The Custody Experience
Reducing 1st time entrants into the Criminal Justice System

Preston Early Intervention Partnership

Herman Goldstein Awards 2012
Section 1: Summary of application: The Custody Experience

SCANNING:
- Juvenile ASB and delinquency highlighted by community
- Community Gateway Association tenants disproportionately linked to Youth ASB
- Police and partnership agencies facing large budget & job cuts
- Unsustainable reductions in first time juvenile entrants into CJS
- 2009 re-offended rate was highest for young people age 10-17 - 33.3%.
- Projected increase in juvenile crime, no contingency plan.

ANALYSIS:
In 2009, number of first time entrants into the CJS in Preston - 184, incurring process costs of £368,000.
Due to government budget cuts to Police of 20%, schools liaison officers, PCSO’s and Neighbourhood officers were reduced, whilst funding for Lancashire Group Intervention Panel (GRIP) ceased, incurring job losses and early intervention services.
Nationally, the total number of offences committed by youths in 2008/09 was 244,583, costing the UK approximately £4 billion. Young people (10-17) accounted for 33.70% of first time entrants to the criminal justice system in 2008/09.
A process evaluation identified weaknesses in the Youth Referral scheme, as youths susceptible to risks were not identified or prioritised. Juveniles with risk factors had a heightened risk of re-offending.
The custody office, was only utilised AFTER arrest, and an under used resource for prevention.
No Lancashire, or UK custody based POP’s plan had ever been developed.

RESPONSE:
- Early intervention analysis by police & CGA
- Creation of intelligence led asset scoring prioritisation process
- Home visit by local NHP team to identify risk factors & offending level assessment
- Custody office utilised as early intervention resource
- ‘Development of ‘Custody Experience’ visit to educate & prevent arrest
- Crime and Consequences input by Youth Involvement Officer
- Bespoke Multi-Agency Action Plan to prevent offending

**ASSESSMENT:**

Asset scoring system enables police to identify youths that pose significant threat of offending. The custody office is now routinely used as an early intervention resource. The Custody Experience is offered to ALL youths at risk.

Achieved 33% reduction in number of youths entering CJS, against objective of 20%. This equates to genuine cost saving of £82000. The reduction in reprimands highlights 41 fewer victims of crime. Partnership reductions in ASB for the same period are 37%.

Assessment of 2 control areas heightened success of results.

A qualitative survey of custody experience participants had a 100% return rate, and 88% of participants said they would think about their behaviour.

The custody experience was highlighted as ‘best practise’ at the 2010 Lancashire Constabulary POP Conference, and is a low cost sustainable project which is easily transferable.
Sec 2: Description of project

SCANNING: Overview of the problem

Preston’s annual Crime & Disorder Strategic Assessment had raised awareness of public concern regarding juvenile delinquency and youth crime.

Worryingly there was an impending a 20% reduction in the police budget so a new approach in youth early intervention was required to divert young people from crime at the least possible cost.

To obtain an initial overview, in December 2009 a review of the Police early intervention process with regards to young people entering the criminal justice system was conducted.

Young people cause a disproportionate amount of crime with an average of 3200 young offenders arrested in Preston on a yearly basis.

The Police Youth Involvement Officer (YIO) had responsibility for the youth referral database (YRD), when Police officers are alerted to a child being involved in Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) they issue a youth referral.

At this early stage it was identified that children living in Community Gateway Association (CGA) properties were disproportionately represented.

Concern was raised regarding the apparent lack of opportunities for these young people on the cusp of criminality identifying a clear partnership role and appropriate interventions.

Scanning showed that although the numbers of 1st time entrants into the criminal justice system was falling slightly there were fewer partnership resources and those in place were being seriously threatened with changes in Political leadership and budget cuts (Police 20%), particularly for young people & families.
This lack of resources highlighted the trend was unsustainable and led officers to forecast an increase in first time offenders.

Having identified and understood how youths enter the Criminal Justice System, local and national data was scrutinised.

This process began in January 2010: data from 2008/9 was used:

- 2008/09, 3319 young people aged 10-17 arrested in Preston
- Nationally over 2000 under 18s were serving custodial sentence
- Total recorded youth crime in England & Wales 2008/09 – 244,583
- 77,800 young people entered the criminal justice system in 2009/09
- 37.30% of people who re-offended were young people aged 10-17

Internal and External early intervention processes were examined, with level of partnership work, with a view to highlighting opportunities for improvement.

Other considerations:

- Weaknesses in processes were identified, which suggested missed opportunities
- Evidence of good partnership work in some Police Departments
- The cost/potential for re-offending having entered the criminal justice system
- Impact on the life chances of a young person with a criminal record

Scanning had provided enough information for further detailed analysis to take place.
ANALYSIS: Identification of the problem

Early intervention needs to be that and take place early; by the time an arrest takes place it is often too late.

A young person may not realise the impact that their behaviour could have, possibly leading to arrest, affecting job prospects and in some cases being sent to prison.

There are many sociologically based theories but these do not necessarily help tackle youth crime in the short term, Police are an agency often seen to follow a reactive, arrest led approach and because of the multifaceted nature of youth crime, police are often a signposting department for other agencies involved in the reduction of youth crime.

POP suggests that once the causes of a problem are recognised, responses can be tailored in a more sustainable method to tackle specific problems.

The table below provides analysis with regard to young people who received reprimands* in 2009.

(*Reprimands are Police Youth Cautions following 1st arrest and are normally issued for lower tiered criminal offences)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of reprimands</th>
<th>Out of Division</th>
<th>On early intervention database</th>
<th>Not on database</th>
<th>Community Gateway tenants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>184</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>52</td>
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</table>

Already in place in Preston was the Police YRD which recorded young people who had received a youth referral.
In 2009 184 young people were arrested and received a reprimand; of these 75 had been listed on the YRD. 77 were not on the YRD and 32 were from outside Preston.

Of the 75 on the YRD; 52 were living in Community Gateway Association (CGA) properties, CGA are the largest social landlord in Preston. The population of Preston is 171,000 and there are 6,135 CGA properties, as the numbers involved were disproportionally high it provided the evidence to ensure CGA involvement.

Youth referrals are issued by Police officers on Patrol where a young person has been involved in Anti-Social Behaviour. This triggers a sequence of events; their details will be added to the YRD, a letter will be sent to their parents/guardians and opportunities will be explored for available interventions for the young person.

Analysis indicated that Police/Partners had a ‘silo’ approach, often only dealing with the one incident and not using other data which was readily available. For example, the missing from home officer dealt with missing children, the schools officer looked at children out of education, the public protection unit focused on vulnerability, CGA looked at housing issues, etc.

National

To further understand the severity of the problem and identify if early intervention was a significant issue national data and information was considered.

- In England and Wales more young people are in custody than any European country (except Turkey)
- The number of 15-17 year olds in custody has doubled since early 1990s
- England and Wales has one of the lowest ages of criminal responsibility in Europe. (10 years of age)
Cost

The majority of costs in dealing with young people are spent on those who have received reprimands and gone on to be repeat offenders

- Total yearly cost of dealing with Young offenders to the criminal justice system; £4 billion a year*
- Only 7% of Youth Justice Board funding is dedicated to prevention*

*According to reports from CIVITAS and Parliamentary Home Affairs Committee

Below we can see the National strategy for dealing with young people who are regularly committing crime and being put before the Courts.

Estimates vary but some reports have the cost of dealing with young people within these cohorts as high as £1 million for a 16 year old Prolific Priority Offender and around £200,000 for a young person in the criminal justice system.

The estimated cost of preventing a young person displaying the risk factors from entering the Criminal Justice System is £50,000.
If a young person over 14 is sent to a young offender’s institution the cost is an average of £42,000. If the children is younger, and in secure local authority accommodation, that cost is £3,400 per week (£176,800 per year).

Local

From a local perspective Preston was following the National Prolific Priority Offender model and the multi-agency Revolution team dealt with high volume young offenders and was working effectively. The model for dealing with young offenders was taken from an adult framework that had been previously highlighted as good practice.

It was becoming clear that a cost effective improvement was required in early intervention.

Problem Analysis Triangle

Feature of the Offender

- Male white, 10-17 yrs
- Truant/Missing person
- Dysfunctional family, drugs, alcohol
- Family offending history
- Lack of positive role models
- No understanding of future consequences
- RISK FACTORS: Research suggests that a young person exposed to any of the risk factors is 20 times more likely to be involved in the Criminal Justice System.
**Features of the Location**

Lancashire Constabulary has 8 custody offices, with a total of 206 cells, and handles over 80000 detained persons (dp's) per year.

Preston has 31 cells, handling approx 11000 dp's. However, no evidence of a POP approach was found in Preston Custody Office.

Further analysis found NO examples of Custody Office based POP submissions in Lancashire or The UK.

**Features of the Victim**

On examining the victims of crimes committed by young persons, it became clear that there was no specific trend, group or categories which we could target or assist.

However the offender could be considered a victim, there are long term implication of reprimand for young person. Young people don’t recognise the consequences of their behaviour as a child and that it can seriously affect their future and adult lives. Although 1st reprimands “disappear” at 18, advanced Criminal Records Bureau investigation after 18 will identify a reprimand for future employers, a dishonest act at 13 can influence adult life. Criminal Record Bureau reports are carried out for a number of careers where any childhood reprimand would be identified i.e. medical, teaching, police, etc.

**Offender detail**

Police custody systems & dates of youth referrals found the majority of youths receiving a second referral were arrested within 6 months

The cost of processing an arrest which does not include the actual offence is estimated at £2,000 from the 184 arrests identified in 2009 this would equate to potential total cost of £368,000.
When we looked at the estimated cost of an individual offence, for example *burglary £2300 or *criminal damage £890 we could see huge potential savings if any early intervention tactic was successful.

*Home Office Research Study 217*

Analysis using PAT highlighted that our main focus was the offender, whilst opportunities regarding the Custody location should be considered in our responses.

Our Analysis confirmed that there were to be drastic reductions in staff and agencies due to looming budget cuts, the Police alone were facing a 20% budget cut.

The cuts were focused on reforming systems and services provided for vulnerable young people, parenting support, family intervention, youth crime and early intervention. Notably, Lancashire Group Intervention Panel (GRIP) which focussed on steering ‘at risk’ youths away from crime, was to be axed, resulting in job cuts, and a withdrawal of a valued early intervention service.

Our analysis needed to look at the current delivery structure and the possible effects of such large cuts. It showed:

- 184 first time entrants into the Criminal Justice System in 2009
- Disproportionate number from CGA housing provider
- Weaknesses exposed in partnership early intervention processes
- Police/Partners had ‘silo’ approach
- High cost of dealing with young offenders
- Academic uncertainty in early intervention effectiveness
Conclusions

Youth Crime and Criminalisation of young people at an early age is a significant and costly problem

1. Resources/budgets are targeted at dealing/managing young people who are prolific offenders

2. The small budget allocated to early intervention was set to get smaller

3. Successes in the early intervention process could lead to significant reductions in cost savings and an improvement in the life chances of a young person

4. Little academic data on most sociological theories

5. Only American “SCARED STRAIGHT” initiative provided inspiration

6. The Custody Office was a potentially good and underused early intervention resource; more importantly the Custody office offered a Police response which was extremely cost effective as all resources are in place.
RESPONSE: What we did to address the problem

Our basis objective was:

To develop a Police led early intervention which would utilise existing resources, be cheap, quick and easy to use.

The aim of the intervention was;

- To reduce the number of first time entrants to Criminal justice system – reduce reprimands
- A provisional target was set to achieve a 20% reduction for arrests

An early initial response was to ensure children involved in ASB are made known to Preston’s YIO by promoting the role through multi agency meetings for schools, parents and members of the public.

The strengths of this are that it may highlight for those children who are not identified by the Police youth referral system.

In Preston there was a tiered approach to intervention which academic practice indicates as an appropriate approach.

Lower tiered responses include a letter home for every child after their first youth referral and home visits. If a child’s behaviour deteriorates interventions then become more focused to the individual's.

Planned Responses

- Create an asset scoring system to assist intelligence lead early intervention opportunities
- Home visits for all young people who have been highlighted via asset scoring
• Develop a transferable ‘Custody Experience’ programme for young people who are on ‘cusp’ of arrest

• Ensure custody experience conducted within 2 weeks of 2nd Youth Referral

• Use Custody Office as an early intervention resource

• All attendees to complete questionnaire & agree to individual action plans

• Reduce 1st arrests (reprimands) by 20%

• Prevent attendees reaching Young Offender status

**Asset Scoring System**

To prioritise a young person & identify appropriate interventions the Asset scoring system was developed, we felt there was a weakness in the youth referral system;

Multiple Youth Referrals were being issued due to the system defaulting back to letter one after six months.

Introducing an asset scoring system could pull together all information available from Police and partner data providing a bigger picture and therefore targeted intervention.

Scoring is triggered by the issue of a youth referral which then triggers research into other Police/partner systems. If there is only one recorded intervention with Police/Partners the 1st youth referral letter is sent.

Any other interventions with Police or Partners that appear on the existing databases are then scored and 1 point is added per intervention as seen below:(See appendix ‘3’ for incidents that are included in asset scoring)

1-4 Green  5-9 Amber  10+ Red
Asset scoring is used as an ‘indicator’ to the team to highlight the number of interactions the young person has had with the Police/Partners.

It does not necessarily mean that if a young person scores red they receive more urgent attention than a low scoring green, a lot depends on the content of individual incidents.

Young people are ‘allocated’ and 'reviewed' at a weekly early intervention meeting.

It was agreed that any families who were tenants of CGA would be referred to the CGA Tenant support worker who develops bespoke parenting strategies to look at parental responsibility & support the process where there may be siblings in a household.

For those young people identified through asset scoring displaying behaviour that may lead to 1st arrest, there was a gap; agreement was reached to use the Custody Office as an early intervention resource;

Over recent years for a number of different reasons the Police service has been reluctant to allow young people to visit custody facilities, but with use of analysis as a persuader the Custody Experience was initiated:

This process has been developed with our partners who are key to the success due to them taking up the majority of referrals after the visit.

A time and date is agreed for attendance and an individual action plan is devised for the young person, the custody experience is as follows:

- Collection from home
- Arrives at Police station for discussion with Youth Involvement Officer
- ‘Scenario’ of possible future arrest agreed
- Enter Custody via compliant door
- Explain to Sergeant circumstances of visit
Custody processes/procedures explained

Tour of custody complex, drunk cells, shower facilities, fingerprint room

Life changing consequences of arrest explained

Threat level assessed

Return to YIO to complete referrals and agree Multi Agency Action Plan

Complete questionnaire

Issued with 'not wanted' poster

Returned home

Each visit is different and specifically designed to address the warning signals highlighted by the asset scoring and threat level assessment.

The visit to Custody is a positive experience, its purpose is to inform, educate and influence future behaviour in an attempt to prevent the young person from entering the criminal justice system, it is not designed to frighten young people, the American concept, “SCARED STRAIGHT” is purposely delivered as a negative experience because its target young people are further along the criminal justice system.

The emphasis of the visit and interaction between the Police and a young person is on prevention of offending whilst pointing out clear consequences of behaviour leaving the young person with a positive image of Preston Police.

As part of the ‘exit strategy’ the early intervention team would look at the appropriate diversionary referral delivered by our partners. (See appendix 1)
Publicity

The 'Custody Experience' was promoted in 4 ways:

Poster Campaign (Internal)

Local Media

A positive report on the Custody Experience was produced in local newspaper (see Appendix 2.)
Local Community

The local monthly community meetings “PACT” which are held all over Preston in each political ward for the Police, stakeholders, partner agencies, voluntary organisations to be accountable to their communities where they work.

Local Partners

All of whom are responsible for delivering statutory services to young people in Preston

The Community Safety Partnership now holds annual Open Days at the Police station where the Custody Experience can be promoted further.

Because of the numbers of CGA tenants identified through YR’s, CGA looked at their existing resources. In addition to a tenant support worker for family support the organisation were paying for 2 Police Constable Support Officer’s to supplement Police resources, they worked specifically on CGA neighbourhoods. One of these CGA, PCSO’s joined the YIO and an Early Intervention Team (EIT) was formed to reduce the demand on already stretched services in the neighbourhood policing teams. Their role was to carry out the home visits, arrange, organise and deliver the Custody Experience.
ASSESSMENT: The results of our approach

This project received an independent academic evaluation from the University of Lancaster and the findings from the dissertation form part of our assessment.

For this project to be replicated it requires that agencies have an early intervention strategy in place to identify young people at risk of entering the criminal justice system such as the youth referral system.

This is advantageous because children are identified for any incident, even those which are minor, because there is a perceived risk of future offending.

Academics have supported the notion that sub criminal acts should be addressed to stop them turning into arrestable offences and serious crime (Wilson and Kelling, 1982).

This would suggest that the youth referral process is appropriate way of bringing youths to the attention of the police and identifying potential future criminals.

Alternatively, children are made known to Preston’s YIO by schools, parents and members of the public contacting them about a child’s behaviour.

The strengths of this are that it may highlight for those children who are not identified by the youth referral system.

QUANTITATIVE

The aim of the intervention was;

- To reduce the number of first time entrants to Criminal justice system – reduce reprimands

- A provisional target was set to achieve a 20% reduction for arrests
Impact Evaluation

Prior to project between 2008 & 2009, from the YDB we tracked a sample of 60 young people from each year.

Using the first 60 from both years: 65 out of 120 have since been arrested.

Between 2010 & 2011, 177 young people were asset scored, from that number 120 agreed to the ‘Custody Experience’ and the table below provided details of those who reprimand.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Reprimands</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cost Savings

Estimating the process cost of an arrest as £2000

The cost to the Police in 2008 & 2009 for arrests of 65: £130,000

The cost to the Police in 2010 & 2011 for arrests of 24: £48,000

Making a saving of: £82,000

Victim Reductions

Perhaps more important however is the fact that the reduction in reprimands equates to 41 fewer victims of crime. This is a clear saving as the project used existing resources available to the Police with contribution from CGA as the key partner.
With reference to data in analysis we can evidence from the 2 tables below the breakdown for reductions of reprimands.

What we can show is of the young people who participated in the Custody Experience only 9 went on to receive a reprimand.

In 2011 69 were offered the CE, 9 refused to engage, and of the 60 who took part 51 have not come to the attention of the Police since. The same theory applies to 2012 where the impact appears to be more significant. In both years the % reduction is far greater than our target of 20%.

What now needs to be examined are the young people that did not appear on the database, the numbers remain stable from 2009 – 2012, however, we need to analyse where those young people came from, this is our ARA process.

### 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of reprimands</th>
<th>Out of Division</th>
<th>Engaged in early intervention</th>
<th>Refused early intervention</th>
<th>Not on database</th>
<th>Community Gateway tenants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>123</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2011 – Reduction of 33% - Our target was a reduction of 20%

### 2012 (up to 31/05/12)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of reprimands</th>
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<th>Refused early intervention</th>
<th>Not on database</th>
<th>Community Gateway tenants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2012 – Reduction of 79% - Our target was a reduction of 20%
For CGA tenants the reductions were: 2011: 37%  2012: 52%

These results more than justified the commitment by CGA to the project in staff resources.

It was important to use Control Areas to see if the reductions were a general trend:

**Control areas** (due to similar geography/finance)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lancaster City</th>
<th>Number of reprimands</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Increase 11%**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Burnley</th>
<th>Number of Reprimands</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Increase 14%**

**QUALITATIVE**

Our basis objective was:

- To develop a Police led early intervention which would utilise existing resources, be cheap, quick and easy to use

By using the Asset scoring system we used a tiered approach to intervention which academic practice indicate as an appropriate approach (Brantingham and Faust, 1976)
After completing the Custody Experience, children filled out a questionnaire, (see Appendix 3) we have provided assessment on the answers from two questions for the assessment:

The figure below shows the type of answers children gave in response to the question

‘How did you feel in custody?’

- 45 percent said they felt ‘scared’ or ‘terrible’,
- 10 percent stated they ‘didn’t like it’
- 10 percent answered ‘not bothered’.
- Four percent did not answer the question at all
- The other 31% of answers included ‘cold and lonely’, ‘worried’ and ‘sad’.

Furthermore, 88 percent said that Custody Experience had definitely made them think about their behaviour. Only 2 percent said the experience had not made think about their behaviour.

Some children added additional comments such as ‘I won’t steal again’, ‘I don’t want to ruin my future’ and ‘I wouldn’t want to be arrested’.
The responses children gave in questionnaires after visiting custody suggest that the Custody Experience has successful immediate effects. In 2011 53 children (88%) said it has definitely made them think about their behaviour and 52 (86%) children said they were 'scared' or gave similar responses.

This intervention shares similarity with the “Scared Straight” programme initiated in the US (Petrosino et al, 2003); academic literature surrounding the use of shock tactics, have reported that it does not deter youths from crime (Bottoms and Von Hirsch, 2010). However, examples such “Scared Straight” have focused on those children who have already progressed into the Criminal Justice System.

The Custody Experience differs because it is an early intervention to prevent entry into the CJS.

The individual experience depends on a young person's behaviour and their initial reaction to taking part in this intervention; if a child is already scared they would not receive a harsh experience. For the Custody Experience officers are friendly and custody is clean and quiet. This does not fit into a 'shocking' or 'scary' intervention; it is designed to be a more positive experience.

As an early intervention strategy, findings from this assessment indicate that the Custody Experience has to date been an effective deterrence when a child shows early signs of delinquency and anti-social behaviour.

It provides, at low costs an early intervention tool that impacts on some young people entering the criminal system which in turn reduces the amount spent on the re-offending budget.

The Custody Experience has added a new angle to the limited literature surrounding the use of early intervention shock tactics to deter children from crime, to be effective the programme
needs to be used when children are displaying the very earliest signs of possible future criminality.

Exit strategy: To date partners have reported a 100% compliance rate with referrals to their agencies for diversionary activities details of opportunities (see appendix 4)
Appendix 1

Police/Partner Asset scoring tool

In addition, all the ways in which police can be aware of children, provided by Youth Involvement Officer:

- Community Concern
- Missing from Home
- Vulnerable child report
- Witness to domestic violence
- Diversionary Referral
- Stay safe (Police operation for vulnerable children out late evening/night)
- Acceptable Behaviour Agreement
- Youth referral
- Acceptable Behaviour Contract
- Cease and desist
- Restorative Justice
- Penalty Notice for Disorder
- Triage (Pre reprimand intervention for criminal offence)
- Relevant INTL (Intelligence)
- Victim in crime
- Suspect in crime
- Housing/tenancy breaches
- Social Care reports (CART referral)

It should be noted that in January 2012 The Home Office have published youth justice statistics which contain a similar asset scoring risk tool as developed by ourselves in this project.
Youngsters 'locked up' for misbehaving

Problem youngsters as young as nine are being locked up at Preston police station to discover what happens if they continually misbehave, as Chris Visser finds out...

"I felt scared because it's very dark." Those are the words of a nine-year-old Preston boy who was given a taste of life behind bars.

After being shown around the city's 31-cell police custody suite in Lancaster Road North and counting to 20 inside one of them, the thought of returning was terrifying.

His case is described as an "exception" given his age but after constantly misbehaving at school, including bullying other pupils, his teachers and parents thought it was time he learned a tougher lesson.

Lancashire Police youth involvement officer PC Gary Salisbury has put together the "custody experience" scheme and sees it as a valuable way for youngsters, usually aged between 10 and 17 and at risk of arrest, to have a taste of life on the inside.

The officer explains: "If the writing is on the wall, why not intervene at an early age?

"If you prevent the first arrest, you could be preventing a criminal career so we wanted to find something which could be of benefit to everyone and thought of this."

Currently held on a Sunday once a month, it is the only service of its kind in Lancashire with county officers unaware of any similar scheme in the rest of the country.
Custody Sgt Dave Johnson, who shows the youngsters around the cells, adds: "it is intended, to open their eyes and understand what will happen if they behave in a certain way."

Most children involved in the scheme arrive after parents have been warned of their child's behaviour in two written letters, have been referred on by an agency and have authority from a parent or guardian to take part.

The police pick up the children in an unmarked car before taking them to the entrance of the custody suite. They are asked a series of questions by the custody sergeant including if they are wearing any cords, which would be removed in normal circumstances due to their potential to harm. They are then shown a paper-based suit which they would have to wear to replace any clothing.

The youngsters have their "mug shot" photograph taken, along with fingerprints – although none of the information is stored – before being taken on a tour of the cells. This includes spending a brief 20-second spell inside one of them.

A 16-year-old from Ribbleton arrived after the nine-year-old. He had been involved in gang-related anti-social behaviour including abusing and intimidating residents. He even admitted he had been "hanging around street corners causing problems."

Speaking of his experience afterwards, the boy said: "I felt like I wanted to go home. I didn't like the bed and the toilet."

"I thought the toilet was horrible as loads of people have been sitting on it. This is an experience I don't want to repeat – it is bad enough."

Others spoke of their fears after the cell tour, with one telling the officer he believed there were evil spiders in the room.
The experience ends with the youngsters being asked what they thought about being locked up before they sign a poster promising not to behave badly.

The "not wanted" posters feature their photographs and are intended to go on their bedroom walls as a reminder of what happens if they offend.

PC Salisbury added: "It's too early to assess the scheme as we are only going back four months and a proper assessment needs 12 months.

"But we did have a young lad in as a referral from school. He hadn't been attending school since last September and after he came here, he has shown up every day."

Sgt Johnson said: "I often see the same faces coming in. We are trying to prevent them becoming one of our customers in the future."
Appendix 3

The Custody Experience Questionnaire

Custody Experience

Name: ___________________ DOB: __________ Date: __________

How did you feel in custody?

________________________________________________________________________

What did you think it was going to be like before you came?

________________________________________________________________________

How has your visit to custody made you think about your behaviour?

________________________________________________________________________

Do you go to school or college? If not, would you like to?

________________________________________________________________________

What activities do you do, or would like to do in your spare time?

________________________________________________________________________

Please tick any of the following issues affecting you:

- Drugs
- Alcohol
- Relationships
- Bullying
- Gangs
- Education
- Money
- Family problems
- Health
- Other

Would you like help to access:

- Leisure activities
- School/College
- Work
- Counselling/Someone to talk to
- Housing
- Health Services
- Other

Thank you for completing this questionnaire
Appendix 4

Description of additional interventions for young people:

Antisocial behaviour contract/agreement: signed by a young person who is agreeing to behave with the conditions and boundaries outlined in the contract/agreement

CART referral: a vulnerable child report to Social Services

Cease and Desist: Signed by the child if they breach their Anti Social Behavioural Contract/Agreement

Crime and Consequence Presentation: A 30 minute educational PowerPoint focuses on Anti Social Behaviour and the possible effects on the victim

Custody Experience: A child visits custody at Preston Police station where they are shown what will happen if they are arrested and future consequences of their actions are explained. It is designed to be a positive experience for young people

Gateway Support: Tenancy support and family support/development programs delivered by Community Gateway.

Home Visit: After being allocated either an officer or our early intervention team, this is the 1st contact with the family

It’s My Life: Intensive ten week programme (2 sessions per week) focusing on risk factors such as drugs and alcohol, living in areas of deprivation, family and relationships, NEET, involvement in criminal justice system and engaging in risk taking behaviour that may be harmful to their emotional health and well being.

LFRS (Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service): Lancashire Fire and rescue service referral for children who may have issues with anything fire related.
Parenting Referral: Two projects offering support for parents in dealing with adolescent behaviour.

Positive Activities for Young People (PAYP): run by local authorities but no longer operating.

Sports Development referral: If a child expresses an interest in sport, a referral is made for the child to receive free use of leisure centre facilities for a period of time on the condition that the child behaves.

Stay safe: police operation to identify young people who are not at home when appropriate

Time For Change: A child visits a prison and is shown what the consequences of being arrested may lead to.

Vulnerable Child 1: Vulnerable child report, submitted when an officer has concerns about safeguarding issues such as state of home conditions etc

Young Addaction referral: One to one sessions on a weekly/fortnightly basis for as long as is needed. Provision of support around alcohol, drugs and solvents from general information, health matters and helping young people look at effects, outcomes and reducing/stopping intake of alcohol and/or substances.

Youth Intervention Programme: Youth Intervention Project run by NACRO as an early intervention project to deal with potential offenders / re-offenders. However, this no longer operates.
Sec 3: Agency and Officer Information

Key Team Members:

PC Gary Salisbury: Youth Involvement Officer: Lancashire Constabulary

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