Strategies to reduce school exclusion

Bob Ashford – Head of Youth Justice Strategy, Youth Justice Board for England and Wales

Bob.Ashford@yjb.gov.uk

Youth Justice Board
Bwrdd Cyfiawnder Ieuenctid

Barriers to Engagement Research Report (2006) - Headlines

- Solid link (amongst other factors) between disengagement from education and crime/anti social behaviour
- Key factors
  - Non attendance, exclusion, disrupted learning
  - Low attainment
  - Poor discipline and bullying in school environment
  - Being in care or custody
- 50- 65% of young people who offend not in full time ETE, older they are the more disengaged.
- Reasons:
  - Practice of schools such as informal exclusions, inappropriate study leave
  - Financial disincentives to enter training/complex benefits gaps
  - Lack of continuity between custody and community

Barriers to Engagement Research

Conclusions

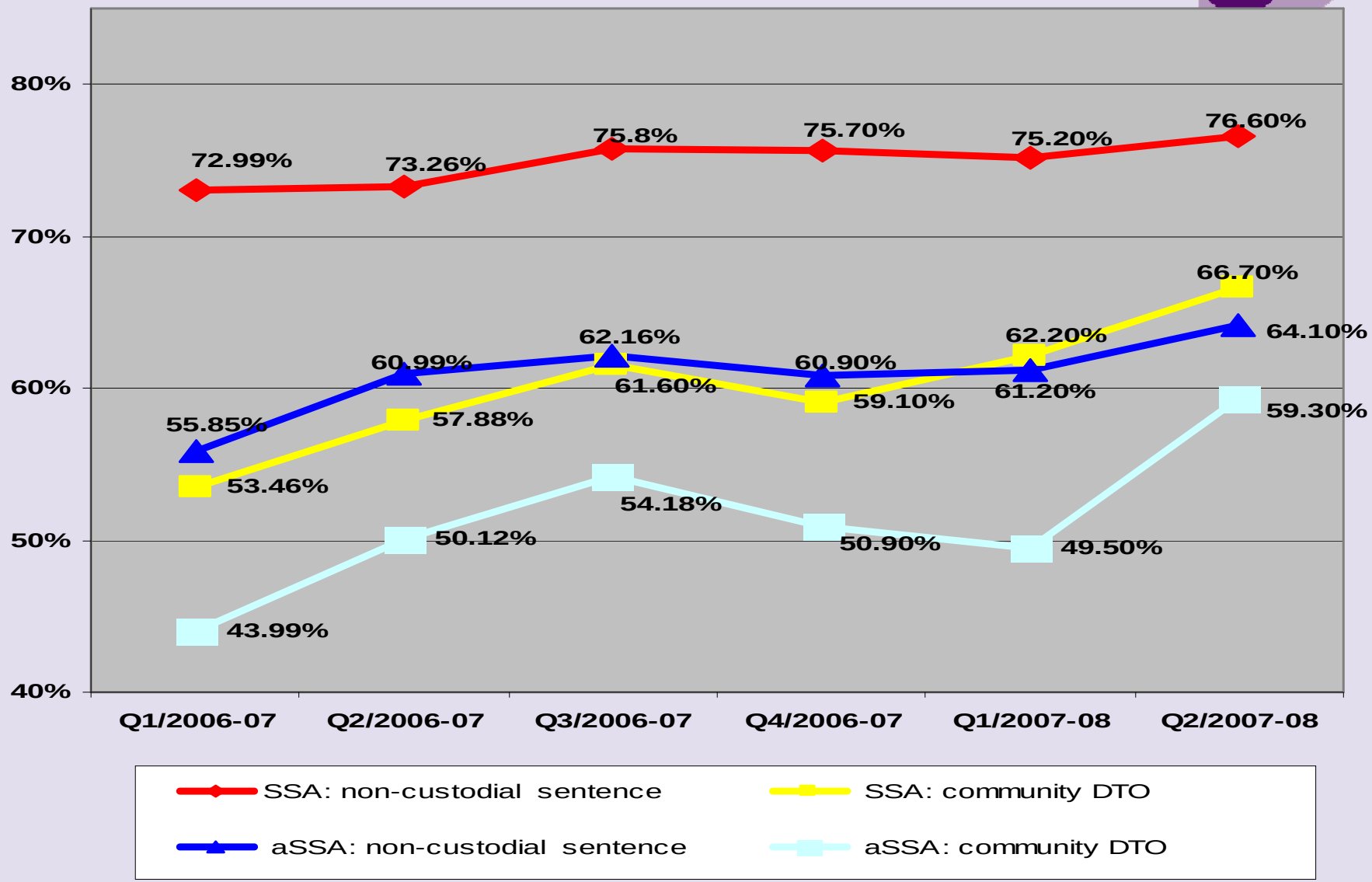
- Failure to recognise the scale of the problem
- Lack of knowledge within education about youth justice
- Conflicting objectives between youth justice and education
- Confusion over who is responsible for the education of offenders
- Poor local joint working protocols and transmission of information

What's needed?

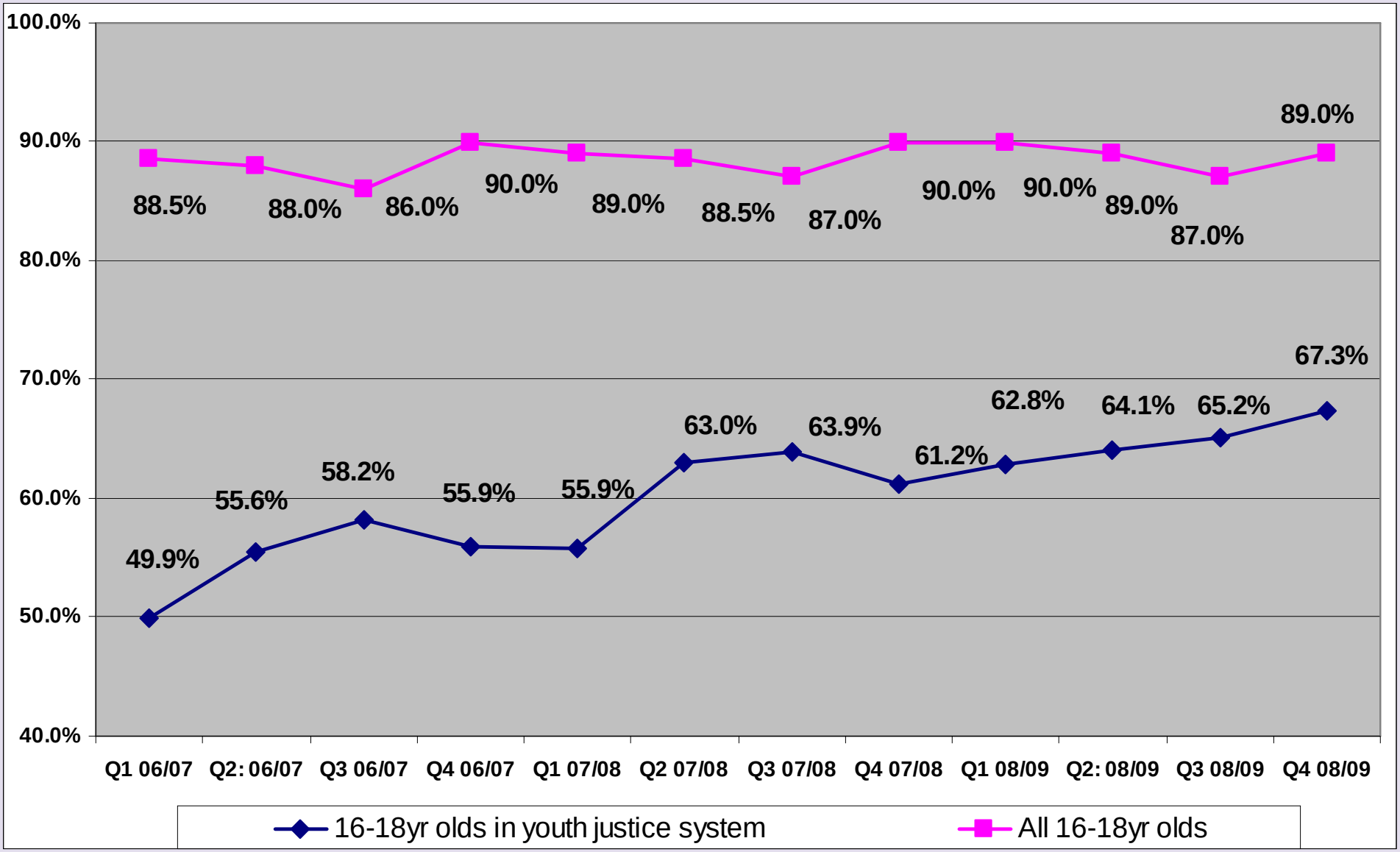
- Better early interventions
- Targeted support similar to that available for LAC
- Better public awareness to support more rigorous community sentences

Youth justice services alone can't resolve these issues!

YOT ETE TARGET TRAJECTORY



Comparison youth justice 16-18yrs ETE engagement against National 16-18yrs ETE engagement – two year trend



Characteristics of young people in YJS

messages from ASSET (audit 2006)

- 75% Impulsive
- 20% vulnerable to harm from others
- 9-15% high risk of suicide/self harm
- 30% live with both parents
- 25% SEN (60% with statements)
- 42% currently or previously experienced school exclusion
- 41% regularly truanting
- 42% under achieving at school
- 80% of the custodial cohort do not have the skills for employment

Future opportunities / developments

- **DCSF – White Paper consultation – 'Raising Expectations: Enabling the system to deliver' – 14-19 curriculum & LA responsibility for custodial education.**

- **YCAP – Resettlement – LA responsibility – notion of the lead professional / virtual head teacher.**

- **DCSF White Paper publication – 'Back on Track' A strategy for modernising alternative provision for young people.**

- **Extended Schools –– wider key stage 3 & 4 curriculum – Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning, community cohesion, well being & risk management.**

- **DCSF 21st Century Schools and the formation of 'Behaviour Partnerships' between schools. Schools working together to address behaviour and have responsibility and ownership for the achievements of pupils they exclude.**

What is the YJB strategy to reduce exclusion?
Keeping Young People Engaged (KYPE)

- £7m per year to invest in all YOTs
- Targeting young people on DTOs or ISSPs targeting the most disengaged
- Evaluation over 3 years by Oxford University
- Designed to assess the ways in which specific roles and resourcing would impact on the engagement of young people
- Evaluation Findings:
  - Diverse range of operating models adopted led to problems evaluating outcomes, identifying active ingredient
  - Project successfully homed in on the hardest to reach group
  - The importance of mentoring, and relationship with workers helping to change young people attitudes to education and learning
  - The establishing of positive relationships at both managerial and operational levels – ratified the importance of resourcing both the strategic and frontline

KYPE evaluation findings

- The young people reported overwhelmingly on the importance of the 1:1 support they received from mentor or PA ('changed attitudes, improved motivation')
- Significant emphasis on person centred, empathetic approaches in which young person takes an active role
- Combination of IAG and personal support is effective
- No short cuts to success – still problems with provision for this group
- The specific KYPE evaluation of the Greater Manchester partnership (Youth Justice Trust 2007) shows even more success with engagement amongst over 1200 young people worked with over three years
- Looking forward - how should KYPE be mainstreamed? Funding?

Other initiatives

- Resettlement and YCAP
- Renewed focus on resettlement following YCAP – current approaches are not delivering
  - Resettlement – to provide a 2% contribution to reducing re-offending nationally and locally
  - National performance: 144 offences were committed nationally within 6 months for every 100 offenders leaving custody in 2008
- Increasing governmental demands on LAs to take responsibility for young people in custody
- *Joint* working, with shared aims and objectives are in line with the new environment of Local Accountability. Shared decision making and development of solutions for the benefit of all key stakeholders
- ETE at the heart of this approach

Offender learning - challenges/issues

- **Changes to the way Connexions is delivered – a mixed economy of IAG providers – will L/As see offenders as a priority group (esp. custody)?**

- **OLASS Re-tendering – contractors bid by December, awarded early 2009, delivery August 2009.**

- **Inflexibility of LSC funding gives providers few incentives to work with 'difficult' entry and pre-entry level young people over 16yrs.**

- **Teaching workforce supply and development problems, especially in the custodial sector.**

n9

Slide 11

n9 Although the YJB has been a supportive patner in the development and rollout of OLASS, there are specific issues remaining, particularly in relation to young people. The youth justice cohort is by and large a difficult group to engage in mainstream education. They need a great deal of support and innovative curriculum design if they are gain the skills and attitudes necessary to hold down employment.

newmanr, 17/09/2007

Summary: protective factors relating to school (YJB Risk and Protective Factors 2005)

- Importance of relationship with teachers /adult mentors as pro social role models.
- Access to pre-school education – Surestart, Children's Centres etc
- Improving literacy levels (throughout the whole family).
- Improving social, emotional and behavioural skills through more personalised learning and curriculum innovation.
- Reducing truancy and exclusion, through partnership between agencies – Safer Schools Partnerships.
- Children and young people in the youth justice system access mainstream ETE services.