confident and stable at the second interview stage.

The formation of a 'working alliance' and a 'respectful empathetic relationship' with the service user, central elements of the T2A model, were confirmed by interviewees as crucial in order to engage service users and their families. This way of working was also instrumental in improving the young adults' emotional wellbeing. These relationships were made possible because the T2A workers had sufficient time and flexibility to build trust and be there when they were needed. In contrast, interviews with young adults who were receiving probation supervision, but no T2A input, confirmed that the limited time on offer from the Probation worker could be a barrier to engagement. Time and flexibility were the elements of T2A provision that marked it out from other services, often making T2A the 'glue' between services – filling the gaps and providing reliable support that was there when needed.

The voluntary nature of T2A provision along with the client-focused and client-led model of work also came up frequently throughout the interviews as a key aspect of the pilots' ability to engage with young adults. The 'person-centred' approach at the heart of the model described in the formative evaluation appeared to contrast sharply with what the Probation Service was able to offer and made T2A a perfect 'add-on'.

The 'strengths-based' principles of the T2A model emerged clearly in the work related to emotional wellbeing, mental health and

substance misuse. In the interviews, service users frequently remarked that their T2A worker's positive attitude – focusing on what they were capable of achieving – increased their confidence and self-belief.

Looking forward

The young adults interviewed for this study could all be described as vulnerable in some way, either through involvement in the criminal justice system, or because of housing, education, mental health and substance misuse needs. For every T2A client, the transition to adulthood was harder than for the average young adult. Whilst it could still be an exciting time, it was undoubtedly a time fraught with stress, confusion and even danger. There was a clear need for specific support for each interviewee to help them to get through the transition.

This evaluation has provided good indicators that the T2A model provides effective support for young adults and helps them in desisting from crime. There is ample evidence that T2A improves the quality of life of service users and has an impact on their emotional wellbeing and self-belief. A small scale evaluation like this is able to provide a rich source of qualitative data on the journey of service users over time and shows us the distinctive work developing in Birmingham, London and West Mercia pilots. T2A workers were providing critical support for many of the young people who were undertaking these complex journeys, and without them outcomes are likely to have been very different.

Large and rigorous evaluations such as the Diamond Initiative (DI) evaluation show that we should be cautious about positive findings, and often, once pilots are 'rolled out' results tend to be more moderate (London CJP; 2011). Evaluations such as the DI and also the Intensive Alternatives

to Custody study (MOJ; 2011), remind us that reducing reoffending is not a simple business. Yet, it would be a mistake to use such findings to reinforce a risk-averse approach. Evidence should also encourage innovation.

A large scale evaluation with a control group would be a good next step in exploring the effectiveness of the T2A model with young adults. As the pilots are growing and establishing themselves, this

is now a feasible project that would provide invaluable evidence for the growing T2A Alliance evidence base. However, one lesson we can take from national trials is the importance of avoiding a 'one size fits all approach'. This evaluation shows the importance of moulding the key principles of a model to specific local contexts. Projects in separate locations can use the same principles to good effect with very varied client groups if they are sensitive to these differences.

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Appendix

First interview

1. How did you get into contact with T2A?

- Can you tell me about what kinds of things your support worker has helped you with?
- How often do you see them?
- What are the main reasons you get in touch with them?
- How comfortable do you feel calling them in an emergency?
- Have they ever worked with you and your family together?

2. So can you tell me a bit about yourself?

3. What about schools, can you tell me about the schools or colleges you've been to since you were 11?

- For each institution: Can you give me ages at which you attended?
- (Referring to the institution) was it full-time or part-time?
- (Referring to the institution) thinking back to that time, how did you feel about going to school/college?
- Did you receive any qualifications?
- Have you been on any other courses since then?
- (If coming out of custody) Have you been on any courses whilst in prison?

4. Are you on any kind of course at the moment?

- When did you start?
- What are you doing?
- What's it like?
- Do you have plans for your education in the next 6 months?

5. What about jobs, have you been employed before?

- Can you tell me about it?
- What about voluntary work?
- Are you employed now?
- Are you aiming to get a job in the near future? What?
- What kind of benefits are you on? Have you had any problems with this?

6. What was your housing situation before your conviction?

- Where are you living now?
- (If family) Were you living with them before your conviction?
- How easy was it to move in with them?
- What kind of accommodation is it?
- How and when did you secure this accommodation?
- How do you feel about it?
- Where would you like to be living?

7. Have you ever been in contact with mental health services?

- (If yes) Can you tell me about the times you have had to use mental health services and why?
- How long running has the problem been?
- Can you tell me about how you were referred to them?
- Were you in contact with them before your conviction?
- Are you in contact with mental health services now?

8. Have you used medication in connection with this, are you using it now?

- How often has it affected you, and how severely?
- (If no) Have you ever attempted to access mental health services?
- (If yes) What led you to this?
- Why hasn't it happened?
- Have you ever been prescribed medication for mental health related issues such as depression?
- Can you tell me about why you were prescribed them?
- Is there any support you feel that you need in relation to this?

9. What about drug or alcohol services, have you ever been in contact with them? Which service?

- (If yes) Can you tell me about the times you have had to use this service?
- How long running has the problem been?
- Can you tell me about how you were referred to them?
- Were you in contact with them before your conviction?
- Are you currently in contact with this service?

- (If no) Have you ever attempted to access drug or alcohol services?
- What led to this?
- (If yes) Why hasn't it happened?
- Can you tell me about any illegal drugs you have used regularly?
- For each one: How often have you taken it in the past year?
- When was the first time you took it?

10. In the past have you used any other support workers or programmes?

- Can you tell me about when this was and what it involved?
- Are you in contact with any other support workers or programmes now?
- How did you become involved in this?

11. How often do you see your Offender Manager?

- How do you feel about them?
- Do you feel they are a source of support?

12. So what about support figures in your life? Who would you say was the strongest support figure in your life?

- (Referring to the person they choose) How have they helped you?
- Do you feel like you could ring this person in any situation?
- How comfortable do you feel in talking to them about personal problems?

13. Could you rank these people in terms of how important they are in terms of support?

- Family member
- T2A worker
- Other support worker
- Friends
- Boyfriend/ girlfriend

- Offender Manager
- Other

14. Can you tell me about how you get on with your family?

- How would you rate your relationship with your family out of 10 at the moment? Where 10 is very good and 1 very difficult.
- How would you rate your relationship with your family before your conviction out of 10?
- Did you always live with your family when growing up?
- (If they don't live with family) How do you feel about not living with your family?
- (If they live with family) How easy has it been living with your family?

15. Has your T2A worker helped in your relationship with your family?

16. Can you tell me about the offence that led to your current conviction?

- What sentence did you get?
- Is it your first conviction?
- If first: can you tell me about the times you have offended in the past year?
- If not: can you tell me about the previous convictions you have had?
- For each conviction: when, what was the offence, was this the first time you had done this?
- Can you tell me about the times you have offended in the past year?
- Can you tell me about the first time you offended?

17. How confident are you in not reoffending in the future?

- Very confident
- Reasonably confident
- Unsure
- Not confident

18. Why do you feel that way?

- (If they have previous offences) How do you feel about your situation now in comparison to after your last conviction?

19. How are you feeling about the next year?

- What do you want to achieve in the next year?
- Where would you like to be in our next interview?
- Do you feel confident that you will get there?
- How do you think you will get there?
- What do you think you are doing now to achieve that?

Second interview

20. So can you tell me a bit about the last six months, how it's gone, and where you've had problems?

- How did you get on with your T2A worker?
- How often have you seen them since I last saw you? How many times a week?
- Can you tell me about what kinds of things they have helped you with?
- What are the main reasons you have got in touch with them?
- What are the main reasons they have got in touch with you?
- What was the best thing about having a T2A worker?
- What do you think would have happened without them?
- Is there anything you would change about T2A?
- Is there anything else you could have done with some help on?

21. Where are you living now?

- What kind of accommodation is it?
Family?
- How long have you been living there?
- How did you find the accommodation?
- When did you move in?
- How do you feel about it?
- Is it safe?
- Any problems?
- Is it affordable in the long term?
- What would you say you were out of: Happy, satisfied and unsatisfied with your accommodation?
- Where would you like to be living?
- Have you lived anywhere else since we last spoke?
- When, where, what kind?
- (If so) Why did you have to move out?

22. What about education? Can you tell me about any courses you've done?

- Have you completed any courses?
- (If yes) How did you find out about it, and become involved?
- Who is running it?
- When did you complete it, how long did it take?
- What was the course?
- Did you receive a qualification? What was it?
- What was it like?
- What difference do you think it will make?

23. Have you enrolled in a college? Are you on any courses / educational programmes?

- (If yes) How did you find out about it and become involved?
- When did you start?
- What are you doing?

- What is it like?
- Have you received any qualifications?
- What difference do you think the courses you have done have made to you?
- Do you have any plans for your education in the next 6 months?

24. So what about jobs? Have you got a job now?

- (If yes) How long have you had it?
- How did you get it? Was it difficult?
- What are you doing? What is it like?
- How long are you planning to stay in it?
- What kind of difference has it made to you?
- (If no) Are you aiming to get a job in the near future?
- What would you like to do?
- Have you taken any steps to get there?
- Have you applied to any jobs?
- Do you think you are in a better position than you were when we last spoke?

25. What about your benefits? Have you had any problems since we last talked?

26. Have you been in touch with any other support workers?

- (If yes) How did you get in contact? Why did you get into contact?
- Who do they work for?
- What have they helped you with?
- How often do you see them?
- Do you have a Probation worker?
- What have they helped you with?

**27. What about other support services?
Have you been in contact with mental health services?**

- (If yes) Can you tell me about the times you have had to use mental health services and why?
- Can you tell me about how you got in contact?
- Are you in contact with mental health services now?
- Have you used medication in connection with this, and are you using it now?
- How often has it affected you, and how severely?
- Has it made a difference to you?
- (If no) Have you tried to get in contact?
- (If yes) Why hasn't it happened?
- Have you been prescribed medication for mental health related issues such as depression?
- Can you tell me about why you were prescribed them?
- Is there any support you have needed in relation to this?

**28. What about drug or alcohol services, have you been in contact with them?
Which service?**

- (If yes) Can you tell me about the times you have had to use this service?
- Can you tell me about how you got in contact?
- Are you currently in contact with this service?
- (If no) Have you ever attempted to contact drug or alcohol services?

29. How supported have you felt since we last talked?

- Who would you say has been the strongest support figure in your life since our last interview? How have they helped you?

- Could you rank these people in terms of how much they have supported you?
- Family member
- T2A worker
- Other support worker
- Peers
- Boyfriend/ girlfriend
- Other
- How have they helped you?
- What do you would have happened without them?

30. How have you got on with your family?

- How would you rate your relationship with your family out of 10 at the moment?
- How would you compare this to how you felt about them when we spoke before?
- Has your T2A worker helped in your relationship with your family?

31. Have you had any arrests or convictions?

32. What was the conviction?

- What sentence did you get?
- Did your T2A worker help you with court or the Police at all?

I am going to ask you about offending since I last spoke to you, again this is completely confidential and will be used to evaluate how well the service is working for you, not to evaluate you at all.

These are different types of offences, if you think you might have done any of them just say yes, you don't need to tell me anything about it.

34. How confident are you in not re-offending in the future?

- Very confident
- Reasonably confident
- Unsure
- Not confident

35. (Referring to 20) Why do you feel that way?

- (If they have previous offences)
How do you feel about your situation now in comparison to last time we spoke?

36. How are you feeling about the next year?

- What do you want to achieve in the next year?
- Where would you like to be in our next interview?
- Do you feel confident that you will get there?
- How do you think you will get there?
- What do you think you are doing now to achieve that?