



Who Needs To See This Bulletin?

Please ensure that this bulletin is circulated to ALL STAFF.

Please print out copies of this bulletin for distribution around your establishment. You may also wish to distribute it to Managers at your morning meeting.

Quick-Time Learning Bulletin Shouting Out – Young People and Young Adults

This QTLB aims to provide guidance for staff in Young Offender Institutes (YOIs) on how to actively manage the difficult issue of shouting out. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) reports and Prisons and Probation Ombudsman (PPO) investigations have identified shouting out as a theme that commonly impacts on the victim's decision to seriously harm themselves and in some cases, take their own life. For example:

- Shouting verbal abuse during patrol states, especially during the night state by inciting other young people to self-harm or commit suicide.
- Harassing young people by name calling about how they look, what they wear.
- Encouraging young people to fight each other (can be gang associated) when unlocked.
- Shouting abuse about the young person's family/friends.
- Shouting threats to vulnerable young people who may be distressed and inciting other prisoners to join in.

NOMS is committed to a Zero Tolerance approach to violence. This includes behaviour which has been identified in PPO reports into deaths in custody, in the form of shouting through windows, cell doors, exercise yards and during periods of movement when young people are escorted within the YOI. Furthermore, 'shouting out' has been recognised as a serious underlying behaviour that can cause harm to others, particularly within YOIs.

Working collaboratively in your establishments with various departments to tackle and reduce shouting out can decrease the risk of self-harm and suicide in young people. HMIP surveys have indicated that up to 50% of young people feel unsafe and have stated that safety is considered a problem within their establishment, especially during the night state. It is important to identify, monitor, consistently challenge and apply appropriate responses to those young people who display this behaviour.

KEY LEARNING POINTS:

- Shouting out can occur in different places within the YOI (residential wings, cells, education and work units). It can be associated with various name calling towards young people. There is a need to ensure a more robust response to shouting out and that reports of these incidents are acted upon immediately and recorded.
- The perpetrator of the shouting out may also be vulnerable; channelling their distress through victimising other Young People.
- The care provided for victims of shouting out can include an active, on-going, determined attempt to engage the individual and build a positive relationship which can reduce thoughts and feelings of self-harm and/or suicide.
- One of the most effective systems to manage, address and reduce shouting out is to utilise the Incentives and Earned Privileges' (IEP) scheme. Consistency, continuity and sustainability of the IEP system provide staff with tools to implement the zero tolerance policy on violence and assurance that young people and staff are safe.

PROMPTS FOR ACTIONS

- What processes do you have in place to identify and manage young people who shout out, particularly during the night state?
- Do you remind young people of the consequences of their own actions when shouting out abuse?
- What processes do you have in place to ensure that robust action is co-ordinated and consistent when dealing with young people who shout out to others?
- What arrangements do you have in place to regularly engage with young people who are victims of intimidation or young people shouting out abuse? Such as support/personal officers, care plans and/or procedures of self harm/suicide monitoring.
- How do you ensure that the relevant information has been considered during the investigation of incidents related to shouting out through windows, cell doors, exercise yards and other areas within the YOI (e.g. physical and/or mental health triggers, severity of self-harm, family interaction, medication, vulnerability, personal issues, prison regime)?
- What systems have you got in place to ensure such incidents are thoroughly investigated? Are these systems working effectively?
- How are local practices on dealing with shouting out, communicated and understood throughout the YOI?

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