



**Annual Report of the Committee  
Appointed to Monitor the Effectiveness  
of the Diversion Programme**

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**2013**

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## CONTACT

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A copy of this report is available on the Garda Website [www.garda.ie](http://www.garda.ie)  
and on the Irish Youth Justice Service Website [www.iyjs.ie](http://www.iyjs.ie)

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## FOREWORD

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**Dear Commissioner,**

It is my pleasure as chairman of the Monitoring Committee appointed under section 44(1) Children Act 2001 to present the 2013 Annual Report.

The report reflects the activities of the Monitoring Committee and the Diversion Programme during 2013 and sets out recommended actions for 2014.

The number of referrals to the Diversion Programme during 2013 was 20,536 and the number of individual children referred was 10,420. Of those referred 7,732 (74%) were admitted to the Programme.

During 2013, the Programme administered 911 cautions by way of Restorative Justice. In 2014 we will continue to progress the use of Restorative Justice as part of the Diversion Programme in addition to promoting restorative practices as a way of working by all professionals responsible for the well-being of children and young people.

2013 was the second year of the second Garda Children and Youth Strategy, developed for the years 2012 – 2014 inclusive.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the Director of the Diversion Programme, Superintendent Colette Quinn and her staff at the Garda Youth Diversion Office and Juvenile Liaison Officers throughout the country for their dedication, commitment and excellent work during 2013.

I would also like to thank my fellow members on the Section 44 Monitoring Committee - Chief Superintendent Anne Marie McMahon, Mr Eddie D'Arcy, Mr John Cheatle, B.L. and Garda Monica Reilly, Secretary to the Committee for their efforts and diligence throughout the year.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A.J. Nolan', written over a horizontal line.

**Assistant Commissioner**

**A.J. Nolan**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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- In 2013, there was a reduction of 15% in the number of referrals to the Juvenile Diversion Programme.
- The total number of incidents referred to the Diversion Programme during 2013 was 20,536 compared to 24,069 in 2012.
- The total number of individual children referred to the Programme was 10,420 compared to 12,246 in 2012.
- 7,732 (74%) of the children referred were admitted to the Diversion Programme compared to 9,105 (74%) in 2012.
- 5,188 (50%) children had their cases dealt with by way of an informal caution compared to 6,265 (51%) in 2012.
- 2,544 (24%) children had their cases dealt with by way of a formal caution compared to 2,840 (23%) in 2012.
- 449 (4%) children have a decision in their case pending compared to 671 (5%) in 2012.
- 587 (6%) children required no further Garda action to be taken compared to 648 (5%) in 2012.
- 1,652 (16%) children were considered not suitable for inclusion in the Programme compared to 1,822 (15%) in 2012.
- 25% of children who were referred to the Programme were female while 75% were male, the same as 2012 figures.
- The Garda Programme of Restorative Justice continued to develop, promoting restorative practice in youth diversion intervention. Juvenile Liaison Officers used Restorative Justice in 911 referrals.
- Theft and related offences (27%), Public Order (26%), and damage to property and to the environment (11%) constitute the three main categories of offences for which children were referred.
- The total number of JLO posts is 123 including 8 JLO Sergeants, which remains the same as 2012 figures.

## THE DIVERSION PROGRAMME

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When a person under 18 years of age is responsible for a crime the matter can be dealt with in one of two ways;

1. the young person can be cautioned, or
2. brought before the courts.

Before any young person is brought before the courts s/he must first be considered for a caution. The caution is a warning from a Garda Juvenile Liaison Officer and includes a discussion about the crime. The decision to caution or prosecute is made by a Garda Superintendent at the Garda Youth Diversion Office. This alternative programme for dealing with young people who commit an offence or crime is known as the **Diversion Programme**. This programme operates under legislation as set out in the Children Act, 2001.

## INCLUSION IN THE DIVERSION PROGRAMME

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Before a young person can be considered suitable for being cautioned and included in the Diversion Programme, there are a number of criteria that must be fulfilled.

The young person must:

- take responsibility for the offending behaviour,
- agree to be cautioned,
- where appropriate agree to terms of supervision.

It is the responsibility of the Director of the Diversion Programme to decide upon the suitability of a young person for inclusion in the programme. In making this decision the Director may seek the views of any victim but the final decision rests with the Director.

## HOW DOES THE PROCESS WORK?

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In all cases a local Juvenile Liaison Officer (JLO) will make contact with the young person and meet them to discuss the offending behaviour. This meeting may take place in the child's home or in the Garda Station. The child and the child's parent/s or guardian must be present. In the course of the discussion, the young person will be expected to undertake not to offend in the future. The JLO and the family will try to support whatever efforts the young person is willing to make to prevent any future offending behaviour. The caution will be given by a JLO, a Garda Inspector or the Garda Superintendent.

## **WHO DECIDES IF A PERSON IS SUITABLE OR NOT?**

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The decision to include a person in the Diversion Programme is made by a Garda Superintendent at the Garda Youth Diversion Office who is known as the Director of the Programme. In making his/her decision the Director may consider:

- The nature of the offence
- The views of the victim
- The interests of society
- The views of the arresting Garda
- The views of the JLO
- The attitude and views of the young person who offended
- The views of the young person's parents or guardian
- Whether an apology has been made
- Whether or not something can be done to repair any harm caused
- The child's previous involvement in the programme

## **WHAT IS SUPERVISION?**

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When a young person is given a caution she/he may be placed under the supervision of the JLO for a period of 12 months. The nature of the supervision will be decided upon by the JLO and will vary from case to case. For instance, it may involve the young person agreeing to engage in certain activities, attendance at a youth project, or it may require the young person to report on particular occasions to the JLO or other Garda.

## **MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE COMMITTEE**

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The Children Act 2001 at section 44, provides that a Committee be appointed to monitor the effectiveness of the Diversion Programme.

The terms of reference of the Committee are to:

- monitor the effectiveness of the Diversion Programme.
- review all aspects of its operation.
- monitor all ongoing training needs of the facilitators.
- present an annual report to the Commissioner of the Garda Síochána on its activities during the year.

The tasks of the Committee are to:

- examine the management and effective delivery of the Diversion Programme.
- identify best practices in the administration of the Programme.
- assess best practices for the training of facilitators and monitor training delivery.
- put in place methodologies for the evaluation and measurement of the Programme's effectiveness.

The current members of the Committee are:

- Assistant Commissioner Jack Nolan, Chairperson
- Chief Superintendent Anne Marie McMahan
- Mr. Eddie D'Arcy
- Mr. John Cheatle BL

## CURRENT MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

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**Assistant Commissioner Jack Nolan** has responsibility for the office of Organisation Development and Strategic Planning, Garda Headquarters, in addition to the South Eastern Garda Region. He previously held posts as Regional Commissioner of the Western Region, Director of Training & Development at the Garda College and Head of the Change Management Department in Garda Headquarters

- PhD. in IT Enabled Organisational Change - Trinity College, Dublin
- MSc. in Criminal Justice Studies - University of Leicester
- BSc. in Social Science - Open University
- Diploma in Applied Social Science - Open University
- Executive Diploma in Strategy and Innovation - MIT, Boston, USA.



**Chief Superintendent Anne Marie McMahon** has responsibility for the Garda Community Relations Bureau in Harcourt Square, which includes the Garda Youth Diversion Office, and is in addition the current Director of Training in the Garda College, Templemore. She was formerly a Superintendent at Roxboro Road Garda Station, Limerick City.



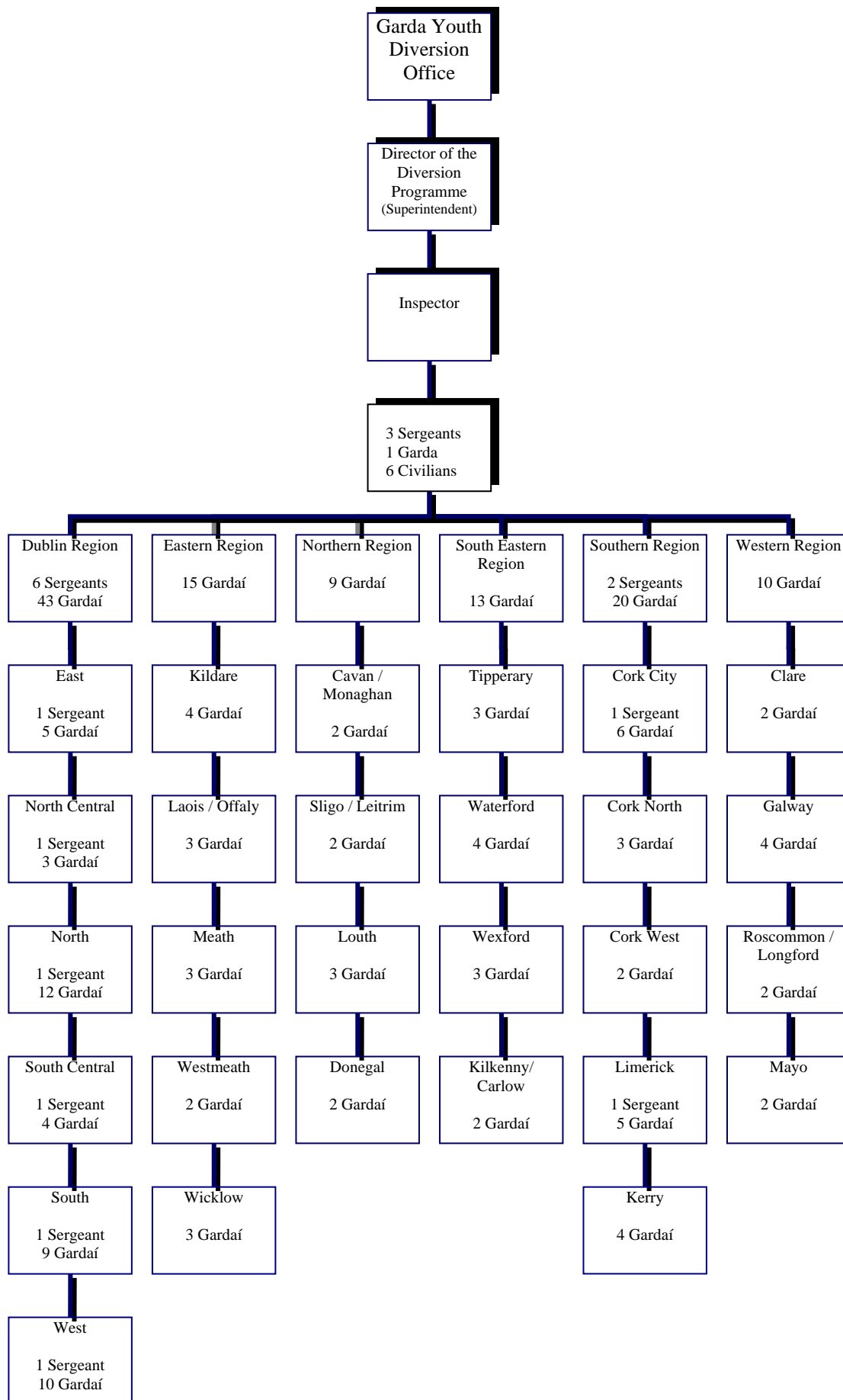
**Eddie D'Arcy** is a professional youth worker with more than 35 years experience, including 15 years as manager of Ronanstown Youth Service and 6 years as Head of Youth Work Services with Catholic Youth Care. He developed the first Garda Youth Diversionary Project (GRAFT). He is presently lecturing on Youth Justice in NUI Maynooth and working as a freelance consultant on youth work.



**Mr John Cheatle BL** was educated in University College Dublin and Kings Inns. He was called to the Bar in 1994 and practices in the areas of asylum, judicial review, commercial and personal injuries. He was trained as an accredited mediator by the Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution and has a particular interest in restorative justice and victim offender mediation. He is a member of the GAA's Disputes Resolution Authority and was a council member of the Irish Commercial Mediation Association.



## ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE DIVERSION PROGRAMME



## TRAINING PROVIDED TO JUVENILE LIAISON OFFICERS

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The Children Act 2001 places an onus on the Garda Commissioner to provide training to those concerned with facilitating the Diversion Programme. An Garda Síochána provides specific training to Juvenile Liaison Officers (JLOs) to include;

### 1. JLO Induction Training

Gardaí appointed as Juvenile Liaison Officers undergo induction training which focuses on the legal and statutory obligations underpinning the role. The training includes instruction on international best practice in the area of juvenile justice along with guidance on the administrative processes and procedures to be followed when engaging with young offenders.

### 2. Mediation Training

Juvenile Liaison Officers are trained in conflict resolution skills and techniques. This training focuses on the process of mediation to improve communication, defuse emotion and preserve relationships. The sixty hour training programme is accredited and is a requirement for JLOs under the Children Act 2001.

### 3. Restorative Justice Facilitator Skills Training.

Restorative Justice is a victim and community oriented theory of justice that emphasises repairing the harm caused or revealed by criminal behaviour.

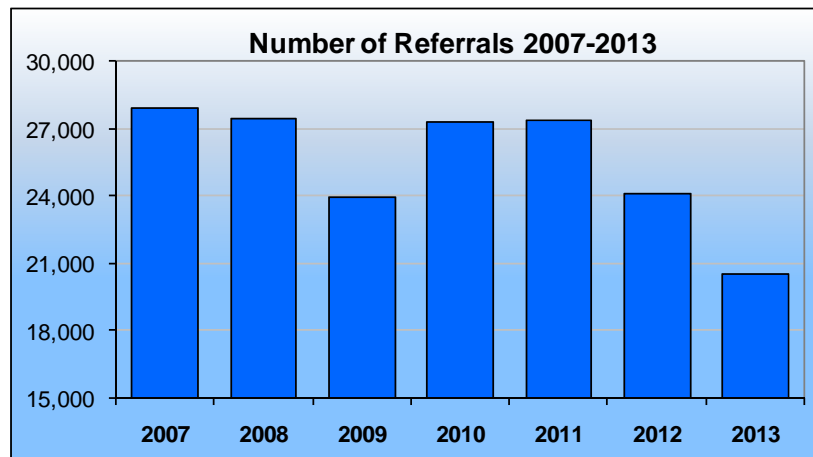
The National Commission on Restorative Justice (Final Report 2009) explains it as *“Restorative Justice is a victim-sensitive response to criminal offending which through engagement with those affected by crime, aims to make amends for the harm that has been caused to victims and communities and which facilitates offender rehabilitation and integration into society.”*

Juvenile Liaison Officers undergo a three day accredited course in Restorative Practices. The course provides JLOs with the skills to facilitate restorative cautions and to use restorative practices in their engagement with young offenders

## REFERRALS TO THE DIVERSION PROGRAMME

There were 20,536 referrals issued in 2013 which is 15% lower than the 24,069 referrals issued in 2012.

**Figure 1 - Number of Cases Referred 2007-2013**



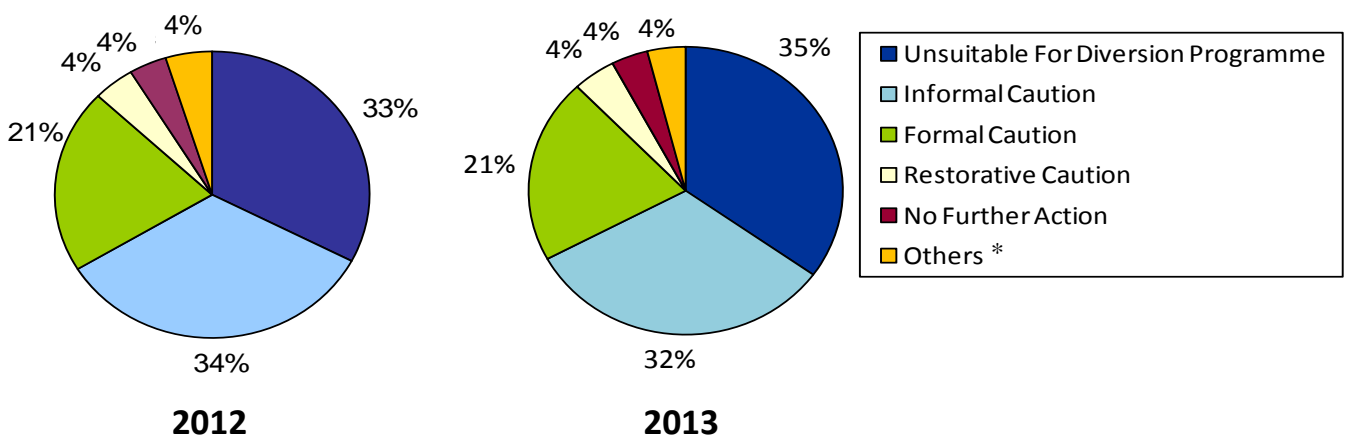
**Figure 2 - Case Decisions as a percentage of total referrals (2013)**

Recommendation	Total	%
Unsuitable For Diversion Programme	7,171	35%
Informal Caution	6,618	32%
Formal Caution	4,254	21%
Restorative Caution	911	4%
No Further Action	774	4%
Others *	808	4%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>20,536</b>	<b>100%</b>

*\*Includes requests for further information*

35% of referral recommendations were Unsuitable for Diversion Programme, 32% Informal Cautions and 21% Formal Cautions.

**Figure 3 - Case Decisions as a percentage of total referrals 2012-2013**



*\* Includes requests for further information*

The proportion of Unsuitable for Diversion Programme increased while the proportion of Formal Cautions decreased between 2012 and 2013.

## REFERRALS TO THE DIVERSION PROGRAMME

Table 1 - Number of Referrals in 2013 by Region and Division

2013 Region / Division	Total	% Change 2012	Unsuitable	Informal Caution	Formal Caution	Restorative Caution	NFA	Others*
<b>Dublin Region</b>	<b>6,990</b>	<b>-18%</b>	<b>3,040</b>	<b>1,795</b>	<b>1,354</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>286</b>	<b>261</b>
D.M.R. Eastern	760	-2%	299	215	133	11	34	68
D.M.R. North Central	661	-21%	374	120	87	28	23	29
D.M.R. Northern	1,500	-28%	665	338	282	136	53	26
D.M.R. South Central	483	-9%	223	128	64	12	38	18
D.M.R. Southern	1,679	-12%	725	502	319	6	64	63
D.M.R. Western	1,907	-18%	754	492	469	61	74	57
<b>Eastern Region</b>	<b>2,833</b>	<b>-6%</b>	<b>941</b>	<b>978</b>	<b>601</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>120</b>
Kildare	591	-19%	117	248	141	5	31	49
Laois/Offaly	547	4%	149	229	110	28	15	16
Meath	757	29%	354	180	158	29	14	22
Westmeath	421	-17%	161	115	99	25	10	11
Wicklow	517	-21%	160	206	93	16	20	22
<b>Northern Region</b>	<b>1,893</b>	<b>-20%</b>	<b>521</b>	<b>738</b>	<b>421</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>85</b>
Cavan/Monaghan	449	-27%	68	216	112	18	11	24
Donegal	495	-27%	50	220	155	36	11	23
Louth	641	-14%	320	158	101	18	13	31
Sligo/Leitrim	308	-6%	83	144	53	9	12	7
<b>South Eastern Region</b>	<b>2,368</b>	<b>-18%</b>	<b>742</b>	<b>825</b>	<b>473</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>100</b>
Kilkenny/Carlow	572	-21%	147	255	88	17	30	35
Tipperary	612	-8%	206	176	138	43	17	32
Waterford	743	-14%	316	186	165	36	19	21
Wexford	441	-32%	73	208	82	48	18	12
<b>Southern Region</b>	<b>4,205</b>	<b>-13%</b>	<b>1,415</b>	<b>1,350</b>	<b>907</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>133</b>
Cork City	1,183	-22%	528	328	210	62	34	21
Cork North	592	-10%	173	199	117	73	8	22
Cork West	434	-5%	121	178	87	25	16	7
Kerry	620	-23%	137	273	129	48	21	12
Limerick	1,376	-2%	456	372	364	57	56	71
<b>Western Region</b>	<b>2,123</b>	<b>-10%</b>	<b>501</b>	<b>884</b>	<b>478</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>105</b>
Clare	637	5%	188	244	126	33	27	19
Galway	873	-4%	181	372	216	13	29	62
Mayo	356	-26%	66	169	69	13	26	13
Roscommon/Longford	257	-27%	66	99	67	1	13	11
<b>Outside Jurisdiction</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>-5%</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>National Total</b>	<b>20,536</b>	<b>-15%</b>	<b>7,171 (-9%)</b>	<b>6,618 (-18%)</b>	<b>4,254 (-15%)</b>	<b>911 (-12%)</b>	<b>774 (-18%)</b>	<b>808 (-30%)</b>

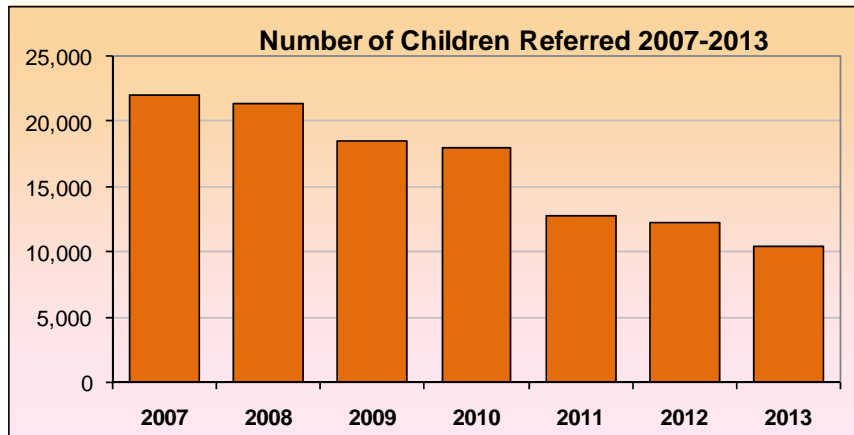
\* Includes requests for further information

Some percentages do not sum to exactly 100 due to rounding

## CHILDREN REFERRED TO THE DIVERSION PROGRAMME

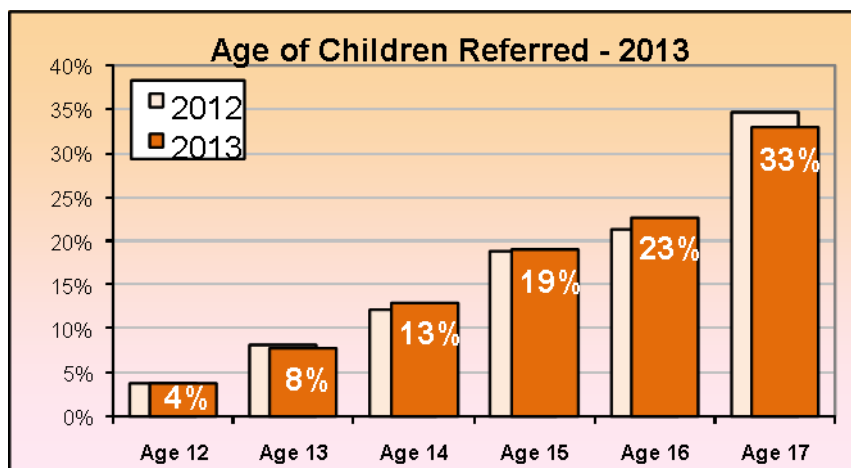
There were 10,420 children referred in 2013 which is 15% lower than the 12,246 children referred in 2012.

Figure 4 - Number of Children Referred 2007-2013



- 75% of children referred were male, 25% female.

Figure 5 - Age of Children Referred 2012-2013



- 33% of children were 17 years of age and 25% were under 15 years of age when cautioned in 2013.

Figure 6 - Number of Children 2013

Children (most recent referral)	Total	%	Male	Female
Informal Caution	5,188	50%	67%	33%
Unsuitable For Diversion Programme	1,652	16%	88%	12%
Formal Caution	2,544	24%	83%	17%
No Further Action	587	6%	68%	32%
Others *	449	4%	85%	15%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>10,420</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>25%</b>

\* Includes requests for further information

- 50% of children referred had an Informal Caution as their most recent referral type. 67% of children who received an Informal Caution as their most recent caution were male while 85% deemed Unsuitable for the Diversion Programme as their most recent caution were also male.

## CHILDREN REFERRED TO THE DIVERSION PROGRAMME

Figure 7 - Number of Referrals per Child - 2013

Referrals in 2013	Total	%	Male	Female
1 only	7,287	70%	71%	29%
2-3 referrals	2,073	20%	82%	18%
4-5 referrals	478	5%	86%	14%
6 or more	582	6%	92%	8%

- 70% of children referred have just one referral while 6% have 6 or more referrals in 2013. Of those receiving 1 referral in 2013, 71% are male and 29% female. Children with 6 or more referrals were predominantly male with just 8% female.

Figure 8 - Age Profile by Number of Referrals

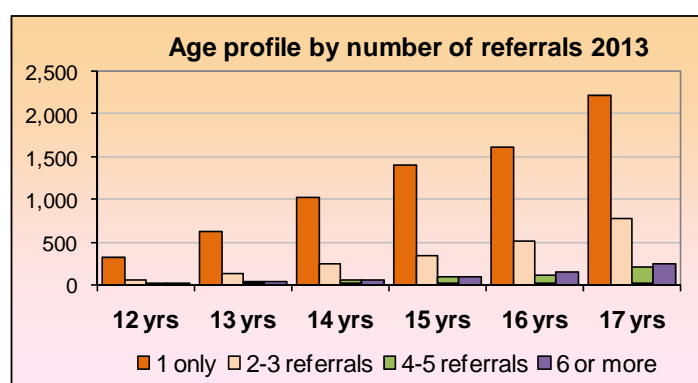


Figure 9 - Age Profile by Number of Referrals

	1 only	2-3 referrals	4-5 referrals	6 or more
12 yrs	315	63	9	10
13 yrs	630	128	30	31
14 yrs	1,019	237	43	57
15 yrs	1,409	338	85	84
16 yrs	1,618	503	105	139
17 yrs	2,214	775	192	244
18 yrs	78	27	14	17

- A greater proportion of referrals relate to older children with those aged 17 years of age or older making up 34% of those referred while 12 year olds account for just 4%.

Figure 10 - Referral Type by Number of Referrals 2013

Referral Type	Number of Referrals 2013		
	1 only	2-5 referrals	6 or more
Unsuitable For All Cases	8%	27%	65%
<b>Informal Caution</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>3%</b>
Formal Caution	24%	50%	26%
<b>Restorative Caution</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>19%</b>
No Further Action	65%	27%	7%
<b>Others*</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>29%</b>

\* Includes requests for further information

- Most Informal Caution and No Further Action outcomes are linked to children with just 1 referral in 2013. 65% those deemed Unsuitable for inclusion in the Programme received 6 or more referrals in 2013.

## CHILDREN REFERRED TO THE DIVERSION PROGRAMME

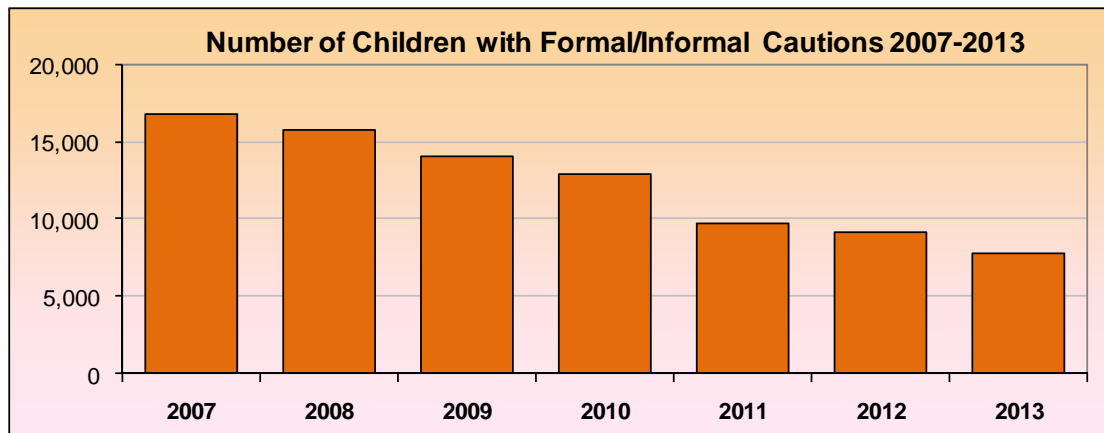
Table 2 - Number of Children Referred in 2013 by Region and Division of residence

Region / Division	Total	% Change 2012	Informal Caution	Formal Caution	Unsuitable	NFA	Others*
<b>Dublin Region</b>	<b>3,252</b>	<b>-17%</b>	<b>1,381</b>	<b>819</b>	<b>685</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>153</b>
D.M.R. Eastern	366	-15%	175	64	65	28	34
D.M.R. North Central	256	-12%	83	50	85	17	21
D.M.R. Northern	725	-28%	281	243	141	42	18
D.M.R. South Central	196	-10%	88	31	51	16	10
D.M.R. Southern	746	-7%	362	147	151	52	34
D.M.R. Western	963	-17%	392	284	192	59	36
<b>Eastern Region</b>	<b>1,430</b>	<b>-12%</b>	<b>741</b>	<b>344</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>73</b>
Kildare	347	-22%	185	80	39	18	25
Laois/Offaly	286	-7%	174	53	37	12	10
Meath	318	4%	144	90	53	13	18
Westmeath	199	-12%	86	63	33	9	8
Wicklow	280	-18%	152	58	41	17	12
<b>Northern Region</b>	<b>1,024</b>	<b>-19%</b>	<b>571</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>47</b>
Cavan/Monaghan	272	-20%	171	58	18	6	19
Donegal	329	-20%	175	115	19	7	13
Louth	236	-30%	115	59	40	11	11
Sligo/Leitrim	187	6%	110	30	34	9	4
<b>South Eastern Region</b>	<b>1,234</b>	<b>-13%</b>	<b>636</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>55</b>
Kilkenny/Carlow	318	-11%	196	50	36	20	16
Tipperary	298	-7%	130	99	41	11	17
Waterford	349	-8%	151	99	68	15	16
Wexford	269	-26%	159	59	32	13	6
<b>Southern Region</b>	<b>2,141</b>	<b>-15%</b>	<b>1106</b>	<b>528</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>57</b>
Cork City	593	-22%	275	140	137	27	14
Cork North	327	-20%	172	94	51	6	4
Cork West	254	-13%	142	56	37	14	5
Kerry	353	-11%	224	74	29	16	10
Limerick	614	-7%	293	164	89	44	24
<b>Western Region</b>	<b>1,231</b>	<b>-11%</b>	<b>710</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>60</b>
Clare	320	-1%	183	75	34	14	14
Galway	515	-9%	307	103	52	27	26
Mayo	238	-10%	141	46	19	21	11
Roscommon/Longford	158	-33%	79	42	20	8	9
<b>Outside Jurisdiction</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>-1%</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>10,420</b>	<b>-15%</b>	<b>5,188</b>	<b>2,544</b>	<b>1,652</b>	<b>587</b>	<b>449</b>

\* Includes requests for further information

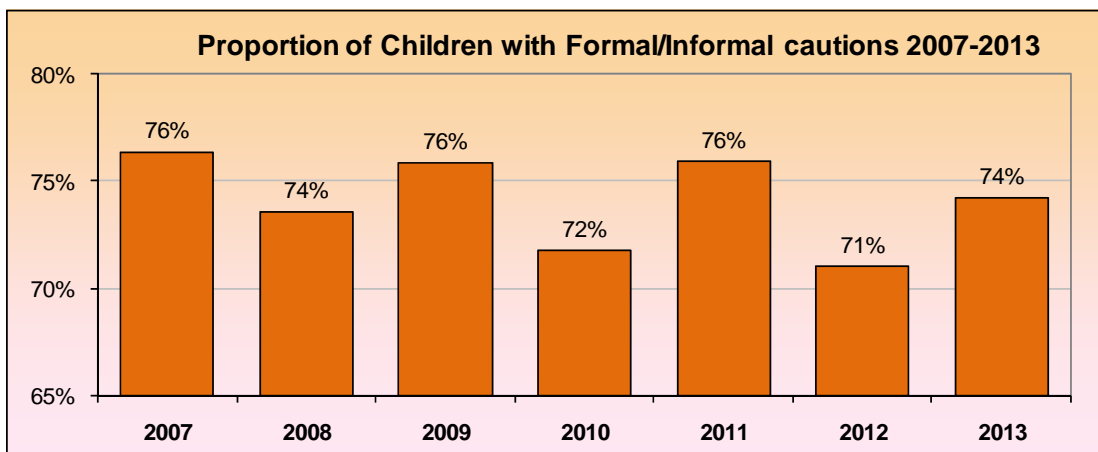
## CAUTIONS—FORMAL AND INFORMAL CAUTIONS

Figure 11 - Number of Children with Formal / Informal Caution 2007-2013



- There were 7,732 children who received Formal or Informal cautions in 2013 which is 15% fewer than in 2012 - based on most recent referral received. This is in line with the overall decrease in the numbers of children referred in 2013 as compared with 2012 which is down 15%.
- 72% are male and 28% female.

Figure 12- Percentage of Children with Formal / Informal Caution 2007-2013



- 74% of children who received a caution were deemed suitable for inclusion on the Programme with 50% receiving an Informal Caution and 24% a Formal Caution - based on most recent referral received.



## **RESTORATIVE JUSTICE**

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Restorative Justice is a voluntary process where the young person accepts responsibility for his/her offending behaviour and becomes accountable to those he or she has harmed. The victim is given the opportunity to have their views represented either by meeting the young person face to face or having their views represented by someone else. This meeting is set up and run by a Juvenile Liaison Officer (JLO).

### **WHAT DOES RESTORATIVE JUSTICE SEEK TO ACHIEVE?**

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When an offence or crime is committed there is harm done to a person or a community. In some way that person or community is affected by the harm. Restorative Justice attempts to deal with the harm through a discussion and attempts to bring that harm to the centre of the discussion. It does this by giving a voice to the person who has been affected by the crime. It then creates an opportunity for the offender to repair the harm caused by the offence and work towards the prevention of re-offending. The Restorative Justice process does not concern itself with judging or blaming.

### **WHO CAN BE INVOLVED?**

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All those taking part in a Restorative Justice meeting do so voluntarily. Participants should include the young person who has offended, his/her family and the victim, who may also bring along someone to support them. Any person who can positively contribute to the process, may be invited by either the victim or the young person. The process is organised by a JLO and is usually chaired by another JLO who is specially trained. Examples of people invited to attend include: persons to support the victim, teachers, social workers, sports trainers and youth or project workers.

### **WHAT HAPPENS AT A RESTORATIVE EVENT?**

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The chairperson, who is a JLO, introduces everyone and outlines how the meeting will run. The young person accounts for his/her behaviour. Each participant then has the opportunity to tell his/her story without interruption and outlining how the offending behaviour impacted upon them. When everyone who wishes to speak has concluded, there will be an opportunity to respond and ask questions. The offender will be given an opportunity to apologise and the victim will be invited to say what they would like from the meeting. A discussion then takes place on how best to meet the needs of the victim and to address the harm. The future behaviour of the young person is then discussed. Where possible, the meeting will identify supports to be put in place which will help the young person to prevent him/her re-offending.

### **WHERE WILL THE MEETING BE HELD?**

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The Restorative Justice meeting can be held in any location agreeable to the parties directly involved. A requirement for favourable outcomes is that the parties invited feel safe and comfortable. Examples of such venues include community centres, sports centres, parish centres, hotels and Garda stations.

## **WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE BENEFITS FOR THE VICTIM?**

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Importantly, victims get a chance to be heard, to give their side of the story and to explain the full impact of the offence on them. They also get a chance to meet the offenders and to challenge their behaviour. Feedback from victims suggest this process is helpful in moving on from the offence. The meeting may also help them to overcome worries about possible future victimisation or to obtain answers to questions that are troubling them. While there are no guarantees as to the final outcome, victims may also benefit from financial compensation or other forms of restitution. Recent research indicated that over 90% of victims were satisfied with the manner in which the case was dealt with by using this process.

## **WILL PRIVACY BE RESPECTED?**

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By law, issues that are disclosed at the meeting and the content of any agreement reached are confidential and will not be disclosed to any person without the prior permission of those directly involved.

## **WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE BENEFITS FOR THE YOUNG PERSON?**

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The restorative caution and conference provide an opportunity for the young person to accept responsibility for his/her actions and to account for their behaviour. They have a chance to apologise directly to the victim and, where appropriate, to do something positive to repair the harm caused. The meeting will endeavour to assist the young person to avoid re-offending through acceptance and reintegration.

## RESTORATIVE JUSTICE – A personal story

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When a JLO recently examined a number of referrals for a young offender, he could see that the crimes were of a serious nature where text messages were used to cause harassment and threaten another young person. This extended to the young offender being caught with a knife at school, where the other young person also attended.

Upon examination of the case the JLO discovered that the young offender was in dispute with another young person at school and the situation was obviously escalating. Through his experience of the use of restorative practices, the JLO recognised the need not only to address the crimes, but also to try and mend the broken relationship between the two young people.

The JLO worked extensively with the injured party and her parents, as well as with the young offender and her parents which led to all parties coming together in a restorative meeting.

An open and honest conversation took place at the meeting between the young persons and at the end they hugged one another.

The JLO later met with the young offender, as part of the supervision arrangement, to find that this girl had a chance meeting with the other young girl and they had spent a half hour talking together. This would have been unthinkable when the crime was initially reported and investigated. However, through the use of restorative justice and bringing all parties affected by the crime together, not only was the harm of the crime addressed but the young victim could feel safe in any future meetings between herself and the other girl.

This example shows the strength of restorative justice to address harm, mend relationships and better address the possibility of recidivism in the process.

## RESTORATIVE JUSTICE – A community story

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An incident occurred where extensive criminal damage was caused to a new community building which housed small industry and craft makers. Windows were smashed, gardening tools removed and wheelie bins set alight. The injured parties were totally shocked as they had believed they were welcome in the community and the premises was there for use by the local community.

The JLO brought together 15 people for a restorative meeting; the five young wrongdoers along with their parents and members of the community centre. The JLO worked extensively with the injured parties to give them a sense of how this process may help them move on from the shock and fear which the crime caused.

One aspect of restorative practice is to facilitate community cohesion and assist with the rebuilding of damaged relationships to allow people live their lives in harmony. A meeting was held in the community centre which had been damaged. This assisted the process as the parents of the youths could see exactly the damage their children had caused. It also served to give them a sense of the community of people who used the premises, and the good work they did.

The youths acknowledged how stupid their actions were and they all verbally apologised to the staff members. The parents expressed their horror at what their children had been involved in. The victims expressed their feelings upon arriving to their place of work with glass all over the place and the general mayhem of finding their building like this. Amongst the commitments made by the youths was to undertake to assist staff in carrying out gardening duties around the centre.

Not only did the 5 youths return to do the work but some of their friends came along and helped as well. They are completing an art course and have planned to complete a mural for the building.

The JLO could see how the dynamic changed over the weeks and the community workers and youths were on first name terms and a real sense of community and collective ownership existed amongst all.

## RESTORATIVE JUSTICE – Road Traffic Offending

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A pilot initiative is currently underway in 10 Garda Divisions which seeks to address road traffic offending through a restorative approach.

It is jointly run by Garda Traffic Unit personnel and Juvenile Liaison Officers. It offers the opportunity for young persons who have offended on our roads, to participate in the '*It won't happen to me*' programme. The participants, including the young offending drivers and their parents / guardians, then engage in a discussion using the principles of Restorative Practices, to further the learning and understanding of the risks associated with bad driving behaviour on our roads.

Four young offending drivers recently attended a Road Traffic/Restorative Justice event accompanied by their parents and viewed the '*It won't happen to me*' video presentation. In the follow up discussion, the emphasis, through the use of restorative practices, is to reflect on what they did, acknowledge the dangers which exist having viewed the video and make commitments for their driving behaviour in the future.

On this occasion, the discussion was greatly enhanced by the presence of a 31 year old man who, at the age of 25, was involved in a serious road accident which has left him a paraplegic. This young man is determined to give something back to society by delivering a message about how his life was changed as a result of a road traffic accident.

The impact he had on the young drivers and their parent was immense. From watching a video, to discussing their driving behaviour and now confronting a real life road accident victim, it left the young people in no doubt that they would have to make real and lasting commitments to their driving in the future in order to stay safe on our roads. Each driver committed to changing and addressing their driving behaviour and this will be monitored by the JLO during their period of supervision.

Significantly, this process allows for and includes a parental voice. It is very often the parents who give access to a vehicle, provide insurance for their children and therefore are integral to supporting this message on road safety through engagement with their children.

## RESTORATIVE JUSTICE 2013 PER REGION AND DIVISION

There were 911 Restorative Cautions in 2013 down from 1,036 Restorative Cautions in 2012.

Figure 13 - Number of Restorative Cautions 2007 - 2013

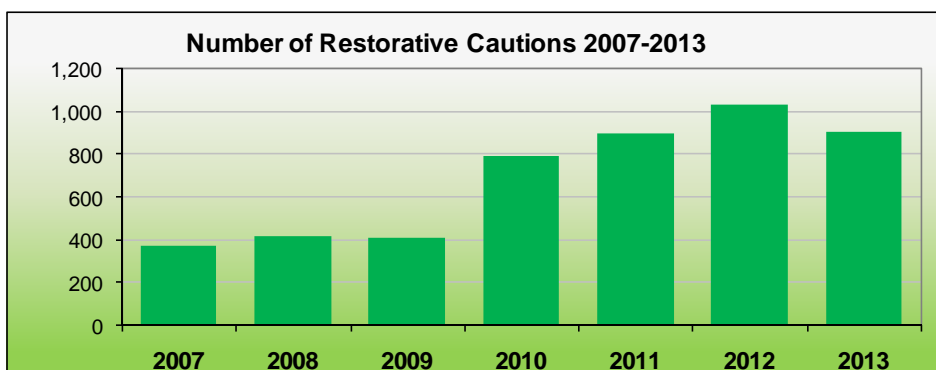


Table 3 - Number of Restorative Cautions 2010 -2013

Division	2013	% Change	2012	2011	2010
<b>Dublin Region</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>180</b>
D.M.R. Eastern	11	-39%	18	18	31
D.M.R. North Central	28	17%	24	21	20
D.M.R. Northern	136	86%	73	82	59
D.M.R. South Central	12	20%	10	21	10
D.M.R. Southern	6	-14%	7	14	16
D.M.R. Western	61	-25%	81	56	44
<b>Eastern Region</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>90</b>
Kildare	5	-81%	27	26	11
Laois/Offaly	28	>100%	9	19	28
Meath	29	71%	17	23	11
Westmeath	25	-14%	29	15	38
Wicklow	16	14%	14	4	2
<b>Northern Region</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>-16%</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>33</b>
Cavan/Monaghan	18	80%	10	10	5
Donegal	36	-40%	60	31	8
Louth	18	0%	18	26	17
Sligo/Leitrim	9	13%	8	10	3
<b>South Eastern Region</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>-3%</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>84</b>
Kilkenny/Carlow	17	-66%	50	16	10
Tipperary	43	-19%	53	40	48
Waterford	36	>100%	16	21	13
Wexford	48	60%	30	11	13
<b>Southern Region</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>-35%</b>	<b>405</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>295</b>
Cork City	62	7%	58	102	162
Cork North	73	-6%	78	115	54
Cork West	25	-34%	38	44	32
Kerry	48	-64%	134	47	5
Limerick	57	-41%	97	49	42
<b>Western Region</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>-21%</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>110</b>
Clare	33	83%	18	4	4
Galway	13	-70%	44	26	67
Mayo	13	63%	8	6	17
Roscommon/Longford	1	-83%	6	46	22
<b>Others</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>911</b>	<b>-12%</b>	<b>1,036</b>	<b>903</b>	<b>792</b>

## CHILDREN CONSIDERED UNSUITABLE FOR INCLUSION IN THE DIVERSION PROGRAMME

There was a total of 1,652 children deemed Unsuited for Caution in 2013 down 9% on the 2012 total of 1,822 - based on most recent number of referrals received. 88% are male and 12% are female.

A case may be recorded as unsuitable if any of the following are present:

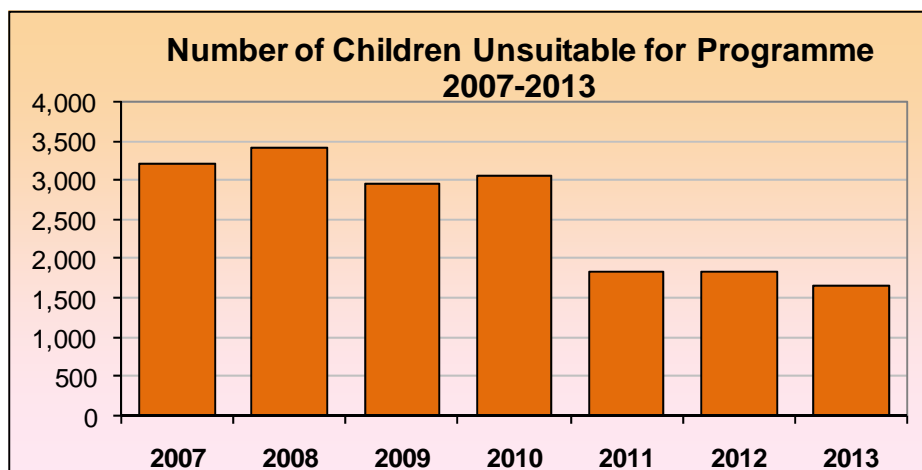
- The child does not accept responsibility for their behaviour.
- The child does not consent to be cautioned and, where appropriate, to being supervised by a Juvenile Liaison Officer.
- It would not be in the interests of society to caution the child.
- The child is offending persistently.

The Director shall be satisfied that the admission of the child to the Programme is appropriate, in the best interest of the child and consistent with the interests of society and any victim(s).

When the admission of a child to the Programme is being considered, any views expressed by any victim in relation to the child's criminal or anti-social behaviour shall be given due consideration, but the consent of the victim shall not be obligatory for admission.

Cases deemed unsuitable are then returned to local Garda management certifying that the child is unsuitable for inclusion in the Diversion Programme. This is with a view to initiating a prosecution before the Courts.

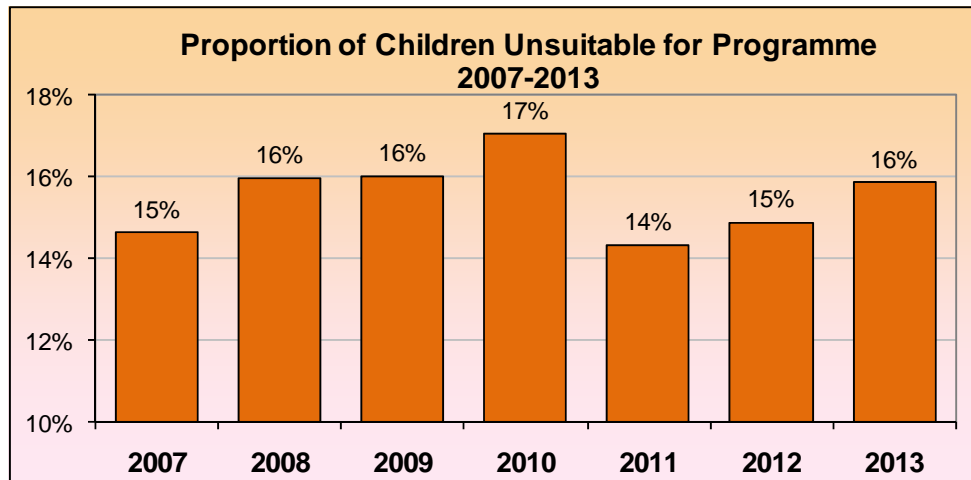
Figure 14 - Number of Children Considered Unsuited for Inclusion 2007-2013



## CHILDREN CONSIDERED UNSUITABLE FOR INCLUSION IN THE DIVERSION PROGRAMME

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Figure 15 - Percentage of Children Considered Unsuitable for Inclusion 2007-2013



- Proportion of children deemed unsuitable for the Programme was 16% in 2013, up from 15% in 2012.



## CRIME TYPE FOR WHICH CHILDREN WERE REFERRED

Table 4 - Crime type for which Children were referred 2013

Offence Group / Offence Type	2013	% of Total	% Change	2012	Proportion Detected Offences in 2013*
<b>Theft and Related Offences</b>	<b>5,611</b>	<b>27.3%</b>	<b>-6%</b>	<b>5,996</b>	<b>23%</b>
Theft from shop	3,228	15.7%	-3%	3,321	20%
Theft Other	572	2.8%	-24%	752	14%
Theft from vehicle	415	2.0%	11%	373	26%
Theft/Unauthorised taking of vehicle	392	1.9%	-22%	501	43%
Theft/Unauthorised taking of a pedal cycle	387	1.9%	22%	316	77%
Handling Stolen Property	328	1.6%	1%	324	21%
Theft from person	191	0.9%	-26%	257	18%
Interfering with Mechanism of MPV	96	0.5%	-35%	148	32%
<b>Public Order and other Social Code Offences</b>	<b>5,400</b>	<b>26.3%</b>	<b>-23%</b>	<b>6,976</b>	<b>17%</b>
Public order offences	3,019	14.7%	-20%	3,787	13%
Trespass Offences	1,020	5.0%	-21%	1,296	58%
Drunkenness offences	725	3.5%	-18%	889	10%
Purchase or Consumption of Alcohol by Under 18 Year Olds	445	2.2%	-38%	723	---
Collecting money without permit, unauthorised collection	54	0.3%	-11%	61	39%
Affray/Riot/Violent Disorder	47	0.2%	-34%	71	58%
Begging	36	0.2%	-39%	59	6%
<b>Damage to Property and to the Environment</b>	<b>2,188</b>	<b>10.7%</b>	<b>-13%</b>	<b>2,511</b>	<b>35%</b>
Criminal damage (not arson)	2,004	9.8%	-13%	2,303	34%
Arson	173	0.8%	-12%	197	61%
Litter offences	11	0.1%	0%	11	17%
<b>Attempts/Threats to Murder, Assaults, Harrassments &amp; Related</b>	<b>1,442</b>	<b>7.0%</b>	<b>-12%</b>	<b>1,640</b>	<b>17%</b>
Minor assault	1,004	4.9%	-14%	1,172	19%
Assaults causing harm	338	1.6%	-10%	377	16%
<b>Burglary and Related Offences</b>	<b>1,401</b>	<b>6.8%</b>	<b>-14%</b>	<b>1,636</b>	<b>27%</b>
Burglary (not aggravated)	1,218	5.9%	-15%	1,433	28%
Possession of an article (intent to burgle, steal, demand)	169	0.8%	-3%	174	25%
Aggravated burglary	14	0.1%	-52%	29	12%
<b>Controlled Drug Offences</b>	<b>1,212</b>	<b>5.9%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>1,205</b>	<b>8%</b>
Possession of drugs for personal use	978	4.8%	1%	965	9%
Possession of drugs for sale or supply	203	1.0%	5%	194	6%
Obstruction under the Drugs Act	26	0.1%	-32%	38	7%
Cultivation or manufacture of drugs	5	0.0%	-38%	8	1%
<b>Road and Traffic Offences (NEC)</b>	<b>1,155</b>	<b>5.6%</b>	<b>-31%</b>	<b>1,668</b>	<b>1%</b>
License/Insurance/Tax	366	1.8%	-21%	463	2%
General Road offences	738	3.6%	-22%	946	2%
<b>Weapons and Explosives Offences</b>	<b>486</b>	<b>2.4%</b>	<b>-17%</b>	<b>588</b>	<b>20%</b>
Possession of offensive weapons (not firearms)	390	1.9%	-13%	446	18%
Fireworks offences (for sale, igniting etc.)	73	0.4%	-38%	118	82%
<b>Dangerous or Negligent Acts</b>	<b>469</b>	<b>2.3%</b>	<b>-29%</b>	<b>664</b>	<b>1%</b>
Dangerous/Careless driving and motorway offences	250	1.2%	-27%	344	8%
Speeding	109	0.5%	-35%	168	0%
Driving/In charge of a vehicle while over legal alcohol limit	51	0.2%	-42%	88	1%
Endangering traffic offences	43	0.2%	-7%	46	38%
Driving/In charge of vehicle under influence of drugs	9	0.0%	125%	4	4%
Endangerment with potential for serious harm/death	7	0.0%	-42%	12	18%
<b>Robbery, Extortion and Hijacking Offences</b>	<b>339</b>	<b>1.7%</b>	<b>-9%</b>	<b>372</b>	<b>31%</b>
Robbery from the person	292	1.4%	-11%	327	49%
Robbery of an establishment or institution	41	0.2%	14%	36	9%
<b>Off. against Government, Justice Procedures, Organised Crime</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>4%</b>
Breach of bail	279	1.4%	42%	197	5%
<b>Sexual Offences</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>1.2%</b>	<b>-13%</b>	<b>291</b>	<b>28%</b>
Sexual assault (not aggravated)	175	0.9%	3%	170	31%
Rape of a male or female	43	0.2%	-39%	71	18%
Defilement of a boy or girl less than 17 years old	25	0.1%	-39%	41	61%
Other Sexual Offences	8	0.0%	60%	5	13%
Sexual offence involving mentally impaired person	2	0.0%	0%	2	100%
<b>Fraud, Deception and Related Offences</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>0.8%</b>	<b>-23%</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>8%</b>
<b>Offences Not Elsewhere Classified (NEC)</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>Kidnapping and Related Offences</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>-58%</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>Homicide Offences</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>-67%</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5%</b>
Murder	1	0.0%	-83%	6	3%
Dangerous driving causing death	1	0.0%	---	0	4%
<b>All Offences</b>	<b>20,536</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>-15%</b>	<b>24,069</b>	<b>9%</b>

\*Proportion of Youth Offences to overall offences in 2013

## **GARDA YOUTH DIVERSION PROJECTS**

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Garda Youth Diversion Projects (GYDPs) reflect An Garda Síochána's corporate commitment to a multi-agency partnership approach in tackling youth crime and anti-social behaviour at community level. GYDPs are funded by the Community Programmes Unit of the Irish Youth Justice Service (IYJS) under the Department of Justice and Equality.

The projects are community based, multi-agency youth crime prevention initiatives which primarily seek to divert young people who have been involved in anti-social and/or criminal behaviour by providing suitable activities to facilitate personal development, promote civic responsibility and improve long-term employability prospects. The projects may also work with young people who are significantly at risk of becoming involved in anti-social and/or criminal behaviour. By doing so, the projects contribute to improving the quality of life within communities and enhancing Garda/community relations.

The role of the community and other locally based agencies as partners is vital in the implementation and delivery of the projects. The projects assist An Garda Síochána, and Garda Juvenile Liaison Officers in particular, in the implementation of the Diversion Programme as set out in Part 4 of the Children Act, 2001.

GYDPs work with young people primarily aged between 12 and 18 years who have come in conflict or are at risk of coming into conflict with the law. The child is referred to a project primarily by a JLO, however a child can also be referred by another Garda, another agency, by a community worker or a family member.

The project works with the child and sets an individual plan of intervention for him/her which seeks to assist the child in examining their decision making process focusing on the decisions that led them to offend and on the need for change. Motivational interviewing techniques are used by project staff to facilitate this change and pro-social modelling is used to challenge individual participant's attitudes and behaviours.

Assistance and support is also provided to the participant's family, recognising that any changed attitudes and behaviours in the participant must be positively re-enforced at home, in school, within peer groups and in the community.

All project staff and JLO's have received familiarisation training in pro-social modelling and motivational interviewing techniques designed to enhance the skill set of those working on the projects. Furthermore, a number of Project staff have received Restorative Practices Training.

Throughout 2013 the Garda Youth Diversion Office has worked closely with the Irish Youth Justice Service (IYJS) to improve interventions provided by projects. In particular the work has focussed on realigning the project outcomes with local crime trends. This involved local Garda management identifying the key issues relating to youth offending in their Districts and working with the project to design and implement appropriate interventions within key areas to challenge the identified offending behaviour.

The Kerry Diocesan Youth Service (KDYS) is an example of this. There were certain areas experiencing youth crime in Kerry. These areas were not receiving a GYDP service. There was an uneven spread of services versus need, given project locations. Kerry was an ideal pilot site as one Community Based Organisation supports the delivery of six (6) projects in a bounded county. A strategic approach was implemented based on local crime statistics in partnership with the IYJS, An Garda Síochána and KDYS. This has enabled the expansion and outreach of delivery of the services provided by GYDP's throughout the county, informed by crime patterns and trends. An evaluation of the Pilot project, leading to recommendations as to how the experience & learning can support improvements, is currently being undertaken. To date feedback from all stakeholders including the young people involved is positive.

## LOCATION OF GARDA YOUTH DIVERSION PROJECTS NATIONWIDE

Region:	Division:	Local Station:
<b>Northern</b>	Cavan / Monaghan	Cavan
		Monaghan
	Sligo / Leitrim	Sligo
	Louth	Drogheda (x 2)
		Dundalk (x 2)
Donegal	Letterkenny	
	Milford	
<b>Western</b>	Clare	Ennis
		Kilrush
	Galway	Mill Street, Galway (x 2)
	Roscommon / Longford	Ballinasloe
		Roscommon (x 2)
Mayo	Ballina	
	Castlebar	
<b>Southern</b>	Cork City	Gurranabraher (x 2)
		Mayfield (x 2)
		Angelsea Street
		Togher (x 2)
	Cork North	Cobh
		Mallow
		Youghal
	Cork West	Bandon
	Kerry	Tralee (x 3)
		Listowel
		Killarney
		Castleisland
	Limerick	Limerick (x 5)
Newcastlewest		
<b>South Eastern</b>	Tipperary	Clonmel (x 2)
		Tipperary Town
		Roscrea
	Waterford	Waterford (x 3)
		Tramore
		Dungarvan
	Wexford	Wexford
		Enniscorthy
		New Ross
	Kilkenny / Carlow	Kilkenny
Carlow		
<b>Eastern</b>	Kildare	Newbridge
		Naas
	Laois / Offaly	Portlaoise (x 2)
		Tullamore (x 2)
		Birr
	Meath	Navan
	Westmeath	Trim
		Athlone
		Mullingar
	Wicklow	Longford
Bray (x 2)		
<b>Dublin Metropolitan Region</b>	East	Dun Laoghaire
		Blackrock
	North Central	Fitzgibbons Street
		Bridewell
		Store Street
	North	Coolock (x 2)
		Santry (x 2)
	South Central	Kevin Street (x 2)
	South	Tallaght (x 5)
		Crumlin (x 2)
	West	Clondalkin (x 3)
Blanchardstown (x 4)		
Finglas		

## **'ANALYSIS OF YOUTH CRIME' - FINDINGS OF RESEARCH CONDUCTED BY GSAS**

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In order to help understand the characteristics of youth crime and to assist in targeting more effective and efficient responses and interventions for young people, the Committee requested the Garda Síochána Analysis Service (GSAS) carry out an analysis of youth crime.

Focus was placed on certain offence groups (alcohol and drugs offences) and young offender categories (female offenders and prolific offenders). The context in which youth crime has decreased was analysed in addition to the location of Garda Youth Diversion Projects (GYDPs) with regards to hotspots for youth offending and the number of Juvenile Liaison Officer (JLO) referrals.

A synopsis of the findings are as follows:

### **Analysis of the factors influencing the reduction in the rate of referrals to the Juvenile Diversion Programme since 2011.**

- As well as the decrease in youth crime in Ireland over the past couple of years there has been a drop in overall crime.
- This pattern has also been seen internationally in jurisdictions such as England and Wales, Scotland, the US and New Zealand.
- The proportion of the population reaching at least an upper secondary level of education has increased from 68% in 1992 to 88% in 2011.
- DEIS (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools) primary school reading and maths performance has increased significantly from 2007 to 2013.
- Young people self reporting the use of either alcohol, cigarettes or cannabis (in the previous 30 days) has decreased from 73%, 33% and 17% respectively in 2003 to 50%, 21% and 7% respectively in 2013.
- The 3 year recidivism rates for those under 18 years of age on probation or community service orders has improved from 68.5% for the 2007 cohort to 58.1% for the 2008 cohort.
- It is reasonable to suggest that the work of An Garda Síochána, particularly by the JLOs and GYDPs is likely to have an impact on falling youth crime seen recently, but the mechanism of this impact has yet to be fully established and there is more work to be done in this area.

### **Analysis of the category of youths with high re-offending rates**

- 4% of young people referred were referred 10 or more times over the past 3 years.
- This group of 4% or 1,065 individuals are linked to 29% of all referred offences over this 3 year period.
- More than half of all Burglary, Unauthorised Taking (Vehicle), Theft from MPV and Robbery from the Person referrals are linked to the young prolific offenders.
- 92% of the most prolific young offenders are male.
- 80% of referral decisions made for the most prolific cohort are Unsuitable for Caution with a very small proportion receiving an Informal Caution.
- 74% of prolific young offenders had committed an offence while under 16 years of age.
- Over half of all referrals given to under 16 year olds for Burglary, Unauthorised Taking (Vehicle) and Robbery from the Person were given to prolific offenders – just 5% of those under 16 years of age who were referred for a Purchase/Consumption of Alcohol by an under 18 year old were prolific offenders.

## **'ANALYSIS OF YOUTH CRIME' - FINDINGS OF RESEARCH CONDUCTED BY GSAS**

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### **Analysis of the crime type that female youths are engaged in and recidivism rates.**

- 25% or 1 in 4 of young people referred were female.
- 46% of referrals linked to young female offenders were for Theft from Shop offences – Theft from Shop is notable for the fact that more referrals for this crime type are linked to females than to males.
- The age profile of female offenders shows that Theft from Shop offences dominate female offending particularly for those under 14 years of age (73% of U14 referrals are Theft from Shop referrals). This offence type increases from 12 years of age to peak at 15 and then decreases until 17 years of age for female offenders.
- Drunkenness and Assault Minor offences also peak at 15 years of age for female offenders.
- Female offenders are significantly more likely to be one time offenders.

### **Analysis of youth crime incidents in which alcohol/drugs play a factor.**

- 28% of referrals in the 12 months under review were linked to Alcohol and Drugs offences with 22% linked to Alcohol-related offences and 6% linked to Drugs-related offences.
- Public Order, Simple Possession and Drunkenness offences each ranked in the top 10 most common offences in which young people were referred in the 12 months to the end of October 2013 with rankings of 2, 6 and 8 respectively.
- Alcohol offences have decreased significantly over the past couple of years with this decrease accelerating in the most recent 12 month period.
- Drugs related offences have decreased by just 4% in the past 12 months despite a 22% drop in the numbers of Drugs Searches of individuals under 18 years of age.
- Data also shows that 92% of female Alcohol offenders are one time offenders as compared with 82% of male offenders in this group.
- 84% of Drugs offenders are one time offenders with 6 out of 7 Simple Possession and Drugs Sale/Supply offenders being one time offenders.

### **Analysis of the hotspots of youth offending taking into consideration the alignment of Garda Youth Diversion Projects (GYDPs).**

- 49% of the population between 12 and 17 years of age and 66% of individuals with a referral reside within the catchment area of a GYDP.
- Youth referrals were recorded in 92% of all Garda Sub-Districts with 45% of those areas recording an incident having 5 or fewer individuals referred in the past 12 months.
- 54 Sub-Districts have 50 or more young people referred in the past 12 months. 49 of these Sub-Districts are currently served by a GYDP.
- One-third of young people referred are not within a GYDP catchment area.
- The highest ranked area without a GYDP is ranked 18th overall in terms of the numbers of individuals referred per Sub-District. Of the top 50 Garda Sub-Districts without a GYDP just 5 have 50 or more individuals referred – this compares with 54 Sub-Districts nationally having 50 or more individuals referred.

## **'ANALYSIS OF YOUTH CRIME' - FINDINGS OF RESEARCH CONDUCTED BY GSAS**

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### **Analysis of the number of JLO referrals to GYDPs.**

- There were 5,052 young people engaged with a GYDP in 2012, down 11% on the 2011 total.
- 55% of young people involved with a GYDP in 2012 were primary referrals.

### **Observations of the Committee:**

- The involvement of a person under 16 years of age in Burglary, Unauthorised Taking (Vehicle) and Robbery from the Person may be an early indication of a tendency for prolific offending behaviour as they get older. An issue with this group is that they are most likely to be deemed unsuitable for caution and therefore outside of the remit of the GYDPs. However if they are identified early, at an age before they become prolific and unsuitable for caution, the GYDP may be able to engage with these young people and have some positive impact on their lives.
- Young female offenders are typically one time offenders, often linked to Theft from Shop incidents and the propensity for committing many of the most common offence types peaks at 15 years of age and decreases thereafter. The committee was concerned with the high referral rate of female youths (25%) but welcomes the finding that these offenders are typically one time offenders.
- Both alcohol and drug groupings have higher than average proportions of one time offenders. This could be an indication that the intervention of Gardai for these young people has a deterrent effect with a high proportion of these offenders not reoffending. The committee welcomes the finding that Alcohol offences have decreased significantly over the past couple of years and that a high proportion of these offenders and drug offenders are typically one time offenders.
- There appears to be a correlation between an increase in levels of education, a decrease in the use of alcohol, cigarettes and drug use and a reduction in youth crime.
- The distribution of the 100 GYDP's is a good fit to the geographic spread of the population and the population of young people referred. While the findings suggest that generally the GYDPs are in the right place, there is room for expansion of the scheme into new areas whether through extension of existing projects catchment areas or establishing new projects. The research has indicated areas where a GYPD could be effective.

## OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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*The committee acknowledges:*

- *The work of the Garda Youth Diversion Office and Juvenile Liaison Officers throughout the country in the delivery of the Diversion Programme.*
- *The ongoing efforts to promote Restorative Justice and Restorative Practices.*
- *The interagency work between the Garda Youth Diversion Office and the Irish Youth Justice Service, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs, the Department of Education and Skills, the Health Service Executive and Non Governmental Organisations.*
- *The role of the Garda Youth Diversion Projects in supporting the Diversion Programme.*
- *The importance of the Garda Schools Programme in supporting children and building relationships with young people.*

*The committee recommends that:*

- *The Garda Síochána Analysis Service continues to work with the Garda Youth Diversion Office to profile high crime areas in order to target more effective and efficient responses and interventions for young people.*
- *Further in-depth analysis be conducted in relation to prolific offenders.*
- *GYDP's are expanded into new areas whether through extension of existing projects catchment areas or establishing new projects as dictated by the findings of the research 'Analysis of Youth Crime'.*
- *The effectiveness of the GYDP's in terms of crime reduction of those engaged or previously engaged in projects be analysed.*
- *The Garda Youth Diversion Office utilise the expertise of the Garda Analysis Service to enable tracking of children through the system in support of the National Strategy for Research and Data on Children's lives 2011– 2016.*