



One minute guide

Strengthening Young Futures Panel

No. 216, October 2025

What is Strengthening Young Futures?

This refers to a strand of the national government's [Safer Streets Mission](#) and is being delivered as a Home Office pilot as part of their stated mission to improve outcomes for teenagers and help them thrive. The mission is taking a whole-systems approach to achieving specific goals - including halving knife crime and violence against women and girls within a decade - and restoring public confidence in the police and justice system. Other goals include reducing anti-social behaviour and improving youth engagement with key support services which address the behavioural and social drivers of crime.

Part of this mission includes the creation of multi-agency panels, to identify and support children who could be vulnerable to being drawn into crime. In response to this, Leeds has established a weekly multi-agency panel named the Strengthening Young Futures Panel, which will be piloted until March 2026. Governance for the pilot sits with the [West Yorkshire Violence Reduction Partnership](#), and the pilot will be evaluated by an external evaluator with the aim of highlighting national issues and challenges.

In addition to the stated aims within the Safer Streets Mission, it is hoped that the panel will contribute to the following outcomes: improved early intervention and support for those children who could previously have been deemed 'unseen' by services; improved wellbeing and outcomes for this cohort; improved multi-agency working at a local level; reduced levels of crime; and reducing costs and harm associated with more serious crime.

How does the Strengthening Young Futures Panel work?

The Home Office is leading on the panel strand of the Safer Streets Mission, and the criteria they have identified as a starting point for children to come to panel are children aged between 10 and 17 years, who have been identified as a second suspect for any crime within a 12 month period i.e. they have come to the police's attention twice. This criteria will be reviewed on an ongoing basis, in line with local priorities. Children looked after will continue to be heard at the [ROCLA \(Risk of Offending for Children Looked After\)](#) panel, in line with existing arrangements. There is no referral route into the Strengthening Young Futures Panel; children are identified from internal police systems and listed for panel by the police.

The multi-agency panel meets weekly and is chaired by the Early Intervention Sergeant for West Yorkshire Police, although the co-ordination of the panel is sat within Children's Services. Key partners who are involved in the delivery of support to children and families sit on the panel and are asked to research the children that police identify to discuss at panel.

During the panel meeting, a multi-agency discussion takes place to scope who is already involved with the child and family and whether any other referrals can be made to meet their needs. The panel take a [Think Family](#) approach, as the wider family and context for the child is key. The panel can assign a plan of work to an individual or agency, who will be contacted for regular reviews throughout the pilot.

What do practitioners need to do?

Practitioners may be asked to provide information to their agency representatives as part of the research process. If you are already a lead practitioner for a child/ family, the Home Office guidance states that the final decision about whether more support would be appropriate lies with you. This decision should be made in the context of the multi-agency discussion.

Practitioners may also be tasked via their representative or via a member of the panel with actions as a result of the discussion. If a request is made for further action in securing the child's engagement and making an offer of support, this will be done within existing agency protocols. Informed consent should be obtained where possible and attempts at engagement should be proactive.

One of the overarching goals is to reach 'unseen' children; these may be children whose families face more structural barriers in terms of access to early help. The panel will attempt to identify agencies within universal services, the third sector and early help provision to find the best placed individual to seek consent and either signpost into other agencies or complete specific pieces of work.

One of the guiding principles around this piece of work is that it must not stigmatise or net-widen (giving the child or those around the child the view that this child is an 'offender'), and the offer of support should be strengths-based and have a view to boosting the positive identity of the child. Any police involvement will be at an early stage and will be covered in the discussion.

A [Child First approach](#) should be taken with a view to improving the safety of both the children and their communities. The delivery of interventions should be in line with research into what is effective, evidence-based practice. For example, the [YEF \(Youth Endowment Fund\) toolkit](#) provides clear evidence on effective approaches to prevent children's involvement in violence.

Key contacts

For more information, please contact Sarah Ross in the Youth Justice Service on tel: 07891 272524 or 0113 3788228, or via email at sarah.ross@leeds.gov.uk