

Name of Organisation: Gwynedd Mon Youth Justice Services

In which ways you use The Right Way (TRW) /UNCRC in your work?

We have a Participation Strategy which embeds children's Rights within our service, currently we are reviewing our Participation Strategy to embed the principles of UNCRC through our service.

Brief overview of work done and the benefits of embedding TRW/ UNCRC:

Embedding - We have created a participating strategy which is currently being reviewed to embed current trends, policies to cover all areas within the service. This will also embed TRW/UNCRC as a holistic strategy for Gwynedd Môn Youth Justice Services.

The ethos of the participating strategy is to continue to build awareness with children and young people and educate and train our staff on an annual basis. We have also extended UNCRC training to partner agencies such as CAMHS, Youth Service and Children's Services in Gwynedd and Môn. The annual training was provided by University of Wales Trinity Saint David and funded by Welsh Government.

Empowerment - Prior to Covid-19, workshops were held with senior management where children and young people within the services were given opportunities to share their journey within the criminal justice system. For example young people attended management board meetings for questions and answer sessions and were given the opportunity to complete reflective journals. Other examples involved delivering focus groups and completing pieces of work for Leaders Unlock who carried out research on behalf of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Participation - We have invested in Viewpoint software technology to capture the thoughts and opinions of children and young people and have our own Participation Strategy, though this is currently under review. Consequently, children and young people who initially take part in the questionnaire are given a key-ring which has a link/QR code to access their profile within viewpoint. Our web-site provides video and links for example INSIDE OUT, Sign post links and contact details of other regional and national support and advice services.

By creating questionnaires for each cohort entering The Gwynedd Môn Youth Justice Services are able to directly capture young people's views and opinions. Consequently, children and young people participate in Initial, Mid and End stage questionnaires. In doing so we have been able to gain children and young people's experience throughout their involvement with the YJS. This includes their experience of education, the criminal justice system, restorative justice alongside providing an insight into young people's emotional wellbeing and mental health. Using such technology allows us to capture their experience of not only the Youth Justice Service but throughout the Criminal Justice System.

Furthermore, for children and young people who start to disengage with their order there is an option to refer them for voluntary participating sessions. These sessions are focused on building positive relationships in a trauma informed way, while simultaneously providing young people with the opportunity to re-engage with their order, in a non-clinical way. It is hoped that by listening to young people's views, prioritising their needs and working with them in supporting environment provides them with an opportunity of re-engaging thus avoiding potential breach proceedings. All children referred for Participation support are provided with a child friendly leaflet outlining their rights.

Accountability - During the pandemic we have also introduced one-off Covid19 questionnaires to capture children and young people's experience and priority needs during the pandemic covering a range of areas. The results from the questionnaires confirm that Young people are more likely to use social media platforms such as Whatsapp, and Facebook as vehicles to express their views and opinions. This has been invaluable in providing The Gwynedd and Mon YJS with an understanding of how we can improve and develop children focused services based upon the views and opinions of our young people.