

The role of Emotional Intelligence in the criminal activity of young people involved with the
Leeds Youth Offending Service

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Abstract

Youth justice has undergone significant changes over the past fifteen years; central to this has been the prevention of offending through an actuarial risk-based model. However, the identification of risk factors largely ignored the growing area of emotional intelligence (EI). The purpose of this thesis was to identify whether young people's EI was linked with their different aspects of their offending. The Mayer and Salovey four branch ability model of EI was adopted, assessed through the Adolescent Swinburne University Emotional Intelligence Test (ASUEIT) - a self-report questionnaire based on this model. For this study, the ASUEIT was used with 100 young people receiving Supervision Orders, supervised by Leeds Youth Offending Service. Thirteen of them were interviewed to gain further insight into their emotions, and check the reliability and validity of the ASUEIT for young offenders. The interviewees selected were: (i) the top and bottom decile of ASUEIT scores, (ii) those in local authority care, and (iii) those first convicted age 12 or below. The ASUEIT results raised questions and concerns, as it did not appear to assess EI with this sample in a robust or consistent way. Reasons for this were explored, and the dataset improved by negating the reverse-scoring on reverse-scored questions, producing acceptable alpha scores. These data were analysed for correlations of EI with offending patterns, and with previously identified risk factors. Some branches from the model showed negative correlations with identified risk factors, for example having offending family members and not attending mainstream school. However, principal components analysis revealed a simpler three branch model, requiring a shorter questionnaire, which could be tested in future research. Links found within the dataset suggest EI to be a valuable area for youth justice interventions to explore further, especially EI scores seemed predictive of further offending, when linked with seriousness.

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Glossary of Acronyms

ABC	Acceptable Behaviour Contract
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
ASBO	Anti-Social Behaviour Order
ASBU	Anti-Social Behaviour Unit
ASUEIT	Adolescent Swinburne University Emotional Intelligence Test
DTO	Detention and Training Order
ECI	Emotional Competence Inventory
EI	Emotional Intelligence
EQ	Emotional Quotient
EQ-i	Emotional Quotient Inventory
EQ-i-YV	Emotional Quotient Inventory – Youth Version
ESYTC	Edinburgh Study of Youth Transitions and Crime
ISSP	Intensive Supervision and Surveillance
LYOS	Leeds Youth Offending Service
KMO	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin
MSCEIT	Mayer, Salovey and Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test
MSCEIT-AV	Mayer, Salovey and Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test – Adolescent Version
NEET	Not in Education, Training or Employment
NEO	Neuroticism-Extroversion-Openness (inventory)
PRU	Pupil Referral Unit
PYO	Persistent Young Offender
RFPP	Risk Factor Prevention Paradigm
ROSH	Risk of Serious Harm
SEAL	Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning

SEN	Special Educational Needs
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SUEIT	Swinburne University Emotional Intelligence Test
TAS-20	Toronto Alexithymia Scale
YJB	Youth Justice Board
YJS	Youth Justice System
YOIS	Youth Offending Information System
YOI	Young Offender Institute
YOT	Youth Offending Team

Chapter 1: Rationale for this research project, and identification of key concepts

Many young people receiving criminal convictions from the courts seem to display, often through their offending, an inability to cope with their situations, and the strength of their own emotions. Some of these links are clear, for example an assault as a result of loss of temper; however some are more hidden, like shoplifting by a young person who may feel frustrated by the lack of attention they receive from a parent. How can youth justice practitioners effectively work with these young people to reduce criminal activity, and enable them to live productive and happy lives? My experiences as a Youth Justice Worker within a Youth Offending Team (YOT) prompted me investigate this question by looking beyond offending risk factors already accepted within youth justice (see Chapter 3 for a discussion of these) for another potential factor which has rarely been explored, that of emotional intelligence (EI) (see Chapter 2).

EI has been investigated in a variety of contexts over the past couple of decades, including schools, workplaces, and universities. Theories of EI have been developed through these studies, and a range of potential life advantages of having good levels of EI postulated. However, relatively little has been researched about EI in offending populations, and nothing could be found examining a youth offending population, despite the plethora of other research which has used this group as its subject. Although much of this EI work is now decades old, the lack of EI research with young people who offend indicates that this study is well overdue, especially if claims about the potential advantages of developing higher EI (see Chapter 2: 34) could also be true for this, often very disadvantaged, population. To investigate further how these young people relate emotionally, both within themselves and to others, may never have been more important as now in Britain, since much responsibility for the August riots of 2011 appears to have placed firmly at the door of young people and young adults (Riots, Communities and Victims Panel, 2012: 70).

Young people often encounter difficulties in dealing with strong emotions (for example anger or frustration); could this be linked with their likelihood of experiencing social exclusion (like being excluded from school), and ultimately, offending? Anger management is a staple on most YOT plans, indicating an acceptance of emotional management as an important aspect of young people's lives, and a potential factor in their offending. Despite this, many young people still re-offend, often in similar ways, so this concept would appear to be more complex. If anger issues are more about being unable to deal with emotions

generally than difficulties with this specifically, then anger management strategies currently used may be attempting to help young people to control something about which they have insufficient knowledge and understanding, and therefore may be unsuccessful in managing effectively.

A recent investigation into the life chances of young people concluded that personal and social skills were significantly more influential now than ever before with life success, but that the less affluent are less likely to develop this effectively (Margo et al., 2006). Young people are increasingly expected to participate in decisions determining their own life success, but it is possible that a lack of the personal attributes and skills which many in higher echelons of society take for granted hampers the social mobility of some, often those already socially isolated and excluded. The emphasis therefore turns to these “soft skills” that other targets (for example school attendance and attainment, of which there are many, government directed) may not recognise, opening the way for the inclusion of other, related, soft targets to be included in assessments. The range of “soft skills” possibly impacting on young people’s behaviour is wide, including such concepts as adaptability, self-efficacy, personal organisation, creativity, and determination. EI is one possible element of this list, not much of which is currently taken into account in traditional forms of assessment currently used by YOTs. Not much is known, or has been investigated, about the effects of these non-cognitive skills with young people who offend, although they are starting to appear within the realms of desistance theory, and the currently unfolding research in this area (looking at stopping offending, rather than commencing or maintaining it) (Bottoms et al., 2004: 374; Farrall, 2004: 72; see Chapter 3: 78). However, it could be that the whole basis of criminology is shifting, as Lawrence Sherman said to the American Society of Criminology in 2002:

“Modern criminology is now poised for reinventing justice around the emotions of victims, offenders, and society”.

(Sherman, 2003: 1)

This issue is becoming even more significant with the growing interest in restorative justice as a methodology for dealing with crime, perpetrators and victims, in a more constructive and meaningful way (Marshall, 1999: 6). Sherman described this as ‘emotionally intelligent justice’ (Sherman, 2003: 1). There is a growing trend within YOTs for young people to be encouraged to meet the victims of their offences, with a view to talking through the effects this has had on both sides. For young people who find it difficult to recognise and deal with their own emotions, this might be at best an exercise which they find it difficult to

comprehend, or at worst, a process which re-victimises the victim through a lack of empathy from the young person. The outcome of this process may depend heavily on the level of emotional understanding (an element of EI, see Chapter 2) which the young person concerned possesses. It would be logical to assume then that research into youth justice proceeded to look at EI in order to investigate how the successes of restorative justice can be maximised, but this has not been the case, until now.

In the Youth Justice System (YJS), there appears to have been no substantial acknowledgement of EI, despite its potentially profound effects. Emotions have more often been treated with distrust (Karstedt, 2011: 2). This is reflected in the available research, of which there has been an increasing amount around the concept of EI and the role this plays in our lives, but seldom linked with young people and their propensity to offend. Some research has been conducted into the EI of adults in the workplace (Jordan et al., 2002: 195), and of adult sex offenders (Puglia et al., 2005: 249). There has been little research into the EI of young people (Ciarrochi et al., 2001: 1105), reflected in the dearth of validated assessment tools for young people. EI has been examined in young children, resulting in the introduction of the SEAL (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning) programme initially into primary schools (Hallam, 2009: 313), then rolled out, with somewhat less success, into secondary schools. However, surprisingly, very little has been done to look at EI in a young offending population (although some research has been conducted specifically into EI and adolescent sex offenders (Moriarty et al., 2001: 743)), despite links made in research between EI levels and anti-social behaviour (Brackett et al., 2003: 234; see Chapter 2: 35). EI addresses people's knowledge of their own emotions, how well these emotions are managed, and their appreciation of the emotions of others. This might have relevance for use with young people who offend, in helping them to understand themselves more effectively, express strong feelings more appropriately, and appreciate the effects of their actions on others. As the Youth Justice Board (YJB) only supports interventions with a strong research base, this is an important area to investigate further.

Therefore, the overall aim of this study was to measure the EI of young people who have offended, using a verified assessment tool, to see whether there were any links with different aspects of their offending. Since very little work had been done using EI assessment tools with an offending population of young people, this study was also an opportunity to investigate how well the selected assessment method worked in this context.

Research design methodology

The methodology for conducting the research for this thesis used a mixed methods design, with a questionnaire (quantitative), and semi-structured interviews (qualitative). For the quantitative element, Leeds Youth Offending Service (LYOS) workers with young people, aged 10 to 18 on Supervision Orders from the Courts, were asked to use an EI questionnaire with them to ascertain their EI level. Supervision Orders were selected rather than other options such as Referral Orders because they were given to recidivist or more serious offenders, providing a cohort of young people who offend, including more entrenched and serious offending. Ideally the questionnaire would have been used with an offending and a non-offending cohort, but this was not logistically possible. The questionnaire used was one of very few tests validated for use with young people (however, the others were explicitly based on trait EI models, not compatible with the ability one used here, see Chapter 2), which meant no real choice of style (although others were available for adults). The questionnaire used, the Adolescent Swinburne University Emotional Intelligence Test (ASUEIT), was based on the favoured ability EI model (Palmer et al., 2006; see Chapter 2: 26).

The ASUEIT is a self-report questionnaire with a five point Likert scale. ASUEIT scores were compared with the twelve sections of ASSET (the youth offending assessment system), the whole ASSET score (shown to be somewhat predictive of future offending), and certain themes ASSET brings out (for example, impulsiveness, peer pressure) seeking correlations. This was done using the SPSS package, with Chi Squared correlations computed for categorical data, and Spearman's rho correlations for scale data. Where there were not enough cases for these tests to be valid, tests of difference were used. Given the paucity of choice for EI test, it was important to see how well the ASUEIT worked with this cohort, identifying any reservations with validity. The fact that it is a self-report questionnaire raised questions initially around how well young people can judge their own abilities and understanding, with no way to check whether they actually had the skills they reported. For this reason, statistical tests were used, alongside the other aspects of the research, to check for validity, using principal components analysis, and reliability, using Cronbach's alpha. Other research has shown girls generally to have a higher level of EI than boys (Siu, 2009: 556), and EI to increase with age (Geher & Renstrom, 2004: 7), so these factors were examined in this cohort to see whether they held true.

Some of the young people completing the ASUEIT were selected to take part in semi-structured interviews, partly from their ASUEIT scores (the top and bottom deciles (10 per cent)), and partly through research (young people looked-after (Looked After) by the local authority and young people first convicted at a young age). These were conducted to add depth and richness to the quantitative statistics, with the intention of exploring some of the issues raised, giving the young people a voice within the research, and checking further the validity of the ASUEIT scores. The young people being interviewed completed an empathy questionnaire, as this was a related and yet distinct concept. This empathy questionnaire had been written for young people by two of the authors of the main EI model used (Caruso & Mayer, 1998; see Chapter 4: 100). They then answered questions in a conversational style based around their offence, since this was a specific event which they were likely to be able to recall, and because the research was particularly centred around links between their EI and their offending. Areas discussed included identification of victims, their feelings about their victims and offence, and their views regarding desistance. This allowed the young people themselves to be heard within the research (especially since their views were actively sought), and enabled further investigation of the issues arising from the quantitative element and through hypotheses from the literature review, for example their attitudes towards their desistance or persistence in offending. It also provided another way to test the reliability of the ASUEIT with actual competencies from the young people. Both the qualitative and the quantitative elements were enhanced by inclusion of data on subsequent (official statistical) reoffending, post-research (2010). This allowed for a more meaningful investigation into desistance or persistence of offending and possible links with EI. The inclusion of interviews also meant that difficulties which arose from the use of the ASUEIT did not negate the original purpose of investigating links between young people's offending and their ability to deal with emotions. They also allowed other themes to emerge. Recommendations were then made on the strength of these results for future research, and for the testing of EI with this type of cohort.

The aims of this study

The overall aim of this study was to look at how young people's EI related to aspects of their offending. This was investigated in several ways. Correlations were sought between young people's EI and their offending (as measured by $p \leq .05$ in statistical testing, see Chapter 6), and young people's views their offences and victims on an emotional level. Young people's EI levels were compared with different aspects of their offending, for

example, onset, seriousness, persistence, and desistance. Their EI was compared with a range of other factors, for example, whether they were Looked After, had offenders within their family, had experienced abuse, or were cannabis users. These factors, and others assessed and recorded by practitioners, were compared with the different aspects of EI, as identified through the Mayer & Salovey ability model (see Chapter 2), to see whether links found were across the whole model, or certain aspects.

It was also important to look at young people's own views of their offending, to see how they related emotionally to their own actions and the victims of their offences, providing further clues as to their EI level, and the impact this might have had on their situation. It was hoped that this part of the research might shed more light on correlations found through quantitative methods, identifying whether young people felt their own emotions to be important both to their lives, and their offending, enabling them to demonstrate how well they related on an emotional level.

Underlying these aims was the need to accurately assess the EI of young people in an offending population. Available tools were identified through the literature review to decide which would be most appropriate for use in this study, with the thesis looking at the validity of the ensuing results. If this process revealed no valid test, then recommendations for what is needed would be made, based on any difficulties encountered, which could then constitute a next step for research in this area.

With regard to future research, statistical links found between EI and offending could determine whether there was justification for a longitudinal study to help identify the nature of any correlations found, not feasible to explore within this cross-sectional study. For example, if further investigation suggested links might be causal rather than symptomatic, there could be practical applications for YOTs, with inclusion in the current risk and protection factors assessment procedure, which purports to predict offending, and aids in the construction of intervention plans for practitioners. Alternatively, EI may fit models of desistance, (see Chapter 3), away from the risk reduction agenda, also indicating potential importance for intervention design. It would set another research agenda for the future, to answer whether EI can effectively be improved through interventions (see Chapter 8: 252), and were this shown to be possible, how it might be achieved.

Key concepts

To fully understand the nature and purpose of this research, certain key concepts need to be defined. They come both from the current YJS and the working models on which this is based, and studies into EI, which have important links with other related, yet distinct, concepts. Understanding these will explain the choice of research design and tools. There are two key concepts in this study: EI, and risk and protective factors. Within EI, other concepts have also been found to be linked through research, and included here for that reason are empathy and alexithymia. In the YJS, assessment of risk and protective factors constitutes the major model on which current policies are based, but there are also emerging models around desistance.

EI is a much-disputed term around which has proliferated a wide range of models, ranging around two different constructs: ability EI (competence in skills concerning emotional functioning), and trait EI (linked more with personality and innate tendencies). Ability EI was felt most appropriate, and potentially more malleable, since skills can usually be developed, whereas personality traits seem more fixed. The most appropriate theoretical basis for this research was the Mayer and Salovey ability EI model, as the purest ability model available, not combining any personality traits (see Chapter 2 for a fuller discussion regarding the different models). The Mayer and Salovey model consists of four branches: perception of emotions in oneself and others, understanding of those, use in decision-making, and control of those emotions (Mayer & Salovey, 1997: 35). Each of these branches builds on the previous ones, so for example if young people were deficient in the first, then they may not be able to accurately identify their own emotions, or the emotions of those around them, including their victims'. Deficiencies in the second might leave them unable to cope with their emotions, should they be able to identify them. Young people who find it difficult to use their emotions effectively in their decision-making could potentially make poorer decisions, possibly reflected in choices of activity, legal or otherwise. Young people who find it difficult to control felt emotions may demonstrate poorer behaviour, for example, resorting to criminal damage or assault when angry or frustrated.

Alexithymia (see Chapter 2: 40) is a lack of ability to communicate emotionally, negatively linked with EI, and therefore important to describe for the context of this study. Alexithymia is thought to occur either at birth, or as a brain response to emotional trauma, which may mean that high levels are not malleable. Alexithymia has been linked to more negative emotions like fear and sadness, and also to increased levels of anxiety disorders and

substance abuse (Heaven et al., 2010: 226; Konrath et al., 2011: 135). Alexithymia would seem to be the antithesis of high EI, possibly making it more difficult for those assessed as such to develop EI skills. However, alexithymia assessments are distinct from EI assessments, so low levels of EI, while correlated statistically with higher alexithymia levels, do not necessarily indicate the presence of alexithymia as a condition (see Chapter 2: 40 for further discussion on alexithymia). There are currently no validated assessment tools available for measuring alexithymia in adolescents, so these links cannot be explored further within this current study.

Empathy is conceptually separate, but related (see Chapter 2: 39), and particularly important to this study, because in a YJS setting, young people are often required to complete work designed to improve their victim empathy. However, this is often done by practitioners with little knowledge of the plethora of literature about empathy, its definitions and effects. Studies around empathy have subdivided it into two different branches: cognitive empathy, an academic understanding of what someone might be feeling, and affective empathy, being able to actually feel someone else's emotions. Evidence for the effects of these different branches is not unequivocal, favouring affective empathy for lower crime and anti-social behaviour (discussed in more detail in Chapter 2). However, as has already been indicated, victim empathy is common to many YOT plans, as it is thought that if young people are shown the effect of their actions on their victims it will promote their willingness to desist, and viewed as being a risk factor for offending. It is important to note at this stage that this research is not about empathy, but EI. However, if young people cannot recognise or understand their own emotions, how can they begin to appreciate the emotions of others, much less feel what they might feel (affective empathy)? This might indicate that working to improve victim empathy is ineffective without first improving EI (however the possibility of EI development would need to be the subject of further research).

Much has been said about the assessment of risk and protective factors in current policy and practice within the YJS. The YJB directed that YOT interventions should be based on identified risk and protective factors, as evidenced through recognised research (YJB, 2005a), however the list does not include reference to EI. This, otherwise comprehensive, list is in four domains: individual (for example, low intelligence or being impulsive), family (for, example poor parental supervision or parental conflict), school (for example, being bullied or truancy), and community (for example, living in an area with a high crime rate or where drugs are freely available) (West & Farrington, 1973; Farrington, 1996; Crow et al.,

2004; YJB, 2005a; Armstrong et al., 2005; McCarthy et al., 2004; see Chapter 3 for a fuller discussion around risk and protective factors). These are ameliorated by protective factors following the same four domains. Pioneering research was conducted by West and Farrington in the Cambridge Study, a longitudinal project beginning in 1960 with a cohort of eight year old boys in London (West & Farrington, 1977). The cohort was followed up over many years, allowing their criminal careers to be mapped, and risk factors for offending to be identified. These risk factors formed the basis for other subsequent projects, both longitudinal and cross-sectional in design, like the Edinburgh Study of Youth Transitions and Crime (much wider in its cohort demographics, addressing some of the limitations of the Cambridge Study) (McVie, 2001; Smith 2004), On Track Youth Lifestyles Surveys (Armstrong et al., 2005), Graham and Bowling's study (Graham & Bowling, 1995), and Communities That Care (Crow et al., 2004). Two of the areas identified through the above research and investigated further in this thesis through their selection for interview were young people with a low age of first conviction, and Looked After young people. Both have been shown to predict offending, so were chosen as criteria to compare more particularly with EI.

The risk and protective factor approach is often expressed in terms of the Risk Factor Prevention Paradigm (RFPP), which highlights an emphasis on reducing risk factors, rather than bolstering protective factors. Proponents of the RFPP suggest that young people are more susceptible to becoming involved in crime when they have risk factors in their lives (West & Farrington, 1973; Farrington, 1996; Crow et al., 2004; YJB, 2005a; see Chapter 3). However, there is an acknowledgement that some young people experience a multiplicity of risk factors and do not offend. This is put down to resilience (which could include the effects of protective factors) (McCarthy et al., 2004: 20), but might reveal a weakness in this model (see Chapter 3: 65 for development of these criticisms), which struggles to explain such anomalies as this, or aspects of desistance (Maruna et al., 2004b: 226).

Theories of desistance provided insight as the research progressed, which the RFPP did not seem sufficient to explain, focusing as it does on reducing deficits rather than developing strengths. These were seated within different criminological models of offending, for example, some have called for reducing the barriers to desistance and working on identified strengths (Farrall, 2004: 72). EI might be viewed as a strength to be developed, or an obstacle (low EI) to be resolved. Increased interest in desistance, and

strengths-based interventions, highlights changes which have taken place in the YJS during this period of study, which has taken over six years to complete.

YJS developments during the research period

This long research period was inevitable because it was conducted on a part-time basis, since I worked full time as a youth justice worker in the LYOS (the research began in January 2006, with final data-gathering completed in December 2010). During this time significant changes occurred within the YJS which bear mention, as they affected the working practices of the LYOS, within which this study was based. Penalties available to the court have been streamlined, with one main generic post-Referral Order option, the Youth Rehabilitation Order, which allows for the application of a variety of requirements, and which saw the abolition of the Supervision Order, the basis for participant selection in this study. YOTs now need to work within the new Scaled Approach system, which matches intervention intensities to assessed need and risk, further enmeshing the RFPP into practice and policy. The Scaled Approach also made scoring changes to the YOT assessment tool, ASSET, which meant that ASSETs after this changed (November 2009) and could not be used within this research (see Chapter 5: 118).

This time period also encapsulated turbulence within British economics and politics, resulting in the Government changing from Labour to the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition in May 2010. However, these changes have not reduced the pertinence of the research questions asked in this study, especially given the increasing importance of restorative justice mentioned earlier. A recent report into early intervention commissioned by this Coalition Government said that social and emotional competence are prerequisites for human success, which should be developed at the earliest opportunity (Allen, 2011). This indicates a commitment by the Government to the development of the 'soft skills' mentioned earlier, of which EI is a part. Therefore the question regarding links between offending and EI, as an aspect of social and emotional competence, is within current Government thinking.

Challenging for the introduction of new ideas to the YJS is the global economic instability also occurring during this time, resulting in dramatic funding contractions in many areas, severe funding cuts for the YJS, with consequential reductions in staff levels. This has affected the practical outworking of new initiatives. For example, the Government promised to introduce a range of Restorative Justice measures to deal with low level crime in particular (Cabinet Office, 2011: 24), endorsing the best practice guidance from the

Restorative Justice Council (quoting their stated commitment from the Cabinet paper referenced above) (Restorative Justice Council, 2011: 3), while expecting the YJS to deliver on reduced budgets. Despite the importance of early intervention identified by Allen's report (2011), the Government also made sweeping cuts of the Early Years systems (generally catering for children from birth to eight years), which would presumably have been involved in the delivery of these recommendations. Funding reductions are also likely to affect research into youth justice, previously largely commissioned by the YJB, suggesting a contraction of future research, increasing the potential value of research currently taking place.

Thesis structure by chapter

Chapter 2 of this thesis sets out the theories associated with EI, beginning with its genesis from earlier research, and identifying the model and assessment tool felt to be most relevant for this research. Links previously found in research between low EI and problematic behaviours are outlined, suggesting potential links between EI levels and offending behaviour.

The literature review explores youth justice in Chapter 3, describing the system, and factors influential in its development. The RFPP is discussed in detail, identifying risk and protective factors, with a consequential list in the four domains of individual, family, school, and community. The assessment tool currently favoured by the YJB (ASSET) uses these factors as the basis for intervention levels, so new factors (like EI, potentially) would need to be incorporated into this system of assessment, possibly by seeing low EI as a risk factor, should a causal link be demonstrated through future research, as it is beyond the scope of this current study. Other aspects of criminological research are also discussed, which question whether the RFPP approach is necessarily the most effective, in particular looking at the more recent work on desistance.

Chapter 4 incorporates a discussion about the merits and limitations of qualitative and quantitative research designs, along with issues raised by combining the two in one research project. The research tools selected were the EI questionnaire, the ASUEIT, and semi-structured interviews (incorporating an empathy questionnaire). The development of these tools for this research is discussed, along with practical issues encountered in their use, giving an overview of how the research progressed in practice. The analyses of these data also incorporated use of the Youth Offending Information System (YOIS), usually used to keep records of interventions with young people on orders. Use of this system for

the different purposes of this research challenges some aspects of YOIS, which are discussed, so they can be taken into account when interpreting subsequent data analyses. As the participants in this study were vulnerable young people, ethical issues are discussed here to identify procedures needed to ensure their safety, which was paramount.

Giving context to these young participants, Chapter 5 concentrates on a description of the cohort used for the thesis, by use of demographic, health, education, and offending data from YOIS. This sets the baseline for comparisons between different groups of young people within the cohort so it can be seen whether EI differs. Information about aspects of offending, like seriousness, previous offending, or age of onset, are set out in this chapter as preparation for the detailed data analyses in the subsequent two chapters.

Chapter 6 presents statistical analyses of the quantitative data from the EI questionnaire. As the process progressed, it became clear that there were some areas of weakness for the use of this questionnaire for this cohort. These are discussed, along with the statistical processes used to assess validity and reliability, introducing the possibility of a differently structured base model. The statistical analyses are presented in this chapter, breaking down the model into its four composite parts, and ASSET in the same way. Correlations with statistical significance (taking significance as $p \leq .05$) are highlighted, indicating potential links.

The importance of the qualitative aspect of the research increased with the emergence of difficulties in the ASUEIT with this cohort, the data from which are presented in Chapter 7. This comprised 13 semi-structured interviews, looking at the offences for which the young people received their Supervision Orders, and their attitudes and thoughts about this. The interviews with the young people are explored in turn, in descending order of ASUEIT score, looking at how identified themes, and those emerging from the data, relate to their experience and opinions. The interviewees were from four groups, low and high EI score, Looked After young people, and those convicted first at a young age. These categories are discussed after the individual interviews, as many of the young people featured in more than one category. There was also one young person convicted of a sexual offence, so issues highlighted by other researchers regarding the EI of sexual offenders could be explored. Given difficulties identified about using the ASUEIT, there is also discussion about the consistency of the questionnaire results with the interview responses.

The discussions from the previous chapters are then drawn together in Chapter 8, highlighting correlations made through statistical processes and observations from the interviews. The limitations of the ASUEIT are summarised, including a discussion about how these could be mitigated in future use, alongside a potentially more fitting model for EI with young people who offend. There were enough indications that this area is worthy of further work, which start by using a bigger sample of young people who offend to test the model, tool, and correlations, and then to look more specifically at causality.

Chapter 2: Emotional Intelligence

In this chapter, the different models of emotional intelligence (EI), are identified and evaluated, according to their different definitions, indicating the reasons for choosing the Mayer and Salovey ability model for this empirical study. It was important to choose a model which sought to address EI in its purest form, unencumbered with factors concerning personality traits. Some models seem to combine personality traits within their definitions, as highlighted in the ensuing discussion. The models have assessment tools associated with them, either designed by the same author(s), or other researchers using an existing definition to devise different assessment tools. These assessments are also evaluated, identifying why the Swinburne University questionnaire was thought most appropriate for the purposes of this thesis. The identification of a specific model for use narrowed down the definitions of EI to one which was the basis for the resultant research.

There are critical evaluations of research into what is thought to affect the development of EI, and what the possible consequences of deficiencies in this area could be. This will help to explain the potential for EI to fit into the risk factor model of offending behaviour (discussed in Chapter 3). The hypothesis is that young people with a low level of EI will have a higher offending profile, both in frequency, age of onset, seriousness, and deferred desistance. This is followed by a review of research into whether EI is malleable, in terms of improving individuals' competency in this area, and how this might be achieved - although there appears at present to be a paucity of reliable information upon which to draw. Possibilities for improvement of EI could have an impact on interventions supported by the Youth Justice Board, should this be correlated with offending (although it is not the purpose of this study to investigate whether such links could be causal – that would be for further research to ascertain). The chapter is concluded by a discussion about two key concepts, which are related, but separate, those of empathy and alexithymia. Both are important for better understanding of EI, but also are highly relevant for this thesis, particularly as victim empathy is a key part of the qualitative interviews with young people.

The study of emotions and emotional management

Research into the effects of emotions on human activity is not a new area of study. Work was conducted by Darwin in his book 'The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals' (Darwin, 1872). Here, Darwin particularly looked into facial expressions, and the function they perform. He also researched how universally understood facial expressions are, both cross culturally and between different species of animals (Boone & Buck, 2004:

74). He came to the conclusion that many expressions are universal, being expressed the same way across different races (who could not have communicated with each other), and by very young children, and those born blind (Darwin, 1872: 352). He also concluded that effective expression of emotions is extremely important to human welfare (Darwin, 1872: 366). More specific work on what he defined as 'social intelligence' was conducted after a substantial period of time by Thorndike, who identified three different intelligences: verbal, mechanical, and social (Thorndike, 1937: 275). He defined social intelligence as "the ability to understand men and women, boys and girls – to act wisely in human relations-" (Salovey & Mayer, 1990:4; O'Sullivan & Ekman, 2004: 92). His studies led him to examine what might contribute to intellectual and moral differences, allowing for factors from heredity, which he found to directly relate to many human habits, to the impact of children's upbringing, and to their environment (Thorndike, 1910: 9). Research into different aspects of emotions continued, most prolifically in the area of facial expression recognition (O'Sullivan & Ekman, 2004: 93), with the production of a pictorial guide to facial expression (Ekman & Friesen, 1976). Ekman found that people were sufficiently receptive to tell whether photos had real or posed expressions. However, he also found that people were less adept at distinguishing between more subtle differences in emotion, like expressions of anger and fear. There was also little evidence to indicate intensities of emotion could be detected through expression (like rage from annoyance) (Hager & Ekman, 1983).

Gardner developed a theory of intelligence just prior to major work on EI, but investigating similar ideas, in which he detailed eight different intelligences: linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial, musical, bodily-kinaesthetic, intrapersonal, interpersonal, and naturalist (Gardner, 1993: 8-9; Gardner, 1998: 115). The intelligences corresponding with EI are intrapersonal (having a good understanding of one's inner self), and interpersonal (having an ability to communicate well with and understand others) (Gardner, 1993: 9). It is unclear whether these constructs have differential validity from EI, that is, whether they are conceptually different.

The next step for researchers in emotions was to look into the regulation of emotions already observed (Gross, 1998: 271). Theorists used to regard emotions as irrational; interrupting normal processes, producing less desirable thought and impulses (Young, 1943; John & Gross, 2004). However, more recently the function of these emotions has been recognised as important in many areas of life, like decision-making, understanding of other people, deciding what is good or bad, and fast motor responses (Gross, 1998: 273).

Two different types of emotional regulation have been identified: problem-focused coping, which answers questions and solves problems; and emotion-focused coping, centering on reducing the experience of negative emotions (Gross, 1998: 274). This line of research led to the construct of EI, which includes the regulation of emotion, differing somewhat in definition, depending on the researcher, which is now discussed in detail.

Emotional intelligence

One of the early EI theorists amongst the current plethora of models was Bar-On, who developed emotional and social functioning theory throughout the 1980s (Bar-On, 2004: 117). His Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i) was the first assessment tool to be published, in 1997, although the term 'emotional intelligence' had already been used extensively by other researchers, particularly by Mayer and Salovey (Salovey & Mayer, 1990: 5). However, as will be demonstrated later, their definitions of EI were somewhat different.

EI was brought out of the laboratory and into more general usage by Goleman in his book 'Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ' (Goleman, 1995). Goleman made some bold claims for EI, saying that IQ accounts for no more than 20 per cent of factors determining life success, the rest being down to other factors he grouped together as EI (Goleman, 1995: 34). He described emotional aptitude as a 'meta-ability', upon which all other abilities and skills depend (Goleman, 1995: 36). These claims have not been backed by others, who distance themselves from what they view as a populist and non-scientific model-base (Mayer et al., 2000a: 93; Bailie & Ekermans, 2006: 3).

Studies started to define emotions more specifically. Emotions have been described as reactions to internal or external stimuli, and differentiated from mood by being defined as shorter in duration but more intense (Salovey & Mayer, 1990: 3, Gross, 1998: 273). EI could be generally defined as the ability to deal effectively with these emotions (Geher & Renstrom, 2004: 6), or as the intelligent use of emotions (Boyatzis & Sala, 2004: 149), the goal of which is social and emotional competence (Topping et al., 2000a: 32; Saani, 2000: 81). Piaget's child development model can also be applied to the development of emotional awareness by creating a hierarchical order of physical sensations, action tendencies, single emotions, blends of emotions, and appreciation of experiential complexity both in self and others (Lane, 2000: 173). Piaget felt that children develop moral reactions by challenges to their actions from other more advanced children, who help them progress from egocentric reactions to socially-acceptable ones (Piaget, 1932:

102). How this develops then shapes EI, which also echoes that EI increases with age, confirmed through research (Geher & Renstrom, 2004: 7), with most concluding that EI increases until middle age (Mayer et al., 1999: 150; Bar-On, 2004: 120). This could offer some explanation towards the desistence from crime which occurs in late teenage years (Moffitt, 1993: 20).

EI: cognitive abilities or a range of behavioural preferences?

EI research has branched into two distinct models: ability EI, seeing EI as competence in a number of skills or abilities associated with emotional functioning; and trait EI (or mixed models), combining emotional competencies with personality traits predicting emotionally intelligent behaviour (Geher & Renstrom, 2004: 22; Bailie & Ekermans, 2006: 4). A relatively weak relationship has been found between these two model-types (Williams et al., 2009: 319), indicating that they may be conceptually different, but not precluding the possibility that they co-exist (Petrides & Furnham, 2001: 427). Critics of trait EI models claim that they seem to include almost anything which aids success, reducing their usefulness as constructs (Brannick et al., 2009: 1063). High correlations with well researched personality traits have also caused some to wonder whether trait EI is different enough from other concepts as to have any discriminant validity or worth in its identification and exploration (Ciarrochi et al., 2000: 541). Mayer and Salovey described trait EI models as 'mixed' because of the way they mix abilities identified in their model with a range of other traits (depending on the theorist), offering little justification for the inclusion of some and the exclusion of others (Mayer et al., 2008: 504). They also felt that since the word 'trait' means 'distinguishing quality', it could apply to any EI model, including theirs, and was therefore unhelpful (Mayer et al., 2008: 504). However, it could be said that even the ability model, typified by Mayer and Salovey's model, is mixed, since it still shows some correlation with personality traits (Bar-On, 2004: 139).

Assessment instruments developed to measure EI have also differed along the same division, with ability EI measured through competence tests, and trait EI measured by self-report questionnaires (Perez et al., 2005: 125). Indeed some have gone further, saying that the method of measurement is what identifies whether trait or ability EI is being assessed, stating that ability models must be measured through maximal performance (tests with 'correct' answers), and trait models through typical performance (self-report questionnaires) (Petrides & Furlong, 2000: 314). This, they claim, is more important than the model on which the measured have been based, as cognitive abilities cannot

accurately be measured through self-report, as what is necessarily being measured is people's own perception of their ability, with no way of checking whether they are actually correct (Perez et al., 2005: 125). Some researchers claim a moderate correlation between ability and self-report tests (MacCann et al., 2004: 38), whereas others have shown little correlation of any significance (Lopes et al., 2003: 258).

Models of EI and their measurement tools

For this research, the most appropriate definition and measure of EI had to be selected from the plethora available. There are arguments for and against the use of each of the models, outlined below, to illustrate which was felt to be most appropriate to the research questions, the group, and the research environment.

Ability EI

The Mayer and Salovey four branch model

Ability EI, as previously stated, is most often defined according to the Mayer and Salovey model, which they built on the abilities they believe are involved, and consequently devised the following definition:

“EI involves the ability to perceive accurately, appraise and express emotion; the ability to understand emotion and emotional knowledge; and the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth.”

(Mayer & Salovey, 1997: 35)

This model has become known as the four branch model, encompassing as it does the four abilities of perceiving, using, understanding, and managing emotions (Salovey & Grewal, 2005: 2). This is a development of their earlier three branch model, which was a much simpler statement around monitoring one's own and others' emotions, being able to distinguish between them, and using them to inform thinking and action. They decided this was too vague, not sufficiently centred on thinking about emotions (Mayer & Salovey, 1997: 35; Mayer et al., 2003: 180). They broke down the four branch model into separate individual abilities for each branch (see Table 2.1).

Table 2.1 Mayer & Salovey's four branch model

Branch	Ability
Emotional Perception and Expression	Ability to identify emotion in one's physical and psychological states Ability to identify emotion in other people Ability to express emotions accurately and to express needs related to them Ability to discriminate between accurate/honest and inaccurate/dishonest feelings
Emotional Facilitation of Thought (Using EI)	Ability to redirect and prioritise thinking on the basis of associated feelings Ability to generate emotions to facilitate judgment and memory Ability to capitalise on mood changes to appreciate multiple points of view Ability to use emotional states to facilitate problem-solving and creativity
Emotional Understanding	Ability to understand relationships among various emotions Ability to perceive the causes and consequences of emotions Ability to understand complex feelings, emotional blends, and contradictory states Ability to understand transitions among emotions
Emotional Management	Ability to be open to feelings, both pleasant and unpleasant Ability to monitor and reflect on emotions Ability to engage, prolong, or detach from an emotional state Ability to manage emotions in oneself Ability to manage emotions in others

(Source: Salovey et al., 2002: 65)

This model is hierarchical, with each branch presuming some competency at the previous level (Mayer et al., 2000a: 109-110). This demonstrates how a state of alexithymia (lack of ability to communicate emotionally, expanded later in the chapter) would curtail other emotional development, as there would be no emotional awareness to begin the development of EI. It also points to a methodology for potential interventions to develop EI. Mayer and Salovey claim a strength of their model is the separation from personality traits, which have their own theoretical underpinnings and measurement tools, allowing independent analysis of the specific effects of EI (Mayer et al., 2000b: 89). However, as described earlier, there is a small but significant correlation between assessments of the Mayer and Salovey model and personality trait assessments, especially in relation to the

trait of 'openness to experience' (McCrae, 2000: 263) (from the NEO Personality Inventory five personality domains: neuroticism, extroversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness (Boyatzis & Sala, 2004: 169)), decrying their claim of complete independence.

Mayer and Salovey also claim that EI meets the criteria for an intelligence in a way that the mixed models fail to do. They say that for an intelligence to be described as such (like general intelligence, or the different intelligences theorised by Gardner), it needs to fulfill certain criteria: it needs to be a set of abilities, it should be correlated with (but distinct from) other ability measures, and it should develop with age and experience (Mayer et al., 1999: 123-4, 126). Their claims of validity centre around fulfilment of these criteria (Mayer et al., 2000c: 333).

The Mayer and Salovey model is currently assessed by use of the Mayer, Salovey and Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT), consisting of 141 items divided between eight tasks (two for each branch) (Mayer et al., 2003: 100). The results give two area scores of experiential EI (combining branches one and two) and strategic EI (combining branches three and four). There is also an overall EI score (Hall et al., 2004: 183). The tests themselves are a mixture of different types of tasks, including facial expression recognition, assigning emotions to art and music, making judgments about possible decisions and emotions in a variety of scenarios, analysing what blends of emotions appropriately combine, and identifying progressions of emotions through different stages (Mayer et al., 1999: 131-135).

The MSCEIT is a collection of ability measures because each item is deemed to have a 'correct' answer. The 'correctness' of these answers was derived through a combination of consensus scoring (a multicultural normative group was used, against which subjects' answers were compared), and expert scoring, which used 21 members of the International Society for Research on Emotions to complete the test, thus providing 'expert' opinions about the answers (Mayer et al., 2001: 167-8; Hall et al., 2004: 185). The two scoring methods correlated highly with each other on the complete tests, adding weight to the validity of this method, but there is a possibility that they are measuring consensual norms as 'correct' (Roberts et al., 2006: 8). The fact that a large group of people mainly agree on an answer does not in itself make it correct (Barchard & Russell, 2004: 64). It is also questionable whether researchers in emotions are themselves experts in emotional management, thereby questioning the validity of 'expert' scoring. The high degree of correlation (in places 99 per cent) of experts with lay people for the consensus scoring

could mean that there are no emotional 'experts', or alternatively that the test just picks up those getting the easier questions 'right' (Fiori & Antonakis, 2011: 333). There was also less correlation between the two scoring methods at the individual branch level, where it was moderate to marginal in some of the lower branches (MacCann et al., 2004: 25). The MSCEIT has been compared with other ability measures (like a facial expression test) but relatively low correlations found, even though the other tests correlated more highly with each other, possibly indicating a weakness in the construct validity of the MSCEIT (MacCann et al., 2004: 36).

There have been criticisms of the MSCEIT offering only partial support for the four factor model (Fiori & Antonakis, 2011: 329). Some researchers have suggested different variations of the model, for example a three factor model, finding that emotional facilitation was not measured by the MSCEIT tool, and suggesting a corresponding refining of it (Fan et al., 2010: 784). Some researchers were concerned that EI, as determined by the MSCEIT overlapped too closely with general intelligence and personality, bringing into question its discriminant validity (Fiori & Antonakis, 2011: 333). However, it has been found to show variance beyond these two concepts (Rossen & Kranzler, 2009: 60). The convergent validity has also been questioned, regarding whether the test can be said to find an overall EI scores, or whether there is only validity within each strand (Fiori & Antonakis, 2011: 333; Fan et al., 2010: 784).

While the ability model of Mayer and Salovey may seem the most objective available, measured by an ability-based test, not given to the self concept inaccuracies of self-report scales – where they may be measuring the subject's perception of their EI (Brackett & Mayer, 2003: 196; Extremera et al., 2006: 1071), it still only measures emotional knowledge, rather than testing emotional skill (Warwick et al., 2010: 66). There have been suggestions of refinements, the Ability and Emotional Intelligence Measure being an example (Warwick et al., 2010: 67), but this is still based on the MSCEIT, with some refinements. Results showed no correlation with empathy, in contrast with most other studies (Warwick et al., 2010: 66-71). These issues have led to a call for a totally different methodology, to find out how people act in real situations and emotionally charged situations, but nothing like this is currently available (Fiori & Antonakis, 2011: 333).

The MSCEIT is only designed for use with adults, but the authors are currently working on an adolescent version (MSCEIT-AV), for which they are still currently developing question items and validity-testing. The current MSCEIT-YV (under testing) is a 101 item assessment aimed at 10 to 18 year olds, divided into the same four branches. It combines

a diverse mixture of activities, from assessing how much a list of emotions can be seen in eight different faces, attributing sensory items (like colour or temperature) to particular emotions (a synesthesia approach), selecting the correct word for a description of feelings, combinations of emotions which go to make up a particular affective state, and responses to scenarios (Papadogiannis et al., 2009: 54). However, it has been described as 'a bit lengthy' by John Mayer on his own web-pages (Mayer, 2004-2007), at 101 items. The MSCEIT-AV is also scored slightly differently, in that only 'expert' scoring is used (the answers given by the respondents compared with a panel of 'experts'), as it was thought that using general consensus scoring would not be appropriate with young people, who may not most frequently choose the most 'correct' option (Papadogiannis et al., 2009: 55). It is not known yet whether this alteration to the scoring technique has affected validity, since the test is still undergoing research. However, how much someone can be regarded as an 'expert' in emotions is debatable, along with the assumption that young people will not answer conventionally. Removing general consensus scoring also removes one of the checks to the validity of the expert scoring. When it is published, it may prove the most reliable test for subsequent studies of adolescents, given the proceeding discussions regarding mixed models. However, this does not answer the MSCEIT scoring concerns.

There is another scale, which claims to test for EI along the Mayer and Salovey model, devised by Schutte et al. (Schutte et al., 1998). This was based on the earlier three branch model which Mayer and Salovey later expanded, but developed as a self-report questionnaire. The test consists of 33 items selected from an initial pool of 62 devised from the model, all questions about the subject's opinions concerning their emotional life (for example: "I expect good things to happen" and "I have control over my emotions") marked by that subject on a five point Likert scale (Schutte et al., 1998: 169-70). Some of the items were reverse scored to reduce the chance of socially desirable responding – answers that the responder feels put them in a better light (Schutte et al., 1998: 172), although this only applied to three items out of 33, arguably not enough to make a significant difference.

It is worth considering whether a test based on an ability model can be assessed effectively using self-report, with all the inherent difficulties which that brings, like the lack of self awareness leading to erroneous answers, and concerns over whether people will fake their answers to produce socially desirable responses (Mayer et al., 2000c: 324; Williams et al., 2009: 316). Self reported ability can be very different from actual ability, and some would say that despite being based on the ability model, the mere fact that it is self-report means that it would be measuring trait and not ability EI (Perez et al., 2005:

125). However, the creators found good internal consistency within the test, and a moderate to high reliability in a test-retest within a two week interval, indicating that subjects appeared to have been largely honest in their responses (Schutte et al., 1998: 173). Schutte's scale also correlated only with openness to experience on the NEO Personality Inventory, like the MSCEIT, but also correlated with other self-report scales based on mixed models (particularly the EQ-i), none of which correlated strongly with the MSCEIT (Schutte et al., 1998: 176). Mayer and Salovey, who developed the original model on which this is claimed to be based, are of the opinion that the self-report nature of the scale compromises the original construct, making it unreliable (Mayer et al., 2000a: 104). This test is only available for an adult sample group. There do not appear to be any plans for adaptation to an adolescent group.

Trait EI

Bar-On and the EQ-i

The mixed models are more numerous, and have a higher correlation with each other through their associated tests than they do with the Mayer and Salovey model, possibly indicating that a slightly different construct is being measured; but these are by no means homogeneous (MacCann et al., 2004: 23). As stated earlier in the chapter (see page 23), the first EI test to be published was Bar-On's EQ-i, based on his own construct of social and emotional intelligence, as he felt these were too inter-related to be separate (Bar-On, 2004: 116-7).

His definition was as follows:

“Emotional and social intelligence is a cross-section of inter-related emotional and social competencies that determine how effectively we understand and express ourselves, understand others and relate with them, and cope with daily demands and pressures.”

(Bar-On, 2004: 117)

This definition seems much vaguer than that of Mayer and Salovey (see page 19) which lists abilities contributing to a total EI. This definition is much more focused on the possible effects of having these competencies, without actually specifying them. These are not explained until the model is examined in more detail.

Bar-On's construct originally consisted of five components: the ability to be aware of, understand and express emotions (intrapersonal); the ability to understand the emotions of others and relate with them (interpersonal); the ability to manage and control one's own emotions (management); the ability to adapt in order to solve problems (adaptability); the ability to create positive moods and be self motivated (general mood). He later decided that general mood was merely an indicator of emotional intelligence rather than a component of it, although it still remained one of the five defining features (Bar-On, 2004: 117). The remaining four bear a high degree of resemblance to the Mayer and Salovey abilities, but seem to lose something of the social competencies that Bar-On stressed were inextricably linked. However, this model holds the different areas as different dimensions, rather than hierarchical abilities (MacCann et al., 2004: 24).

The EQ-i is a self-report scale containing 133 items on a five point Likert scale. The scale results in a total Emotional Quotient (EQ) score made up of the individual components listed above. Bar-On always related this to psychological well-being, asserting that the components he identified contribute to this (Bar-On, 2004: 119). One of the major criticisms of this model is that it correlates too highly with personality traits (Bracket & Mayer, 2003: 200), in particular to neuroticism (MacCann et al., 2004: 32). However Bar-On disputes this as his research indicated that EQ-i increases with age, and also can be enhanced using focused interventions, factors not true of personality traits, which are more constant through life (Bar-On, 2004: 127). However, *social* intelligence has already been defined as a model of personality, making the combination less valid as a single concept (Zirkel, 2000: 20). The criticism has also been levied that this scale measures anything related to success not already measured by IQ tests, seemingly widening the scope too far (Hedlund & Sternberg, 2000: 146). It contains some items which are indistinguishable from personality test items, and also, perhaps unsurprisingly, has moderate to high correlations with the 'Big Five' personality traits (Day & Carroll, 2008: 764; Perez et al., 2005: 130). One research project, comparing the EQ-i to the MSCEIT, found it susceptible to faking (Day & Carroll, 2008: 776).

The EQ-i is the only measure recorded as having been used with an offender population (Hemmati et al., 2004: 695-706). Bar-On found that testing on prisoners in an American prison produced significantly lower EQ scores than for a general population. He hypothesised that high EQ equates with rule-following in society, indicating that low scores could be linked to societal rule-breaking. Unlike studies conducted in the community, the offender sample did not show increases of EQ with age. This could indicate that an

offender population has significant differences from a non-offender sample, possibly meaning that the test needs to be trialed with offenders for construct validity (whether the scale measures what it purports to measure) within that environment. This measure was only conducted on groups of adult offenders in custody, so the results may not be meaningfully generalised to young offenders (Hemmati et al., 2004: 695-706), whose profile could be significantly different, given that most young people committing crime desist before they reach adulthood (Moffitt, 1993: 20, see Chapter 3: 78).

There is an operational youth version of the EQ-I (EQ-i-YV), recommended for use in UK schools to the Department of Education by researchers at Oxford University (Bar-On, 2004: 119). However, there seems little doubt that the inclusion in this construct of social intelligence, and other personality aspects, creates a very wide definition, possibly not very useful for ascertaining the independent effects of emotional intelligence on behaviour (Brackett & Mayer, 2003: 198). In view of this, it would seem prudent to seek a more narrowly defined construct, which has assessment possibilities for adolescents.

Goleman's emotional competence inventory

Goleman's mixed model of EI encompasses possibly the widest range of concepts, including social and emotional skills and traits, personality characteristics, and motivation (Lopes et al., 2003: 245). Goleman identified five areas: knowing one's own emotions, managing one's own emotions, motivating oneself, recognising emotions in others, and handling relationships (Mayer et al., 2000b: 90). Goleman recognised that he was giving a very broad definition of EI, basically attributing to it every non-cognitive competence (Goleman, 1995: 34). He says: "There is an old-fashioned word for the body of skills that EI represents: character." (Goleman, 1995: 285). The assessment instrument associated with Goleman's construct is the Emotional Competence Inventory (ECI) (Boyatzis et al., 2000: 345). The underlying theme running through both the construct and the ECI is effectiveness, especially in the context of work. This has led to EI being defined in this construct as follows:

"An EI competency is an ability to recognise, understand, and use emotional information about oneself or others that leads to, or causes, effective or superior performance."

(Boyatzis & Sala, 2004: 149)

Despite the use of the word 'ability' in this definition, this model is situated in the trait EI or mixed model category, the emphasis being on the results of having high EI, rather than the method by which this might be obtained. The definition might be viewed in this way as similar to that of Bar-On. The ECI was explicitly based on personality theory (Boyatzis & Sala, 2004: 151), consisting of 18 self-report (and ratings from significant others close to the subjects) competencies in four clusters: self awareness, self management, social awareness, and relationship management, but has been found by some researchers to have a low level of reliability (Davies et al., 1998: 1012). Many of the competencies in the ECI are specifically regarding the workplace, like service orientation, and organisational awareness (Boyatzis & Sala, 2004: 154), making it inappropriate for young people.

The Swinburne University Emotional Intelligence Test (SUEIT)

Relative newcomers to the arena of EI modelling and assessment are the Palmer, Stough et al. team from Swinburne University in Australia. They conducted a systematic comparison of the different models with a view to devising a universal model of EI (Palmer et al., 2006: 2). The model they devised consisted of five factors under a general EI label. These factors were emotional self-awareness and expression, emotional awareness of others, emotional reasoning, emotional self-management, and the emotional management of others (Palmer et al., 2006: 24). The five factors were much more streamlined towards an emotion construct than others which veered towards personality traits, and as such provided a useful construct on which to base an assessment instrument. Their definition of EI is as follows:

“The skill with which one perceives, expresses, reasons with and manages their own and others’ emotions.”

(Palmer et al., 2006: 25).

This definition contains no comment about the way in which improved competencies in the areas mentioned would affect functioning, reducing it down to a set of skills more in line with the Mayer and Salovey model. It has less emphasis on understanding of emotions than all the other definitions, although understanding is included in the assessment tool, described later. This definition does not allow for any difference personality might make, seeing that as entirely separate. The assessment of this five factor model uses the SUEIT, which is self-report utilising a five point Likert scale, designed specifically for use in the workplace (Baillie & Ekermans, 2006: 5), and therefore for adults. This provides an overall EI score plus sub-scale scores from the five factors. The SUEIT showed high internal

consistency and reliable test-retest with an intervening period of one month (Baillie & Ekermans, 2006: 5).

The SUEIT has been adapted for use with adolescents (ASUEIT – Adolescent Swinburne EI Test), following indications of negative links for this age group between EI and deviant behaviour, and positive links between EI and academic success (Luebbers et al., 2007: 1001). The test was reworded after research into the comprehensibility of the items with 13 to 15 year olds. Items were changed if less than 80 per cent of respondents understood (Luebbers et al., 2007: 1002). Unreliable items were removed from the initial 64, leaving 57 remaining. Factor analysis of this new scale showed that it supported a four-factor model, consisting of: understanding and analysing emotions, perception and expression of emotions, emotional management and control, and use of emotions in decision-making and problem-solving (Luebbers et al., 2007: 1005). All of these factors showed improvement with age, except emotional management and control. However, this was in line with Mayer and Salovey's findings, possibly demonstrating the development aspect of this intelligence, as it is unlikely that this factor should develop very much until late adolescence or early adulthood (Luebbers et al., 2007: 1006).

This remaining four-factor model fitted well with the Mayer and Salovey model (Salovey et al., 2002: 64; Luebbers et al., 2007: 1007). This measure, being based on the abilities model of EI rather than ones incorporating personality traits, alongside the fact that there was an adolescent version already tested and ready for use, made it an attractive instrument to use in assessment of the young people in this study. However, this test is self-report, trying to measure abilities, and as such is possibly limited in its applicability, and may well be assessing trait EI. It cannot measure actual ability, but whereas the MSCEIT measures emotional knowledge rather than abilities, the ASUEIT measures individual's opinions regarding their abilities, which automatically introduces a filter of self image or self esteem (Petrides et al., 2001: 36). This is necessarily open to the well documented pitfalls of insincere responses and socially desirable responding:

“self reported levels of emotional skills may not be a particularly accurate indicator of objectively measured emotional skills.”

(Williams et al., 2009: 316)

Despite these concerns, this assessment tool seemed to be the only one available, unencumbered with items based on personality, for use in this type of study. It then became part of this empirical study to assess how well this self-report format worked with

a cohort of young people who had offended (see Chapters 6 and 7). The development of the ASUEIT had reported reasonable internal consistency reliability levels (Total EI $\alpha=0.85$, understanding and analysing emotions $\alpha=0.81$, perception and expression of emotion $\alpha=0.75$, emotional management and control $\alpha=0.75$, emotions direct cognition $\alpha=0.75$), so it was interesting to compare these with the reliability levels from this cohort see Chapter 6: 155). Difficulties were anticipated because poorer literacy levels have been observed in the LYOS sample when compared with the general population (Gregory & Bryan, 2009: 8). The ASUEIT was developed for use by young people from Year 6 (age 11 years upwards), but although this may be the chronological age of the young people within the sample, it would not necessarily reflect their reading or comprehension age.

How does EI develop?

Emotions as they proceed through babyhood and childhood, are aspects of a developmental system (Cicchetti et al., 1995: 6). This development begins with emotional expression in early infancy, with babies only a few days old also being able to perceive emotions, which require no cognition (Cicchetti et al., 1995: 5; Hall et al., 2004: 198). Emotional expression can easily be seen, with the infant crying to gain attention from its primary care-giver, moving swiftly into the beginnings of emotional regulation, as infants start to self-sooth (Rubin et al., 1995: 50). Emotional regulation includes the monitoring, evaluation, and moderating of emotions, both in their intensity and their duration, with the ability to realise goals a marker for emotional competence (Zimmerman et al., 2001: 332). Since development of these skills begins so early in life, it depends heavily on interactions with parents or primary caregivers (Rubin et al., 1995: 50).

Children learn to react appropriately and regulate their own emotions through their care-giver relationship. If they react with distress, they learn whether their care-giver thinks this is worthy of attention by whether they receive it or not. If they do not receive attention, they learn that normal expressions of emotion are not enough, and they must resort to distorted expressions of emotion to address their distress (von Salisch, 2001: 311). Children developing maladaptive emotional regulatory behaviours may either internalise their difficulties by behaviour over-control, or externalise them through behaviour under-control (which can take the form of aggression and defiant behaviour) (Rubin et al., 1995: 50). Conversely, parental communication with young children over their emotions has been found to help their emotional development, resulting in better perspective taking (necessary for empathy), emotional understanding, and moral sensitivity (von Salisch,

2001: 312). So parents who do not specifically communicate with their children about their emotions may be disadvantaging their emotional development. For example, mothers who identify as being angry were found to have less empathic children, who were more angry and defiant themselves (von Salisch, 2001: 312). This has implications for children in domestic violence situations, or who are themselves being neglected or abused. Children witnessing domestic violence are less likely to possess advanced emotional skills, and will either over or under control their behaviour to ensure their own safety (Hall et al., 2004: 202). Similarly children who have been maltreated themselves will have a lower range of emotions which they can express, and greater levels of fearfulness, anger, and sadness, with fewer positive emotions, even as babies. Abused children have been found to be more aggressive, but also to have higher levels of anxiety and depression, pointing to poor emotional regulation (Hall et al., 2004: 199). This leads to one of the most influential theories around infant and childhood development, Bowlby's theory of attachment.

EI and attachment theory

Attachment theory developed from observations of infants in institutions, leading to the theory that early deprivation of maternal care leads to difficulties in social development (Bowlby, 1965: 21). Bowlby felt very strongly that prolonged separation from a maternal figure was a major cause of delinquent behaviour (Bowlby, 1965: 41), but he also observed that disruption of the maternal relationship seemed often to result in 'affectionless character' and behaviour disorders (Bowlby, 1965: 228). He found that half of an observed group of children who had spent at least five years in an institution were 'socially incapable'. This seems to link the current concept of alexithymia (an inability to communicate emotionally, expanded later in the chapter) with young people who have suffered deprivation in their maternal care. While Bowlby mainly studied children physically deprived of their maternal figure, he also found these attributes to be true of those who had a deficient early relationship with their mothers (Bowlby, 1965: 36). He found that an individual's ability to make personal attachments was dependant on interpersonal interaction with their mother – insufficient interaction leading to sensory deprivation (Bowlby, 1965: 232). Ainsworth, who also developed attachment theory with Bowlby, found that babies' security of attachment was dependant on how sensitive their mothers were to them (Bell & Salter Ainsworth, 1972: 1187). Babies of insensitive mothers were likely to have an insecure attachment (Borelli et al., 2010: 475; Bretherton, 1992).

This theory classifies four different types of attachment as follows: secure (children welcome a close relationship with their main caregiver, and are able to use them as a base from which to explore); resistant (insecure bond, often causing the child to suffer anxiety on separation, and the need to stay near to the caregiver, but possibly resisting the caregiver's attempts to initiate contact); avoidant (insecure attachment causing the child to be distressed on separation from their caregiver, but also to avoid or ignore them); disorganised (insecure again, but apparently combining avoidant and resistant attachment, causing confusion to the child as to whether or not they want caregiver contact) (Main, 1996: 238). Children create through their experiences from their primary care givers an internal model of attachment, to which they return in times of stress. This internal model dominates their ability to regulate their emotions, having been reinforced through countless incidents in their home environment (Becker-Stoll et al., 2001: 345). Those with insecure attachments can be diagnosed with Reactive Attachment Disorder, which has a range of associated behaviours, like poor impulse control, dishonesty, and difficulties with reading others' emotions (Hall et al., 2004: 196). This disorder has generally set in by the age of five, but can be diagnosed as early as one year old, when it could be argued that babies have had very little influence, apart from their primary caregivers (Hall et al., 2004: 202).

Children with resistant attachment are likely to have experienced inconsistent parenting, and therefore try vigorously to gain emotional support, making them appear clingy (Shaffer, 2002: 399-400). Inconsistent parenting is also a risk factor for offending (Farrington, 1978: 74, see Chapter 3: 66). Children with avoidant attachments appear to have either experienced parenting which is impatient and unresponsive, possibly demonstrating negative feelings towards them, or over-enthusiastic caregivers who provide too much stimulation which the child cannot comfortably handle (Shaffer, 2002: 400). This can cause the child to be dismissive of close emotional bonds with others (Shaffer, 2002: 406). Children with disorganised attachment may have been abused in some way, so are unsure about the reception they may receive from their caregiver (Piaget, 1932: 185; Shaffer, 2002: 400). This can cause them to remain fearful of being hurt in the future, affecting their ability to maintain close emotional relationships (Shaffer, 2002: 406). Conversely, in tests, higher EI levels were associated with self-reported experiences of parental warmth (Brackett et al., 2003: 227). Children with insecure attachments tend to be more aggressive towards peers, assuming hostility where none may be intended, also showing more dysfunctional anger with fewer positive emotions (von Salisch, 2001: 311).

The attachment theory approaches of Bowlby and Ainsworth (Bowlby, 1965; Bell & Salter Ainsworth, 1972) have been relied upon by the agencies involved in the Leeds Youth Offending Service (LYOS), within which the fieldwork for this empirical study was based, with clear training being given regarding the way attachment affects young people as they grow up. Children experiencing insensitive or traumatic attachments have been found to have difficulties regulating emotional states when under stress, find it difficult to assess risk, and are often angry and destructive (Golding, 2007: 21). Research in the field of criminology has made links between parenting and the subsequent behaviour and decision-making of young people, with poor supervision at the age of eight being found highly predictive of future offending (West & Farrington, 1977: 160, see Chapter 3 for a fuller discussion of risk factors for offending).

However, this theory is not without its critics, who suggest flaws in the research, and other factors which could be of equal significance. Piaget was first to suggest that peers might be more significant for the shaping of children's personality and characters than inter-generational influence (Piaget, 1932: 91), backed by other researchers coming to similar conclusions (Field, 1996: 541-2; Lee, 2003). Significant stress has been observed with peer separation, even at the early age of leaving pre-school friendships to attend different schools (Field, 1996: 551).

There is an underlying assumption with attachment theories that nurture is more significant than nature in the development of personality. Experiments have been conducted with identical twins to ascertain which has more impact on their life outcomes (Bouchard et al., 1990: 223). Conclusions to this found they were likely to have similar hobbies and tastes to each other despite being raised in different situations (Lee, 2003), implying a strong genetic aspect to the forming of personality and tastes, completely overlooked in the attachment paradigm (although the robustness of twin studies' methodology has been questioned, casting doubt on the validity of their findings (Joseph, 2001: 26)). This is also questioned by the fact that siblings are often significantly different to each other, despite their common upbringing.

Another aspect of upbringing which could be important, but neither part of nurture nor nature, is wider environment. Studies have shown that young people growing up in neighbourhoods with high levels of crime are much more likely to become involved in delinquent behaviour (Hawkins et al., 1992: 13; Armstrong et al., 2005: 38; Lee, 2003). This leads to questions around whether attachment disorders are too commonly diagnosed, excluding other possibilities, which in some circumstances might be more

pertinent (Nilsen, 2003: 303). For example 'symptoms' often associated with attachment disorders may have been caused by the parent ignoring good behaviour, inadvertently rewarding poor behaviour by giving attention to it. A more appropriate response to this might be support through parenting programmes in the community, than treatment of a maladjusted child (Scott, 2003: 309). In Gottfredson and Hirschi's theory of delinquency, poor self control is cited as a major determining factor, but they add that a major influence over a child's level of self control is the parenting they have received. Parents who have been abusive or neglectful are more likely to have children who are poor at delaying gratification, risk takers, and impulsive, engaging in criminal behaviours as a result (Gottfredson and Hirschi, 1990: 90).

Concerns have also been raised that the research only apparently includes mothers as attachment figures, completely ignoring the role of fathers (especially if they are single fathers), and the significance siblings can have as attachment figures (Bretherton, 1992). The multiple attachments developed in other cultures where care-giving is shared within a group of adults, including the feeding of the infant, shows that the Bowlby attachment theory is a rather two-dimensional one (Field, 1996: 542). The Bowlby-Ainsworth attachment experiments, including the strange situation paradigm, where infants are left momentarily, then observed to see how they greet the absent mother on her return, arguably only providing a snapshot of how an infant deals with one stress situation. There is no observation about how this changes in a more familiar environment (Field, 1996: 544). However proponents of attachment theory have cited that this only takes note of one aspect of Ainsworth's experimentation techniques, missing more thorough observations occurring at home (Bretherton, 1992).

Despite the criticisms of attachment theory, it would appear from other researchers that parenting is an important factor in the emotional development of children, with disruptions or difficulties in these relationships having a deep impact, also affecting offending onset (Riley & Shaw, 1985: 4/23-25; Farrington, 1996: 4; Sutton et al., 2004: 59). This has led to theorising about the requirements for children's home environments for the healthy development of emotions, and by extension, EI, which have been listed as: having a secure attachment to caregivers, having a stable family environment, and having protection from violence and maltreatment. These factors are noticeably missing from a good percentage of the young people who are typically involved with the LYOS (whose characteristics are described in Chapter 5), which leads to speculation about their emotional development. Children who are rejected by their caregivers when trying to

communicate emotionally are more likely to repress their feelings (Hall et al., 2004: 202). This can lead to alexithymia (expanded later, Taylor & Bagby, 2000: 57), not only affecting an individual's ability to perceive their own emotions, but also possibly to the inaccurate appraisal of the emotions of others. This can lead to an assumption of hostility and aggression by others where none was intended – an attribute found in many young people displaying delinquent behaviour (Hall et al., 2004: 202; Smith, 2006a: 7). Avoidant attachment can lead to distorted views of self and others with a positive model of self and a negative model of others, also possibly leading to an assumption of hostility in others (Shaffer, 2002: 406). For this thesis, young people who are looked-after by the local authority were chosen for the reasons discussed above as an interview group to look at some of these issues further. It will be interesting to see whether any familial factors can be linked with EI in the statistical analyses.

EI and gender

Gender may be a significant factor: in most EI tests, females have been shown to have a slightly higher level overall than males (Salovey & Mayer, 1990: 10; Brackett et al., 2003: 237; Santesso et al., 2006: 313), although their main strength over males was in interpersonal skills (the ability to understand and express their own emotions) and in recognition of emotions in facial expressions (Salovey & Mayer, 1990: 10; Brackett et al., 2003: 237; Muncer & Ling, 2005). Males often scored higher than females on adaptability, leading to hypotheses regarding differences between the male and female brain. Baron-Cohen proposed that males have a brain better disposed to systemising (looking at how things work and developing rules), whereas females have a brain better at empathising (Baron-Cohen, 2002: 248). His empathy quotient backed this up by discovering that females scored much higher than males (Baron-Cohen & Wheelwright, 2004: 170).

There is an interesting inverse relationship here between male and female EI and offending, with males seeming to have a higher level of offending and a lower level of empathy (and EI) than females (Way, 2004: 155; Rutter & Giller, 1983: 121, see Chapter 3: 60). There are also theories regarding the upbringing of male and female babies, with observations revealing that mothers appear to speak more to daughters than sons, and also display more emotion to them (Brackett et al., 2003: 237). Males score more highly on alexithymia measurement scales than females, and more males do not possess a sufficiently high level of EI to allow them to interact well in social situations (Brackett et al., 2003: 237). It will be interesting to see whether the research cohort in this thesis follows

the same gender pattern. The effects of these identified difficulties associated with low EI levels are outlined next.

The effects of EI

There are many correlational factors associated with EI models and associated constructs like empathy, although not all agree on their findings. Damage to the amygdala in the brain (associated with affective processing) can cause alexithymic reactions (Bechara et al., 2000: 206, expanded later), but this has also been found to seriously affect decision-making capabilities, as normally decisions are mainly made quickly due to the somatic (emotional) weighting assigned, often through past experience, to different choices (Lopes & Salovey, 2007: 296). Damage in this area of the brain appears to obliterate this activity, leaving the individual having to make the simplest of decisions through a cost benefit analysis (Bechara et al., 2000: 194), weighing up the costs and benefits of different options. This not only causes decision-making to be more difficult, but also more time-consuming (Goleman, 1995: 27). Goleman found that one group of primary school boys who were not doing well in school had an impairment of the frontal cortex of the brain (also associated with emotional processing), and were more often disruptive, anxious, and impulsive (Goleman, 1995: 27).

Being impulsive shows an inability to delay gratification, which, it would seem, is associated with the emotional processing areas of the brain. The ability to delay gratification is predictive of the development of higher levels of self-control and motivation as adolescents, which is positively linked to academic success, and negatively to offending behaviour (Scharfe, 2000: 225; Smith, 2007: 667). This was part of Gottfredson and Hirschi's self-control theory (see Chapter 3: 67). They theorised that people with low levels of self control tended to indulge in behaviours which were injurious, but gave short term gratification, like tobacco use, and were more likely (but not inevitably) to engage in criminal behaviour; those with high levels of self control were more likely to conform to social norms (Gottfredson and Hirschi, 1990: 91).

The MSCEIT was correlated with high self-report levels of empathy and parental warmth, linking with the attachment theory of emotional development outlined earlier (Mayer et al., 2000c: 334). The empathy subscale of the EQ-i correlated highly and negatively with the anti-social features and aggression aspects of the Personality Assessment Inventory (Bar-On, 2000: 376). High scores in the Multifactor EI Scale (precursor of the MSCEIT) correlated with high scores in perceived life satisfaction and relationship quality (Mayer et

al., 2000c: 334). This backs up Bar-On's claims that EI is linked with psychological well-being (Bar-On, 2004: 119), also found by others linking EI negatively with depression (Hall et al., 2004: 198). There is a positive association with lower self-reported violence and delinquent behaviour among college students, even after controlling for empathy, showing that it is not merely empathy as a result of healthy emotional growth that governs behaviour (Mayer et al., 2000c: 334). High EI levels correlated with lower peer ratings of aggression, and higher teachers' ratings of pro-social behaviour, showing it is not merely that a high EI gives an individual an inflated view of their success, as this is also independently corroborated (Mayer et al., 2000c: 336).

Claims concerning links between academic success and EI are more variable, with the EQ-i showing moderate correlation (Bar-On, 2004: 129), and Schutte et al. claiming strong correlation (Schutte et al., 1998: 176; Boone & Buck, 2004: 100). However, the MSCEIT showed no correlation (Brackett & Salovey 2004: 187), with Mayer and Salovey criticising Schutte et al.'s results, as also showing correlating highly with happiness – known to be a factor in improved grades (Boone & Buck, 2004: 100). However, it would be logical to assume a somewhat more successful school career in those judged by teachers to be less disruptive and more pro-social in their behaviour (Mayer et al., 2000c: 336).

Generally it has been found that high levels of EI correlate with improved problem-solving, positive relationships with peers and families, positive mental health, valuing school attainment, and altruistic behaviour (Salovey & Mayer, 1990: 16-17; Salovey et al., 2002: 69; Brackett et al., 2003: 224; Santesso et al., 2006: 313). There is also an acceptance of correlations between lower EI and increased drug, tobacco, and alcohol use, deviant behaviour, negative relationships with friends, use of violence, eating disorders, and risky behaviours (Graczyk et al., 2000: 391; Mayer & Cobb, 2000: 274; Parker, 2000: 495; & Mayer, 2003: 199; Brackett et al., 2003: 234; Lopes et al., 2003: 245; Lopes et al., 2005). If deviant behaviour and violence are correlated with low EI levels, then the link between crime and low EI would be established to some degree, although it would not describe the nature of the link. EI could be a marker of these behaviours.

There are significant findings indicating that children with low EI are much more likely to be ostracised and rejected by their peers (Petrides et al., 2006: 544; Salovey & Mayer, 1990: 17), itself a risk factor for school drop-out, substance misuse, and delinquent behaviour (Kupersmidt & Coie, 1990: 1359). Petrides et al. conclude that: "Low trait emotional self-efficacy may be a key risk factor, alienating children from their peers and leading to anti-social conduct and delinquency later on in life" (Petrides et al., 2006: 544). While sex

offending among adolescents is uncommon, tests on those perpetrating such acts show low levels of empathy, social skill deficits, fear of intimacy, impulsivity, and an inability to perceive emotions both in themselves and in others (Moriarty et al., 2001: 2), and high levels of alexithymia (Moriarty et al., 2001: 7).

A question of cause?

Most of these claims have been expressed in terms of correlations of behavioural indicators with different levels of EI, but this does not address the nature of the relationship between these them. Is the link causal, or are the behaviours simply markers or symptoms of EI levels? (Wikström, 2008: 127). Correlations are not the same as causation (for instance, there are many more boys within the criminal justice system than girls, but this does not mean that being male makes someone commit crime – being male is an example of an attribute which someone might have but which does not have the power to cause anything (Holland, 1986: 949) (Cheng, 1997: 367)). Low EI possibly predicts criminal or anti-social behaviour because they tend to go hand in hand, but this does not mean that one causes the other. A predictor is not necessarily a cause (Wikström, 2008: 127), although to predict involvement in crime is not without worth, and is at the heart of the risk and protective factor model on which the youth justice system is currently based (see Chapter 3 for a fuller exploration of this, and of causation). For something to be a cause, it has to have the power to trigger a process mechanism, which is why it cannot merely be an attribute (Cheng, 1997: 368).

However, there may be more distal causes, the effects of which are not so easy to discern. A direct cause may take seconds to initiate the process ending in a criminal act, but an indirect cause may be something within the development of an individual predisposing them to take criminal action in the face of other factors (becoming possibly a cause of a cause) (Wikström, 2008: 134), and which could have taken years, like their EI development. It may be posited that having low EI may predispose someone to commit a criminal act if it has led to deficiencies in their ability to empathise with others and appreciate the full implications of their actions. However, since there will be a plethora of other factors in that person's life which will similarly affect their responses to immediate situational factors, it would be extremely difficult to extrapolate any particular one. There is worth though, in analytically developing what potential process mechanisms might be at work, especially since this type of factor is not malleable, making experimentation to see effect change not an option (Wikström, 2008: 128).

This study offers very limited scope for examination of cause, but instead seeks to establish whether there are any correlational links with different aspects of criminality, as an initial step. As essentially a cross sectional study, the main part has no temporal aspect, to enable observation of whether as EI changes, participation in crime changes. This might be possible with more longitudinal studies, although it should still be acknowledged that correlation over time is no guarantee of a causal relationship (Cheng, 1997: 367). However, there do not appear to have been longitudinal studies looking at causality for the behavioural correlations which have undoubtedly been found, which may be because much of the research so far has been to define EI and measure it. It is possible that although low EI levels have been linked with deviant behaviour (see above), and process mechanisms by which one might have contributed to the other may be devised and indeed logical, there would still be no firm establishment of causality, which with this type of potentially distal factor among many distal factors, may seem like seeking the Holy Grail. However, the research design of this study allowed some space for assessing the predictive nature of the EI factor in the committing of crime, since further offences of the interview cohort for the 12 months post-interview were analysed to see whether any patterns ensued (see Chapter 4 for a full discussion of the research design).

Can EI be developed?

There is less research regarding the possible improvement of EI than in its theoretical base, measurement, and behaviour correlates. However, researchers generally seem optimistic that EI can be improved, possibly alleviating the inherent problems that appear to co-exist with low EI (Graczyk et al., 2000: 391). Mayer and Salovey feel that because their model is based on abilities and skills, these are teachable competencies, rather than fixed aspects of character, indicating that EI can be taught (Salovey et al., 2002: 68). They have shown that EI scores improve with age, also backed up by most other scale results. The ASUEIT writers specifically asserted that adolescents are in the midst of this development, making it unreasonable to expect them to have competence in the higher levels of EI. EI improves through learning and experience together in any case (Matthews & Zeidner, 2000: 462). A programme being run in a New York school showed that aggressive behaviour was related to the number of lessons received in emotional schooling (Salovey et al., 2002: 71).

Topping et al. (2006b) conducted an analysis of school-based programmes in social competence, assessing their methodology and effectiveness. They found a wide range of

programmes taking place incorporating behavioural programmes, counselling, social skills training, and peer support. Effectiveness was wide-ranging, with some programmes working better than others (Topping et al., 2000b: 423-4). The varying levels of success with these programmes at least showed that aspects of emotional intelligence may be malleable. A structured model of EI, like the hierarchical Mayer and Salovey four branch model, shows how development could progress, beginning as it does with emotional perception and expression (Salovey et al., 2002: 65).

Goleman felt that EI was a means towards an egalitarian intelligence, since anyone can learn it and be emotionally intelligent (Mayer et al., 2000a: 97). He detailed a potential methodology in his book for teaching it in school, also describing work being undertaken at that time (Goleman, 1995: 261). Training has also been written up in self-help books to enable the concerned individual to improve their own EI (Steiner, 2003). EI has been thought so significant in terms of crime prevention that it is being taught in US prisons and youth facilities, and has been since 1988. One particular project (called Houses of Healing) recognised that youth at risk of becoming criminalised were those with little or no support from their families and communities, and who therefore had to develop these skills in a different way (Casarjian & Casarjian, 2003: 5). Their aims were very similar to those of the EI models outlined above, even though this was before much of that work took place:

“a course that gives participants an increased ability to read and understand emotions that motivate choices, perceptions, and feelings, as well as teaching coping and stress management strategies”.

(Casarjian & Casarjian, 2003: 5)

Related concepts significant to this study

There are a variety of concepts which might be considered related to EI. Two of these are particularly important to the research for this thesis: empathy and alexithymia. Empathy is important to this research because young people's ability to empathise with their victims is a significant aspect of most intervention plans with YOTs. It was also a factor specifically measured with the young people in the interview cohort. Alexithymia, which is an inability to communicate emotionally, has been conceptualised separately from EI, and helps indicate what the effects of low EI might be. It has also been linked with adolescent sex offenders, who have been found to have higher levels of alexithymia than adolescent offenders with no sexual offences (Moriarty et al., 2001: 750).

Empathy

The most basic aspect of EI is emotional awareness, as being cognitively aware of one's own emotions underlies all other aspects (Lane, 2000: 171). Empathy has shown a positive correlation with EI in most studies (Warwick et al., 2010: 67). EI is also a pre-requisite for the existence and healthy development of empathy, which has been defined as understanding and sharing another person's emotional state or situation (Jolliffe & Farrington, 2006a: 592). Babies have basic empathy from birth, as research has found them responding with distress when other babies cry (Scharfe, 2000: 250). Empathy has been divided into two branches – cognitive empathy, an understanding of the way someone else feels; and affective empathy, actually feeling what someone else feels (sharing), with affective empathy thought to lead to cognitive empathy (Jolliffe & Farrington, 2006b: 542; Jolliffe & Farrington, 2006a: 600).

Cognitive empathy has been negatively correlated with offending in some studies (Farrington, 2007: 610). In others, affective empathy has been negatively correlated with bullying and use of violence. Interestingly, cognitive empathy has also been positively correlated in some research with bullying, and with psychopathy (Way, 2004: 165). It is thought that a high level of cognitive empathy might allow individuals to bully more effectively (in terms of having more of a negative effect on their victims), and that for psychopaths, it enables them to create a veneer of acceptability, but the lack of affective empathy then allows them to behave in an injurious way towards their victims. (Jolliffe & Farrington, 2006b: 548). Psychopaths are defined by their lack of empathy and corresponding compassion, providing an initial link between impaired affective reasoning and crime (Goleman, 1995: 107). A link has also been posited between sex offending and an imbalance of cognitive and affective empathy, with a higher cognitive empathy allowing offenders to better identify vulnerable victims, but having no commensurate affective empathy to moderate their behaviour (Way, 2004: 165). Undoubtedly, there must be emotional understanding both of self and others for empathy to be developed (Lane, 2000: 173), but this would appear to be insufficient to ensure socially acceptable behaviour.

Lack of empathy can lead to difficulties in controlling inappropriate behaviour, sometimes resulting in violent and sadistic crime. The perpetrator finds it difficult to accurately assess the impact they have on their victims, sometimes justifying it with entirely erroneous ideas of what is being felt (Way, 2004: 159). Sykes and Matza identified that some people justify criminal actions by denying that any injury has been caused to the victim, showing an impaired view of their victim's feelings (Sykes & Matza, 1957: 664-760). This lack of

appreciation for someone else's emotions could allow such circumstances as a child abuser feeling that they are showing love by molesting their victim. They may not recognise the true feelings on their victim's face (Goleman, 1995: 106). This also relates to the concept of alexithymia.

Alexithymia

Alexithymia is an inability to appraise and to verbally express emotions (Salovey & Mayer, 1990: 7; Averill, 2000: 288), or more literally, 'having no words for feelings' (Heaven et al, 2010: 222). It also translates into an inability to represent emotions symbolically (Taylor & Bagby, 2000: 40). This has an effect on the understanding and breadth of emotional vocabulary, since language is a symbolic assigning of words to experience (Taylor & Bagby, 2000: 52). It can result in people ascribing physical sensations to emotional reactions, like stomach ache (Way, 2004: 153). Two possible mechanisms are thought to cause alexithymia, being either inborn, or a consequence of brain changes due to emotional trauma (which could be early childhood experiences, like abuse) (Way, 2004: 155). Children who have suffered abuse and do not have the emotional language to express how they feel might show their feelings through physical illness, or through their behaviour. This makes it interesting to see whether there are any correlations between experiences of abuse and EI.

Alexithymia has prompted its own assessment tools, the most commonly-used being the Toronto Alexithymia Scale (TAS-20) (Taylor et al., 2000: 314). However, this is not validated for young people, as have no other measurements for alexithymia currently, so this construct cannot be independently measured in this present study, except by the identification of young people scoring very low levels on the EI test. Someone with alexithymic tendencies may be able to acknowledge that they are upset, but will find it difficult to give further detail concerning how they are being affected (Taylor & Bagby, 2000: 50). Alexithymia is unconnected to general intelligence (Taylor & Bagby, 2000: 50) – the processing taking place in a different area of the brain than cognition, in the neo-cortex, and more specifically, the amygdala (where affective processes occur). The amygdala is crucial in enabling recognition of facial expressions, and therefore in the interpretation of emotions in others (Bechara et al., 2000: 206). Alexithymia has been observed in people with amygdala lesions, who display considerable difficulty in making good decisions, yet show no impairment to general intelligence (Goleman, 1995: 27/8). This difficulty with emotional insight also causes impairment in empathy, meaning that

those displaying alexithymia find it difficult to understand and process what someone else might be feeling (Goleman, 1995: 96).

Alexithymia has been linked in adolescents with little support, both in quantity and quality, and higher levels of sadness, hostility, and fear (Heaven et al., 2010: 226). It has been linked by others to higher levels of depression, anxiety disorders, eating disorders, and substance abuse (Konrath et al., 2011: 135). Alexithymics are less able to identify certain emotional states in others, such as sadness, fear, anger, disgust, and surprise. They will therefore be less able to adjust their own behaviour in response to others, possibly putting them at higher risk of misunderstandings leading to violence, which might indicate why they have been identified as having poorer interpersonal relationships (Prkachin et al., 2009: 412-414). This, coupled with a generally higher level of hostility, could lead to offending behaviour, particularly with that rooted in anger (see Chapter 3: 82, Agnew, 1992: 49, general strain theory). It is logical that empathy and alexithymia have been found to be negatively correlated (Jolliffe & Farrington, 2006b: 590). Alexithymics have been found in one study to have a lower pain threshold, which could allow a greater propensity to become involved in fights, where pain is inevitable (Prkachin et al., 2009: 416). This may lead to more assault or affray charges. Behaviour problems might be an externalising of internal emotions, therefore young people with alexithymia may be more violent and aggressive (Way, 2004: 155). Adolescent sex offenders have been found to be alexithymic and more aggressive than non-sex offending adolescents, backing up the link between alexithymia and aggression (Moriarty et al., 2001: 750).

Summary and conclusion

The field of EI has developed significantly since it first began, but as yet there is little agreement on the construct, its meaning, measurement, or assessment. This has resulted in the emergence of two different model types – ability EI and trait EI. Ability EI is typified by the Mayer and Salovey four branch model (Salovey et al., 2002: 65). However there are many more models of trait EI, for example those propounded by Bar On (2004: 117) and Goleman (1995: 34). These are usually assessed using competency tests for ability models, and self-report for trait models. Assessments between the two types of models do not correlate greatly, but different tests of trait EI largely correlate with each other. It is possible that two different constructs are being measured here, but two tests attempted to join them up by self-reporting on the ability model: Schutte et al. (1998: 169), whose test results correlated higher with the trait than the ability EI scales, and the ASUEIT (Luebbers

et al., 2007: 1007), which started as a work-based adult test (SUEIT), and developed into an adolescent self-report test based on the four branch model. In the absence of a properly researched and validated MSCEIT for adolescents, this appeared to be the best choice for a sample of young offenders, although it should be acknowledged that what might be being measured with this is trait EI, by definition.

EI develops throughout childhood, with difficulties arising when primary caregivers are either absent or unable to give proper care and attention. This would appear to adversely affect children's social and emotional growth, potentially predisposing them to becoming involved in delinquent behaviour at a later stage, linking aspects of attachment theory with the development of EI. There have also been links made from other research into EI with other similar, but distinct, concepts. Empathy correlates positively with EI, and is particularly interesting to a study of young people who offend, and who are required through court orders to work on empathy towards victims. Alexithymia, being an inability to communicate emotionally, has been found to correlate negatively with EI, but is also important in a context of young people who offend, as it has been found most particularly in those who demonstrate high levels of violence, and those who commit sexual offences. Other outcomes for children with low levels of EI appear to be poor relationships with other people, anti-social behaviour, substance abuse, and peer rejection. It is not currently possible to attribute causality to EI for any specific outcomes, positive or negative, as the research for this has not yet been undertaken. However correlations between different outcomes and EI would be a useful development for the field, and may indicate whether more longitudinal research to investigate whether the nature of such correlations was worth pursuing. It is logical to suppose that before this can happen, assessment processes for young people in particular need to be investigated further, as there is currently very little available to measure their EI.

This thesis was designed therefore with these two purposes in mind: to evaluate the use of the most appropriate EI assessment currently available to see whether it tested with validity and reliability EI levels of an offending population of young people, and to seek out correlations between low EI and offending in particular, looking at frequency, seriousness, persistence, and desistance (see Chapter 3: 78). This was combined with investigations into their empathy levels, the methodology for which can be found in Chapter 4. As previously mentioned, it was not within the scope of this study to investigate the nature of any correlations found, although the potential of EI levels for predicting offending was considered using conviction data for the 12 months after the data-gathering period.

Having outlined developments in the field of EI research, the next chapter moves on to examine criminological research, looking at the model base for the current youth justice system in which this research is situated.

Chapter 3: Risk and Protective Factors: Youth Crime

Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate possible links between juvenile crime and emotional intelligence (defined in the previous chapter in terms of the Mayer and Salovey model, see Chapter 2: 19), and whether young people with low levels of emotional intelligence (EI) commit crime more frequently and of a more serious nature than those with a healthier development of emotional functioning. This possible influencing factor for youth crime fits well into the risk and protection model at the heart of the Youth Justice Board (YJB). This chapter summarises recent history in this area, setting out the developmental crime prevention debate, which has seen a sea-change over the years in attitudes towards the rehabilitation of young offenders. The mood is now much more optimistic concerning the possibility of reducing reoffending, and evidence-based in terms of interventions undertaken; however it is based, from the YJB's point of view, firmly in the risk and protection model of youth crime, which is also reviewed and evaluated here in detail. There is also a consideration of whether actual improvements in service have taken place through the latest developments in policy.

Offending trends are identified, information which could prove significant when considering the emotional maturation of young people. This chapter provides discussion around criminal pathways, especially factors influencing desistance from and persistence in crime, as these may differ from those initiating criminal behaviour. This may provide insight into whether investing resources in improving an individual's EI could influence change in criminal behaviour. Using the risk and protection model as a basis, the question can be asked concerning whether a young person's EI affects their propensity to commit crime. There may be links with other factors, like drug and alcohol use, being cared for by the local authority, and poor mental health – all criminogenic needs. EI depends firstly on an ability to understand emotions in oneself, and then to generalise them out to others - the development of empathy (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). The impairment of personal emotional growth could also affect an individual's ability to understand the emotions of another, making them less able to appreciate the effects their actions on others. Risk and protective factors have a complex relationship, and the different ways these can be viewed are explored, along with the role of resilience in protecting young people from negative experiences.

The risk and protection model is discussed with reference to significant studies in youth crime encompassing different research methodologies, with factors categorised into four domains: individual, family, school, and the community. Reference is made to a wide range of studies: longitudinal studies, offering more on the causality of different factors, were the Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development; the ESYTC; the Offending, Crime and Justice Survey, and the On Track Youth Lifestyles Surveys (intended to be followed up longitudinally). Cross-sectional studies were Graham and Bowling's study; the MORI YJB's crime surveys; and the Communities That Care research.

As can be seen later in the discussion, questions of cause and effect, symptom or source, are difficult to answer with the research outlined in this chapter. The same is true of EI and its effects, particularly since much of the research here is cross-sectional (a gathering of specific information at a particular point in time) therefore only allowing the identification of correlations. Could a poor upbringing in an unaffectionate household with parents unable to adequately supervise their children impair the development of EI, increasing their likelihood of committing crime without thought or care for the consequences? Could these be merely symptomatic of each other? Is a low ability to empathise more likely to increase crimes committed against the person than acquisitive crime? If EI can be developed or 'taught' then correlations like these could have implications for evidence-based interventions, should impaired EI be recognised as a significant independent risk factor for offending.

The development of the current youth justice system

The Youth Justice System (YJS) experienced a radical change when the Labour Government gained power in 1997. They introduced the Crime and Disorder Act (1998), which swept away much of the previous theory concerning youth justice and effective interventions, also reducing the propensity of workers in this arena to use their own skills and judgements (Smith, 2006c: 79). The new emphasis was on an actuarial system of risk assessment, with interventions tied to reducing the risk of re-offending, as assessed through this process. This was a result of the new government's assessment of previous interventions lacking an evidence-base and being ineffective (Smith, 2006c: 79). They took a hard-line approach to the apparent proliferation of youth crime by announcing they were going to be 'tough on crime and tough on the causes of crime' (Walklate, 2007: 113), and arrived in government equipped with the Audit Commission's report *Misspent Youth* (1996), which formed the basis for the Crime and Disorder Act.

This re-organisation of the YJS saw the introduction of the Youth Justice Board (YJB) as the overarching authority for this sector. Under the authority of the YJB are the multi-agency Youth Offending Teams (YOTs), charged to carry out the directions of the YJB (Hopkins Burke, 2008: 167). The preferred methodology of the YJB is actuarialism, where risk is assessed and ameliorated by targeted interventions aimed almost solely at reducing offending (Smith R, 2006: 92). This is illustrated by the inception of Youth Inclusion Programmes, targeted towards young people felt to be at risk of offending, but not yet within the criminal justice system (Smith R, 2006: 94). However, this assumes that the risk of offending can safely be translated into prediction of offending, which may not be methodologically robust (Sampson & Laub, 2003: 586). It also assumes that the assessment of evidence supporting these approaches is valid, but criticism towards this, which also dismisses other, potentially effective interventions as insufficiently evidenced, points to weaknesses in evaluations (Smith, 2006c: 88). Nevertheless, the actuarial system is what now dominates youth justice practice, with a common assessment tool, ASSET, based entirely on the identified risk factors thought to predict offending, on which interventions are then based (Smith R, 2006: 97). The risk and protective factors are centred around 12 different aspects of young people's lives, one of which is emotional and mental health. This is where work on EI would fit into an intervention strategy, as emotional development is core to this aspect of assessment and planning. The origins of the currently accepted risk and protective factors are discussed later in this chapter.

The 2010 coalition Government announced that the YJB was going to be abolished, but this was not ratified by the House of Lords. However, the status of the YJB raises questions about where the theoretical base will be situated for future legislation and practice (www.justice.gov.uk/news/newsrelease141010a.htm). If the YJS were to be subsumed into the Ministry of Justice, it will be interesting to see whether this would see youth justice being run like adult provision, or whether the differences of youth will be properly encompassed.

The insistence of the YJB for evidence-based practice assumes that intervention is desirable in itself. Prior to the Crime and Disorder Act, 14 year olds were presumed, under 'doli incapax', not to know the difference between right and wrong (Home Office, 1997), and therefore not held criminally responsible, prosecutors having to prove that this is not the case in court. The Crime and Disorder Act (1998) established the age of criminal responsibility at ten, abolishing doli incapax, and meaning that interventions were through the YJS rather than social services. This early criminalisation does not sit well with some

of the research into desistance from crime, which shows a strong correlation between young people who have been caught by the police and persistence (Smith, 2006a: 13). Young people pulled into the YJS early may experience a labelling effect, causing them to decide they are criminal, and act accordingly (Smith, 2006a: 6). The peak age for offending has been found to be 14 (Smith, 2006a: 4 & 5), so had the age of criminal responsibility remained older, a good proportion of those may have desisted before being of an arrestable age, or may have been given support through social care, rather than criminal justice interventions.

The introduction of Referral Orders in 2002 for young people as an early intervention through the courts, while providing vital support for some young people who might otherwise have slipped through the net, also criminalises others at a very early stage (Hopkins Burke, 2008: 168). Many of the Referral Orders coming through the courts now may never have previously been a court matter, relating as they often do to school fights, and damage to local authority children's homes (Morgan & Newburn, 2007: 1043). These incidents would have previously been dealt with internally through each institution's own behaviour policies. However, the introduction of this order, and others like the Reparation Order, illustrates another theme to the new youth justice, that of reintegrative tutelage (Hopkins Burke, 2008: 167). This is a restorative approach which looks to the involvement of victims and use of restorative activities to shame and then reintegrate young people back into the society they damaged by their criminal actions. Victims are actively involved in Referral Orders, with reparation activities being ascribed to each young person after consultation.

Effective programmes were considered to be those that improved personal and social skills, changed behaviour, and encompassed a multimodal approach from different services and approaches (Hawkins et al., 1992: 41-42; Utting & Vennard, 2000: 78; Sutton et al., 2004: 97-98). Although prescribed community interventions are fully endorsed by the YJB, especially those thought to have been effective through research, it is interesting to note that while the secure estate (custody) is universally decried as having an adverse effect on recidivism (McGuire, 1995: p4 & 10), 25 per cent more young people were locked up in 2004 than ten years previously (Morgan & Newburn, 2007: 1045). There is partial acknowledgement of the damage made to young people by punitive punishment as the language in Young Offender Institutes (YOIs) has changed to soften the possible stigmatising effect they can have. Some are now called Secure Training Centres, with the young people being called trainees rather than inmates. This apparent rejection of adult

prison language shows an attitude change, but how much it will change the reality of regimes or the propensity for trainees to re-offend remains to be seen. The reaction of the media has been to shock communities into feeling that young people are not containable anymore, therefore making people feel they are more likely to be victims of crime. This is not a reality in any official crime statistics, but reflects the media's ability to affect opinion and cause fear (Reiner, 2007). Those committing serious and dangerous crimes may need to be secured for public protection, but there is also doubt about the predictability of violent offending. It is now thought that most violent crime is committed occasionally by a large percentage of offenders, rather than being limited to a small discrete group. A substantial proportion of offenders are violent occasionally (Rutter & Giller, 1983: 294). Calculations were undertaken concerning the effect reducing the prison population would have on the crime rate, with one view from Brody and Tarling that a reduction 40 per cent would only cause a 1.6 per cent increase in convictions (Rutter & Giller, 1983: 294).

It has just been discussed that the current YJS has come to rely on actuarial assessment of a selection of risk and protective factors, identified through research, and recorded through the assessment tool of ASSET. The following section outlines in more detail this risk factor model and its origins.

Risk and Protective Factors

The risk and protective factor model, or risk factor prevention paradigm (RFPP), is based on a public health model, which looks at diseases to discover other factors active at the time, seeking correlations which could be cited as risk factors for that illness (Sutton et al., 2004: 10-11). An example of such a model is the way health professionals have communicated smoking as a risk factor for lung cancer. Different aspects of health have been analysed to come up with associated risk and protective factors (Sutton et al., 2004: 10-11). With offending, however, the interplay between the factors is less clear: they often coincide and react with each other (Farrington, 1996: 5; Sutton, et al., 2004: 9-10).

Risk factors are those factors increasing the chance of a young person becoming involved in offending (YJB, 2005b: 5). They include a range of behaviours and attitudes demonstrated by adolescents themselves, their siblings, peers, parents, and the community around them (Crow et al., 2004: 2). The existence of risk factors does not make offending a certainty, merely increasing the probability (Farrington, 1997: 382). There are many young people with multiple risk factors who never offend (McCarthy et al.,

2004: 21; YJB, 2005b: 7). The reason for this could lie in the presence of protective factors (YJB, 2005a: 25-29; YJB, 2005b: 5).

Protective factors are those helping young people ameliorate risk through internal assets and external strengths (Hawkins et al., 1992: 21). These serve to increase their level of resilience by possibly reducing exposure to risk, or at least reducing its impact (Beinhart et al., 2005: 3). However, resilience can sometimes be seen as anomalous to the risk and protective factor model, as some young people's lives have seemed to be full of classic risk factors with very few mediating protective factors, and yet they function well despite this, and show a good ability to overcome their stress experiences (Rutter et al., 1998: 170, West & Farrington, 1973: 145).

Resilience

Resilience can be variable, depending on the risk factor – an ability to deal with some risk factors and not others. It may be more to do with personality than any other identifiable factor, but even though it seems to contradict some of the assertions of the RFPP and is difficult to pinpoint, resilience is an important element in the question surrounding why some young people with a high degree of risk factor exposure do not offend. Chain reactions are interrupted that could otherwise have occurred, resulting in increased self-esteem and achievement, positive pro-social relationships, and opportunities grasped (McCarthy et al., 2004: 20). Resilient young people may just be exposed to lower risk generally, but this would not explain all instances. It has been observed that resilient young people tend to have a high IQ when they are aged eight, lower rates of novelty-seeking at age 16, and are less likely to have delinquent friends (Rutter et al., 1998: 207).

Resilience need not fall outside the boundaries of the RFPP, functioning as an important component of it, and place more of an emphasis on the importance of a few protective factors than the destructive nature of many risk factors. The relative importance for young people of having a good support network may be enough to counter a range of seemingly insurmountable risk factors. Important factors for resilience have been found to be encouragement by family members to deal with problems, rather than viewing failure as inevitable, good modelling of problem-solving behaviour, being required to carry out tasks for the greater good (and not being excused if reluctant), having a good self-image based on achievement, and the presence of at least one adult in their life from whom positive regard can be relied upon (Howard & Johnson, accessed online 1/9/07: 6-7). Merely removing risk factors may not be the ideal, since resilience can be developed through

adversity – chronic situations being more difficult to recover from than shorter more acute ones. It can be seen that young people with the ability to deal with difficulty rather than simply being shielded from it are likely to have more positive outcomes (Newman, 2004). Interventions may be more effective if they are aimed at increasing resilience through the building up of significant protective factors, rather than expunging identified risk factors.

Certain internal characteristics have been found to foster resilience, like good social interpersonal skills, empathy for others, knowledge of one's own personal strengths and weaknesses, internal locus of control (indicating acceptance of responsibility for events, and own behaviour as a result), and a positive, good-natured temperament. While some of these attributes could be said to lie in personality, some (notably empathy) are significantly dependent on EI (Bar-On, 2000: 376), implying that those with a higher level of EI could be more resilient.

Interactions between risk and protective factors

There is much discussion as to the precise working relationship between risk and protective factors, which can be broken down into three different models (McCarthy et al., 2004: 26-27). The additive model sees risk and protection on a continuum, counterbalancing each other, not considering protective factors as anything other than the opposite of risk factors (Hawkins et al., 1992: 22; McCarthy et al., 2004: 26). However, research does not back up the proposition that offending can be caused by numbers of risk factors tipping the balance against protective factors (YJB, 2005b: 7). The interaction model sees an interactional relationship between risk and protection factors, varying depending on the levels of each (McCarthy et al., 2004: 26). Protective factors are seen as working by buffering the effects of risk factors, or preventing their onset in the first place. The pathways model combines the first two, allowing that some protective factors work simply because they are the opposite of the risk factors, but also accepting that protective factors can be conceptually distinct (Armstrong et al., 2005: 31). A further element is added to this by taking account of a child's development over time, and stressing that the interaction is context-specific, depending heavily on timing. This would seem to be the most rounded view of the RFPP.

Determining the causality of risk factors in offending is not straightforward, but some factors are thought to predict future offending (West & Farrington, 1977: 141). This has led to some of the criticisms of the RFPP, discussed later in this chapter (see page 71). Generally, the identity of risk factors is agreed by most researchers. Much less is known

and more research needed in the area of protective factors (Armstrong et al., 2005: 31; YJB, 2005b: 9-10). It is not understood whether these block the damaging effects of specific risk factors, help young people respond positively to risk factors, or in themselves provide a pro-social influence (YJB, 2005a: 26; YJB, 2005b: 7). There is also less agreement on their identity (Armstrong et al., 2005: 31).

The question regarding causality is not eased by cross-sectional research, which gives no indication of causal direction (Irving & Bloxsom, 2002; Armstrong et al., 2005: 31). There is no mechanism within correlational studies to determine whether effects are causal or merely correlational. Risk factors could be causing offending behaviour, or be merely a symptom of it (Farrington, 1997: 383; YJB, 2005a: 8). Many risk factors may indeed be both causal and symptomatic (Irving & Bloxsom, 2002), differing between individuals. Causality could be viewed as a process or mechanism, rather than a simple uni-directional cause and effect. There could be a chain effect of different factors, each causing or influencing the next, further complicating the identification of individual causal factors (Rutter et al., 1998: 17). Cause may differ in differing circumstances, in individuals, over time and between different places, and between different types of offender. Causation becomes more difficult to control for in research, given the complexities of human living (Rutter et al., 1998: 15). Taking a family example, it could be that poor, non-affectionate parenting increases a young person's risk of becoming delinquent, but it could also be that the child's delinquent behaviour causes a negative reaction in the parent, resulting in the deterioration of a previously close and affectionate relationship (Farrington, 1978: 74).

Risk factors may be active within individuals or between individuals – the former being found to be more significant in causing offending (and therefore more significant to tackle for its desistance), the latter being more symptomatic of offending. The example is given of peer delinquency being a strong correlate of delinquency between individuals (comparing one individual to another), but not being predictive of delinquency within an individual (just a symptom of it) (Farrington, 2007: 605-6). If EI is treated as a risk factor, then it is likely to be significant within individuals, as it concerns the internal structure of their modus operandi. Currently accepted risk factors have been the result of a wide range of youth crime research, detailed in the next section.

Youth Crime Research into Risk and Protective factors

There have been many research projects into different aspects of youth justice in Britain, contributing to generally accepted risk and protective factors. Some have also investigated

routes into offending, with others tracking youth lifestyles, seeking insight into persistence and desistance. Different research designs have been used, with a variety of associated costs and benefits. Comparing data from these different studies could provide insight into areas of agreement or debate.

Longitudinal Studies

Longitudinal studies are conducted over lengthy periods, with many revisits to a cohort, providing trend information to researchers about changes over time, or with the cohort age. This can be an effective way to look at paths into delinquency, as data examined concern young people's actions from an early age, without the use of potentially flawed memory recall, then tracking through their adolescence to see how they develop, identifying relevant factors for the outcomes (Rutter et al., 1998: 19). Large-scale longitudinal studies are relatively rare, because of the expense and commitment involved, and problems associated with losing the subjects' co-operation over time.

The Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development

The Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development (West & Farrington, 1977; West, 1982; Farrington, 1996, Farrington, 1997) was a significant longitudinal study, covering a lengthy research period beginning in 1960 (participants were interviewed from the age of eight until they were 32), having particular emphasis on the origins of delinquent behaviour. The Cambridge Study (so called because the researchers' offices were based in Cambridge) took its sample from six neighbouring primary schools in an inner London borough, of 411 boys, all aged eight to nine, from a population born from 1951 to 1953. The only element of selection was the inclusion of 12 boys from an 'Educationally Subnormal' school, ensuring a wider sample type than mainstream school alone. The neighbourhood was working class, with mainly local authority housing. Interviews were conducted with the sample group around their activities, psychological tests undertaken, and interviews also used with parents, social workers and teachers, gaining a balanced perspective of the young people's lives. National crime statistics were used to verify the interview responses. This process was then repeated every few years until the cohort was in their early thirties.

Attrition can be a problem for those conducting longitudinal studies, with a large drop-out rates over time, but the Cambridge Study had unprecedented success in its ability to trace and re-interview the cohort, with a 87 per cent re-interview rate at post school leaving age,

and a 95 per cent re-interview rate at over 21 (Farrington, 1978: 76). One fifth of the cohort became delinquent (as defined by an entry to the Criminal Records Office), with responses verified by comparison with official records, giving them confidence in the validity of the responses.

There were limitations to the study. Apart from being all male, 90 per cent of the cohort was White, with boys from immigrant minorities being of European or White Commonwealth origin, although a few were Cypriot and Black West Indian. The racial mix in most urban areas would look very different now, with a much larger percentage of Black, Mixed Race, and Asian people. The results should be interpreted with this in mind. The cohort were born more than half a century ago, raising questions regarding how changes in society since this time have affected children and young people's development (West & Farrington, 1973; West & Farrington, 1977; West, 1982; Farrington, 1996; Farrington, 1997).

The Edinburgh Study of Youth Transitions and Crime

Longitudinal criminology study was brought up to date by the Edinburgh Study of Youth Transitions and Crime (ESYTC), their potential cohort being the entire group of children due to start secondary school in Edinburgh in 1998. The study managed to negotiate the co-operation of all secondary schools, 57 per cent of independent schools, and 75 per cent of schools for special educational needs. This amounted to 4,300 children aged 11 to 12 years old. The aims were to investigate factors affecting young people's offending behaviour, in terms of its development, the interaction of formal social control and criminal justice agencies, and the effect of the physical and social structure of the neighbourhoods involved. They also wanted to investigate gender differences in offending, and look at what influences the onset of offending, its persistence or desistance (McVie, 2001: 3). They combined a significant element of questioning regarding victimisation, to address whether victimisation causes young people to be more involved in crime themselves, and whether offenders are more likely to be victims. (Smith, 2004: 10).

The research design was similar to the Cambridge Study, with many strands of information being gathered at each annual sweep, starting with self-report questionnaires, official data from social work departments and the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (the body administering youth justice in Scotland). There were also some semi-structured interviews with a sample of the cohort, and interviews with teachers and carers. Official records from the Scottish Criminal Records Office and school records were also

considered, along with information about the neighbourhoods and communities to which the young people belonged (McVie, 2001: 4).

In taking a whole year-group cohort, the researchers secured for themselves a representative ethnic and gender mix. The study can therefore comment on ethnic differences and investigate gender differences. As a current study, it is more up to date, making comment on the society it is measuring meaningful. The nature of the cohort also ensured a good cross section of communities, not just concentrating on a deprived neighbourhood. Comment can therefore be made on the possible effects of neighbourhood organisation on offending behaviour and trends. As with all cohort research data, there is statistical difficulty in generalising out to a whole population, as what may be true for this group may not be true for the population as a whole (Coleman & Moynihan, 1996: 76; Wilson et al., 2006: 13).

The Offending, Crime and Justice Survey

The Offending, Crime and Justice Survey (OCJS) is a different type of longitudinal study, consisting of cohort self-report questionnaires, repeated each year, asking young people aged between 10 and 25 about their offending behaviour, with a slightly changing cohort each time. A new cohort is added each year, freshening the sample. The initial survey for 2003 enquired about offences ever committed, with subsequent ones enquiring about the previous twelve months. The 2005 sample totalled 4980 young people. They were taken from the general household population, but did not include those in prison, those in institutions, or those who were homeless, limiting the level of serious offending included, more common among those groups. Offences used are a core list of 20 divided into property related, violent, and drug selling. They do not include homicide or sex offences.

Self-report surveys in this instance may be more accurate, especially for offending statistics because such a small proportion of crime is ever reported, not allowing official statistics to carry a full picture (Tarling, 1993: 3), which can become more of a reflection of government policy around offending than objective statistics, for example changes in the way the police administer cautions has introduced inconsistency in measurement (Tarling, 1993: 5). However, self-report relies on people being honest in their responses, and also on accurate memory recall of past events. When considering whether they have ever committed an offence or been offended against in some way, young people may have difficulty, and may also have difficulty remembering accurately when they started to commit offences in which they are now regularly active (Coleman & Moynihan, 1996: 66).

The On Track Youth Lifestyles Surveys

The On Track Youth Lifestyles Surveys were also based on self-report surveys regarding offending and life experiences of young people. However, the purpose of this study was slightly different, being specifically targeted at On Track programme areas, which have a high level of deprivation and a specific programme of preventative intervention aimed at four to 12 year olds. This study encompassed more than 30,000 young people from the age of seven to 16, asking them about their experiences of family, school, neighbourhood, and friendship groups, as well as their problem behaviour. The plan for this was longitudinal, with the intention to revisit the surveys in the future to identify trends and changes in patterns of self-reported problem behaviour, and to assess the impact of interventions that were implemented (Armstrong et al., 2005: 1).

Youth Justice Board research

The YJB have been conducting research using self-report data, with which they have assessed five years of youth offending (Phillips & Chamberlain, 2006). This survey has been undertaken annually by MORI since 1999, specifically asking young people about their offending behaviour. The survey includes one cohort of young people from mainstream schools and a separate one from projects attended by pupils who have been permanently excluded, allowing for further investigation into the effects of exclusion on young people, and how this has shaped their pathways into crime (MORI, 2004: 8).

Cross-sectional Studies

Cross-sectional research provides a 'snapshot' of information, surveying what is happening at the time of the research (Coleman & Moynihan, 1996: 145). Much research is conducted in this way, as it is cheaper and quicker to administer. Disadvantages of cross sectional designs are that causality questions are less likely to be answered, and there is no facility to map trends. Questions could be asked about prior activities to provide context to the present, but answers will always depend on the ability of the subjects to recall accurate information

Graham and Bowling

Graham and Bowling's cross-sectional study into young people and crime was conducted in 1993, including both boys and girls, and paying particular attention to obtaining a good representation of different ethnic minorities (Graham & Bowling, 1995). This research

sought to provide more accurate information through self-report of a representative sample of 14 to 25 year olds, broadening the information base to include background, lifestyle, family and school experiences, whilst also considering onset and desistance, Factors were sought indicative of offending onset for preventative policy, and offending desistance for intervention policy.

Communities That Care

The Communities That Care report used cross-sectional surveys (Crow et al., 2004). This initiative was originally developed in the United States, but commissioned for use in the United Kingdom by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, and begun here in 1998. Its purpose was to provide a programme to reduce drug abuse, youth crime, school-age pregnancy, and school failure to specific, identified geographical areas by the reduction of risk factors and the promotion of protective factors.

Pre-existing information and research was used to devise a list of 16 risk factors and seven protective factors within the four domains of family, school, individual, and community, which was the basis for an area-based risk audit using available official records and a school-based self-report questionnaire. This led to an action plan using interventions already identified as either 'effective' or 'promising', which were assessed after two and a half years of operation.

The research consisted of three different areas of study. The Southside was from a Welsh city with high unemployment (due to previous redundancies from ship building and coal mining), within the top 15 per cent of the most deprived in Wales, predominantly white, with an ethnic population of about one per cent. It also included a more affluent ward, which local professionals felt may contain hidden deprivations, which they wanted to investigate. The Westside was from a West Midlands city, with an unemployment rate above the national average, but an ethnic minority of 12 per cent, the majority of which were Asian. The Northside was from a semi-rural area in the north of England with a large percentage of council owned housing, high unemployment, high levels of poverty and social need (42 per cent of the city's children were classified as living in poverty), and a small ethnic population of less than one per cent.

The fact that three very different areas were selected was useful in countering some of the concerns about the Cambridge Study. It also used gender information and significant diverse ethnicity in the Westside. It was more up to date, having been commissioned in

Britain in 1998. It set out to build a relevant list of risk and protective factors for use in today's society, whilst building on previous research. However, it centred very much on areas of deprivation, not necessarily answering questions concerning generalisation to more middle class areas (Crow et al., 2004; Crow & France, 2001).

Key findings from research regarding risk and protection

As can be seen from Figure 3.1, risk and protective factors have been categorised into four different domains: family, individual, school, and community (Crow et al., 2004: 2; McCarthy et al., 2004: 14; Armstrong et al., 2005: 32). Risk of offending increases in a multiplicative way the more risk factors are present (Hawkins et al., 1992: 23; Sutton et al., 2004: 10). Graham and Bowling found in their research that 80 per cent of their male cohort and 60 per cent of their female cohort, who had four or five of their identified risk factors, were involved in offending (Graham & Bowling, 1995: 47-48). It is easy to see how multiple risk factors might gather around some individuals with relatively few mitigating protective factors (Furlong & Carmel, 1997). An example of this could be a single mother with four children, living on benefits in a run-down council estate, with disorganised schools, and drugs readily available, who is less able to follow through on discipline due to other pressures (Graham & Bowling, 1995: 36; Irving & Bloxsom, 2002). This would see a large number of the risk factors from Figure 3.1 in operation (Sutton et al., 2004: 43). Some researchers have asserted from this pooling of risk factors that an 'underclass' of those with a predilection for criminal behaviour is generated (Macdonald, 1997: 10).

Figure 3.1: Risk and Protective factors for offending

	Risk factors	Protective factors
Individual domain	<p>High degree of impulsivity/ hyperactivity/ low self control (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder - ADHD)</p> <p>Poor ability to delay gratification</p> <p>Low intelligence</p> <p>Early anti-social behaviour</p> <p>Being male</p> <p>Condoning attitudes towards offending</p> <p>Perinatal stress</p> <p>Being a victim of crime</p> <p>Involvement with drugs/ alcohol/ tobacco</p> <p>Aggressive behaviour</p> <p>Delinquent friends</p>	<p>Intolerant attitude towards offending</p> <p>High intelligence</p> <p>Religiosity</p> <p>Being female</p> <p>Good social skills</p> <p>Pro-social friends</p>
Family domain	<p>Low income/ poor housing</p> <p>Poor parental supervision</p> <p>Harsh or erratic parental discipline (poor parenting)</p> <p>Parental conflict</p> <p>Separation from a parent (Except by death)</p> <p>Young parents</p> <p>Being abused</p> <p>Witnessing violence at a young age</p> <p>Parent/sibling criminality</p> <p>Large family</p> <p>Being looked after by the local authority</p> <p>Parental mental illness (especially maternal)</p> <p>Family structure</p> <p>Family instability</p> <p>Poor parental stability</p> <p>Parental substance abuse</p>	<p>High attachment to the family</p> <p>Warm relationship with parents</p> <p>Perceived high parental expectations/interest of school</p> <p>Shared activities with parents</p> <p>Appropriate parental supervision</p> <p>Assertive parenting</p> <p>Anti-offending parental attitudes</p>

School domain	Low school attainment Truancy Exclusion from school Low attachment to school Disorganised school ethos Poor classroom discipline (and harsh discipline) Poor teacher-pupil relationships Being bullied/bullying	High attachment to school High school attainment Good pupil - teacher relations Strong, consistent discipline
Community domain	Living in a deteriorating area Disorganised local community (low community participation) High crime rates Chronic community violence High availability of drugs	Opportunities for community activities Attractive, well maintained communal areas High proportion of owner-occupied residences.

(adapted from West & Farrington, 1973; Farrington, 1996; Crow et al., 2004; YJB, 2005a, Armstrong et al., 2005; McCarthy et al., 2004)

The Individual Domain

The individual domain includes all aspects of a person's personality, attitudes, behaviours, medical issues, gender, ethnicity, attributes, friendships and choices. This domain is probably the one into which EI would fit. Many of the individual risk factors are influenced by the family domain, with young people's attitudes and actions being shaped by their upbringing (Farrington, 1997: 389-390; West, 1982: 44). Factors most enmeshed with the family domain are behavioural and attitudinal ones. The Cambridge Study found that anti-social behaviour at the ages of eight to ten was a strong predictor of future offending behaviour, as was childhood aggression and 'troublesomeness' (West & Farrington, 1973: 100 & 128; West, 1982: 31). Anti-social children tend to grow into anti-social teenagers, who are more likely to become the smaller percentage of anti-social adults, who in turn tend to produce anti-social children themselves (Moffitt, 1993: 5).

Perinatal stress could have been caused by maternal behaviour whilst pregnant (Moffitt, 1993: 10; Sutton et al., 2004: 23), but this may just as easily be due to other factors like specific health conditions of both mother and baby (Irving & Bloxson, 2002). However, pregnancy complication and maternal rejection have been shown to bring with them a higher risk of violent (but not acquisitive) crime (Rutter et al., 1998: 107).

Being male is statistically a risk factor in all countries with crime figures for offending, as there are significantly more male offenders recorded than females (Rutter & Giller, 1993: 120). The OCJS recorded male offending over the previous 12 months at 30 per cent of respondents, while female offending was 21 per cent (Wilson et al., 2006: 18). This ratio difference is still present in self-report studies (Farrington, 1997), although less significant for minor offences, many more of which are reported in this type of research (Flowers, 1990: 71; Rutter & Giller, 1983: 121). This could reflect bias in the police and court system, meaning fewer girls are brought into the YJS for their delinquent acts than boys (Rutter & Giller, 1983: 120). It has been observed that females are more likely to receive a welfare response, with a referral to social services, whereas boys are more likely to be put through the YJS (Elliott, 1988: 113). However, victim surveys have also brought in a heavy emphasis towards male perpetrators (Messerschmidt, 1993: 1). The most marked differences in offending between the genders are with serious offending and serious delinquency. However, offending in general peaks for girls at 14, but for boys this is later at 16 to 19 (Wilson et al., 2006: 18). When girls desist, it is much more sharply, so boys are much more likely to be delinquent at 15 (Smith & McAra, 2004: 3).

There is mixed opinion regarding whether gender differences occur in the type of crimes committed, with some studies indicating that they do. Rutter and Giller (1983) assert that females are less likely to damage property or cause injury to people (p.120), whereas others say that the crimes committed are similar, with males merely offending at a higher rate than females (Elliott, 1988: 16). Both self-report studies and official statistics indicate that the difference ratio is much higher with more violent and serious crime, with girls significantly less likely to be involved than their male counterparts (Rutter & Giller, 1983: 121). Studies have shown, however, that the ratio between male and female crime is decreasing, from ten to one, male to female in the 1950s, to six to one in the 1990s (Heidensohn & Gelsthorpe, 2007: 392).

Given that there is at least some difference in levels and types of offending between males and females, why should this be? Boys have been found to be much more aggressive with peers than girls, even in early childhood, and especially with other male peers (Rutter & Giller, 1983: 125), but this need not indicate a biological difference, as there are already socio-learning influences at work. One study found that mothers seemed to communicate differently to male babies than to female ones, perhaps already shaping the differences in behaviour (Brackett et al., 2003: 237). It is not known whether there is significance in the male sex hormone (said to cause more aggression), temperamental differences between

the sexes, or whether girls and boys are generally brought up differently, causing an attitudinal difference that has more to do with environment than anything else (Rutter et al., 1998: 254).

Boys from discordant family situations are much more likely to express anti-social behaviour than girls with the same experiences. They also appear to respond poorly to parental disagreement about child rearing, and more likely to display some level of conduct disorder (Rutter & Giller, 1993: 127). Does this mean that girls are more resilient? It could be that girls deal with these types of experiences in a different way, not measured in research projects, for example, teenage girls are much more likely to self-harm than teenage boys. The very nature of this, often being surrounded by secrecy, makes it difficult to measure and weigh up against the same criterion. When parents are divorced, the children are much more likely to stay with the mother, depriving boys of a positive male role model (Rutter & Giller, 1983: 128). They also found that parents are more likely to argue in front of sons than daughters, reflecting a possible difference in their actual experiences of similar situations.

It is not clear what mechanisms are at work causing a gender discrepancy, but it could be the social construct of masculinity, rather than the physical fact of being male. What is masculinity in this context, and how is it proved? One definition of the achievement of masculinity states that they need to be big, inexpressive, responsible, hard, experienced, independent, and do not cry (Yates, 2004). This is a hegemonic masculinity that all young males will be acutely aware of and aspire to, but especially so in the working classes, and will be characterised by control, dominance and independence (Messerschmidt, 1997: 12; Messerschmidt, 1993: 93). This causes difficulty when to attain these ideals is out of reach, possibly due to other disadvantages. There will then be an attempt to achieve this masculinity by an oppositional redefining of those ideals, which can then be achieved by other means – often criminal (Messerschmidt, 1993: 84). There could be an attempt to achieve ends like power, material success, status, and dominance – all of which are possible through daring acts like stealing a car and driving it around the estate for all to see. This will give them status and dominance among delinquent peers, material gain through the theft of internal items, and the feelings associated with possession of the most visual indicator of success and masculinity – a car (Yates, 2004). However, hegemonic masculinity may change in definition over life-span, since what is deemed to be ideal masculinity may develop from alcohol consumption and ability to attract women, to being able to provide for one's family (Heidensohn & Gelsthorpe, 2007: 389).

These struggles are bound to occur during adolescence, as males attempt to make the transition from childhood to adulthood, putting teenagers as the major age-range at risk of offending for these reasons. The lengthening of adolescence only serves to make this transition more protracted, as another of the signposts of masculinity is delayed – that of being a wage earner (Yates, 2004). Those who are socially excluded may never be able to see a way of achieving hegemonic masculinity through non-criminal means, having an impact on desistance of offending for males in particular.

The ESYTC found that gender difference was much less marked in broad delinquency (defined with a discrete list of minor delinquent acts) at 80 per cent for boys and 70 per cent for girls. Serious delinquency, however, was completely different, with boys registering 47 per cent and girls only 26 per cent (Smith & McAra, 2004: 6). They found that the offending profile for boys and girls was different, with girls being more likely to steal from home and write graffiti. Boys were more likely to carry weapons, break into houses, commit robbery, steal from cars, and be cruel to animals (Smith & McAra, 2004: 3). They found slight differences in what they termed explanations of emerging crime – girls were more likely to offend because they had weak attachments to school, friends of the opposite sex, and low self esteem, whereas boys were more likely to have weak moral beliefs, experience of being a victim of crime, and a risk-taking personality. However, they felt that this was associated with broad offending and delinquency, where the difference was less marked anyway. They did not feel that they had found an explanation in their study for the significant over-representation of boys in more serious offending (Smith & McAra, 2004: 16 & 21).

There are also some behaviourally significant disorders that are much more prevalent in boys than girls, like ADHD. It has been questioned whether the Y chromosome is related to hyperactivity, and autism (Mulligan et al., 2008: 104). Patterns in male and female offending are different as well, with females much less likely to be recidivists, and having a far shorter criminal career (Smith, 2006a: 4 & 5; Wilson et al., 2006: 18). It could be significant that the type of crimes committed by males and females is very different. Drug crime and sexual assaults are both much more likely to be committed by males. However, as previously stated, the difference between the levels of male offending and female offending has reduced considerably in recent years (Rutter et al., 1998: 256-260).

Other individual factors could be related to the family domain by virtue of heredity (YJB, 2005a: 11). ADHD is a condition comprising many individual risk factor traits, like poor concentration, high impulsivity and hyperactivity, low ability to delay gratification, and low

self-control (Farrington, 1997: 384-385 & 397; Irving & Bloxsom, 2002). ADHD is a greater risk factor when coupled with a conduct disorder causing poor behaviour, which may result in far reaching effects in the school domain (Irving & Bloxsom, 2002). In combination these factors are acknowledged to be an accurate predictor of criminality. Children genetically vulnerable because of inherited mental weaknesses may be more likely to be adversely affected by environmental stresses, one possible reason for differences in resilience (Rutter, 1978: 108). Low intelligence has been associated with increased offending (Graham, 1988: 8; Hawkins et al., 1992: 18). This could be because young people are less able to predict the consequences of their actions, as they are more likely to be concrete thinkers (Farrington, 1997: 386). This will also detract from their ability to appreciate the feelings of victims (Farrington, 1996: 4; Farrington 2007: 610). Some research has led to speculation about neurophysiological deficits in the brain being more common in boys, inhibiting the ability to organise and plan ahead, and possibly affecting the ability to anticipate consequences (Smith & McAra, 2004: 21).

One of the most influential risk factors, especially for boys, appears to be having delinquent peers (Tarling et al., 2001; McCarthy et al., 2004: 71). In a Home Office study, nearly three quarters of male offenders also had friends in trouble with the police (Armstrong et al., 2005: 40). The Cambridge Study reported boys having delinquent friends to be eight times more likely to be delinquent themselves (West, 1982). Anti-social young people tend to migrate towards each other, creating groups of anti-social youth (Hawkins et al., 1992: 19; Sutton et al., 2004: 58). This could be because delinquent young people are rejected by more pro-social peers, and therefore have to find others of a similar attitude with whom to associate (Moffitt 1993: 15). It could also be that the young person with behaviour and aggression problems in earlier childhood becomes more attractive as a rôle model to other adolescents who have previously been pro-social, as part of the normal adolescent process of detaching from parental influence (Farrington, 1997: 397; Armstrong et al., 2005: 41). This ring-leader would then pull the others into more anti-social behaviour, something that some researchers agree is very common as an adolescent-limited phase (Moffitt, 1993: 21; Beinhart et al., 2005: 4). Some researchers have suggested that *not* engaging in anti-social behaviour at this stage of life is unusual, rather than the converse (Moffitt, 1993: 21). The stage of 'adolescence' has in recent history been lengthened by longer statutory education and a later entering of the employment market, offering a partial explanation for this phenomenon (Furlong & Cartmel, 1997: 13 and 41-42; Jones, 2002: 1 & 3), mentioned later in more detail in the discussion on desistance (see p78). Young people poorly supervised by their parents are likely to spend

more time with peers, increasing their significance in affecting behaviour, and consequently being more problematic for those with delinquent peers (Farrington, 1997: 387; West, 1982: 57). Young people tend not to commit crime alone (Armstrong et al., 2005: 47 & 52) – it is usually a group activity, the converse of adult offending, which is usually solitary (Farrington, 1997: 381). Group offending could help boys to achieve prestige and status by demonstrating daring and bravado (Moffitt, 1993: 23-24). Talking about anti-social behaviour in delinquent peer groups is common, and may increase individuals' prestige within the group (Rutter et al., 1998: 196).

Childhood aggression has already been mentioned as a predictor of later offending, and of a long offending career, with the Cambridge Study suggesting that being a bully increases risk of offending (Farrington, 1996: 7). A Norwegian study found that 60 per cent of known male school bullies had a criminal conviction by the age of 24 (YJB, 2005a: 15). Bullying behaviour at 14 predicts bullying behaviour at 32, and bullying behaviour by that individual's child. Violent and aggressive behaviour seems to be transmitted from parents to children, perpetuating anti-social behaviour, although how much of this is genetic, as discussed previously, remains unclear (Sutton et al., 2004: 25; YJB, 2005a: 16).

Young people are much more likely to become the victims of crime themselves, and also to experience repeat victimisation (Newburn, 2007: 594). Work on victims and victimology appears to be underdeveloped compared with other areas of criminology. The United Nations (UN) defined a victim as someone who has 'suffered harm, including physical or mental injury, emotional suffering, economic loss, or substantial impairment of their fundamental rights through acts or omissions that are in violation of criminal laws'. Also included in this definition are: 'the immediate family or dependants of the direct victim and persons who have suffered harm in intervening to assist victims in distress or to prevent victimisation' (UN, 1985). The latter category of victims has been termed 'indirect victim' for the purposes of this research. Being a victim of crime and of bullying has been shown to predict later offending, especially in crimes of violence (Armstrong et al., 2005: 45 & 48), although the ESYTC found only a weak link with bullying (Smith, 2004: 10). Victimisation is also an overlooked factor, since these incidents are under-reported to the police (Newburn, 2007: 595); however early childhood victimisation has been found to increase the risk of later criminality by 50 per cent (Rutter et al., 1998: 187). Those who have been a victim of violence recently are much less likely to desist from offending than those who have not (Armstrong et al., 2005: 29). This is also significant for the high correlation of children who have been abused and their later increased offending (Farrington, 1996: 4).

The correlation of victimisation and offending is not easily explained in a causal relationship, as the direction could go either way, perhaps both (Smith, 2004: 15). There are differing reasons put forward for the link. It could be that the social circle of an offender becomes polarised through lack of social acceptance by more pro-social parts of the community due to their behaviour, meaning that the only people who will accept them are other offenders. They would then be at risk of being a victim to their associates (Smith, 2004: 5 & 14). The personal profile of a victim and an offender may be very similar, causing them to be interchangeable. They are perhaps both more likely to have low self esteem, be aggressive, and have a risk taking personality (for example, someone who has been a victim may have been populating an area where they were more likely to be attacked). They may come from a similar social background with a dearth of opportunities in terms of education and personal resources, and weak social bonds with others (Smith, 2004: 15). There could be a directly causal relationship, for example being victimised while in prison, then targeted by their victim when they are in the community, and then again by vigilante groups who disapprove of their actions. This can clearly be seen with very serious crimes, like sexual offending against children. Young offenders can also find it difficult to access the criminal justice system to help them defend themselves. Victims can become offenders by retaliating, or being a victim can cause trauma, adversely affecting their subsequent development (Smith, 2004: 15).

Many individual protective factors are the converse of risk factors, with the exception of religiosity. It has been found that strong religious belief forms a considerable protective factor against offending (Hawkins et al., 1992: 24). This could be because most of the teachings of the major religions hold strongly to pro-social values, like honesty, compassion, and self control (Resnick et al., 2004: 424-8). However, there is no evidence to show that lack of religious belief could be considered a risk factor.

The Family Domain

The family domain includes all aspects of an individual's upbringing, parenting, family status and position, sibling issues, and any other aspects of the home which significantly impact the way they approach life and handle situations. This domain relies quite heavily on the social development model, which asserts that children need positive adult guidance if they are to grow up problem-free, as they will not make constructive decisions without it (Hawkins et al., 1992: 24; Sutton et al., 2004: 45). Children need positive social bonding with pro-social adults, who will give them recognition, praise, and solid boundaries

(McCarthy et al., 2004: 66). Problems could exist in the presence and maintenance of maladaptive behaviours, or the absence of adaptive behaviours (Yule, 1978: 116). These could be inadvertently maintained by negative reinforcement from parents (Yule, 1978: 119).

Poor parental supervision has frequently been cited as a strong risk factor, as young people are able to spend long periods away from parental guidance, often in the company of anti-social peers (Farrington, 1996: 4; Tarling et al., 2001). This has been connected with an early onset of offending, more likely to lead to life-course persistent offending, as opposed to adolescent-limited (Moffitt, 1993; Sutton et al., 2004: 12-13). In the Cambridge study, boys who were poorly supervised at the age of eight and nine were most likely to become delinquent (West & Farrington, 1977: 160).

Poor parental supervision is also linked to poor parenting techniques, possibly resulting in weak attachment of young people to their families (Riley & Shaw, 1985: 4 & 23-25; Sutton et al., 2004:59). Parents who are inconsistent with their discipline, punishing erratically, are more likely to be parents of anti-social or aggressive children (Yule 1978: 119; Farrington, 1978: 74). Instead, parenting needs to be systematic, consistent, and relatively mild (Yule, 1978: 122). Harsh disciplining has been associated with an increased risk of violent offending, as has exposure to family conflict and abuse (Hawkins et al., 1992: 14; YJB, 2005a: 10). Breakdown of the family unit has sometimes been seen as an independent risk factor; however single parents are more likely to be suffer other risk factors, such as low income and poor housing, making family breakdown a more questionable independent factor (Irving & Bloxsom, 2002). Some researchers have concluded that a stable single parent family is less risky than an intact family in conflict (Hawkins et al., 1992: 16; Farrington, 1996: 4). Parent or sibling criminality is associated with an increased risk of offending (Rutter, 1978: 99; Riley & Shaw, 1985: 2). In the Cambridge Study, over 60% of boys whose fathers were convicted ended up convicted themselves (West & Farrington, 1977: 114). There is a link between parents who have been violent and aggressive, and their children displaying those traits (Farrington, 1997: 388; YJB, 2005a: 12). This link also applies to parental attitude, as it would seem that parents who have a favourable attitude towards crime, or think it unimportant, are more likely to have offending children (Macdonald, 1977; Sutton et al., 2004: 44).

Being in a large family has been cited by some researchers as a risk factor (Rutter, 1978: 99), but questioned by others (Riley & Shaw, 1985: 2). It is another example of how a situation can make a family more vulnerable to other related factors. Having lots of

children could result in overcrowding, inadequate family income, poorer parental supervision and laissez-faire parenting, all of which are independent risk factors (Hawkins et al., 1992: 12 & 16). As another example, teenage parents are more likely to have offending children (Sutton et al., 2004: 24-25), but they are less likely to have adequate parenting skills, and more likely to experience low income and poor housing in a run-down inner-city area, so which the active risk factors are remains unclear (YJB, 2005a: 8).

Protective factors in the family domain centre around good parenting skills producing pro-social non-offending children (McCarthy et al., 2004: 66). Warm and affectionate parental relations with children results in an early secure attachment, the best way to foster emotionally secure children who will embrace parental attitudes. If these attitudes are anti-crime, then the children will also adopt anti-crime attitudes (West, 1982: 45-46; Hawkins et al., 1992: 24). This could go some way to explaining why children who are looked after by the local authority have a higher risk of offending, which also brings into question whether the state can ever act as an appropriate corporate parent (Macdonald, 1997: 90; Melrose et al, 2000: 12-13), and explains correlations between children separated from a parent and their later offending (West, 1982: 55; Farrington, 1977: 388-389; Irving & Bloxson, 2002). However it is important to note that this does not appear to act as a risk factor if the separation was caused by parental death (Farrington, 1997: 389).

Parenting has long since been thought significant to offending, with Gottfredson and Hirschi's self control theory theorised as beginning with parental supervision (Gottfredson and Hirschi, 1990: 90, see Chapter 2: 32). Prior to this, Glueck and Glueck, who devised somewhat controversial tables to predict delinquency, found significant correlations between delinquency and over-strict discipline from a father, inadequate supervision from a mother, and lack of affection from either parent (Glueck & Glueck, 1959: 16-17).

The School Domain

The school domain covers all aspects of school experience, attendance, attainment, and attitude (both from and towards school) that impact on an individual's behaviour, attitudes and social outcomes. There have been strong correlations demonstrated in various studies between rates of delinquency and school attainment, attendance and attachment (Graham, 1988: 47; Graham & Bowling, 1995: 39-41; Farrington, 1997: 392-393). Schools can provide a nurturing atmosphere which increases the pupils' self esteem and sense of achievement, which would be protective of offending (McCarthy et al., 2004: 60), but they can also do the opposite (Graham, 1988: 47; Farrington, 1996: 5). Pupils who have been

marginalised in school by use of exclusion are more likely to be delinquent out of school (Graham, 1988: 9; Graham & Bowling, 1995: 42). The ESYTC found that boys were much more likely to be excluded for their behaviour at school than girls, even after controlling for the types of behaviour displayed. This could go some way to explaining why boys are more likely to offend than girls, although it is not clear why exclusion is gender-related (Smith, 2006b: 13).

Schools with poor organisation, poor classroom discipline, overly harsh or laissez-faire discipline, and poor teacher-pupil relations, seem to cause more marginalisation of pupils who already carry risk factors like ADHD and conduct disorder, low intelligence, and parents who are not supportive, especially of education (Hawkins et al., 1992: 17; Rutter, 1978: 102). In addition, feelings of failure in school, rather than simply a lack of ability, would seem to increase the risk of anti-social behaviour (YJB, 2005a: 15).

The Cambridge Study found that children who were under achieving at 11 were more likely to end up with juvenile convictions, and were also more likely to truant (Farrington, 1997: 393; Farrington, 1996: 4). Truancy is strongly associated with offending (Graham & Bowling, 1995: 41), even though a lot of juvenile crime does not occur during the normal school day (YJB, 2005a: 16). It does, however, increase the opportunity for time spent with truanting delinquent peers (West, 1982). Truancy was found in the ESYTC to be much more common in girls than boys, despite the connection to delinquency (Smith, 2006b: 7). It is difficult to define the direction of any causal link between truancy and delinquency, but truancy is symptomatic of low attachment to, and disaffection with, school (Graham & Bowling, 1995: 45; Smith, 2006b: 7). This is understandable if a young person has had a very negative experience of school, and compounded if their parents also had a difficult relationship with school in their youth.

The ESYTC places a strong emphasis on the role schools can play in the development of criminal and delinquent behaviour. Poor behaviour at school is predictive of criminal behaviour out of school, leading researchers to suggest that if schools deal appropriately with poor behaviour, and create positive school experiences, they will have a positive effect on young people's decisions on whether or not to embark on criminal activities (Smith, 2006b: 16). However, this assumes a causal link between school behaviour and later criminal behaviour. It could be that someone who is more likely to misbehave at school is more likely to commit criminal acts out of school. The fact that the school is preventing them from behaving poorly may not impact on their out-of-school activities.

Bullying has been found significant to criminal onset, adding weight to the view that criminality is linked with victimisation. Both being bullied and being a bully were significant factors in the ESYTC (Smith, 2006b: 12). Schools that are less effective in dealing with discipline may also be less effective in dealing with bullying incidents, creating opportunity for a larger percentage of young people to be either bullies or victims of bullies.

The Community Domain

The community domain includes influences that the local community has on an individual, like level of maintenance, attitudes towards public areas, local authority investment levels, availability and prevalence of drugs and crime, neighbourhood relations, social demographics, ratio of owner-occupiers to rentals, and availability of activities in the area.

The community domain is possibly the most difficult to separate from other domains because those living in deprived areas are more likely to be subject to many other risk factors already (YJB, 2005a: 12). Poorer, less well-organised neighbourhoods are more likely to suffer from lack of local commitment, resulting in graffiti and vandalism (Macdonald, 1997: 21; Sutton et al., 2004: 57). Turnover of local residents is usually higher, with a high proportion of tenants, who have less of a vested interest in the community (Farrington, 1997: 391-392). Neighbourhoods so characterised tend to have high crime rates, including violence and easy availability of drugs (Hawkins et al., 1992: 13; McCarthy et al., 2004: 52; Armstrong et al., 2005: 50). In poorer areas risk factors tend to aggregate, resulting in complicated interactions involving all four domains, individual, family, school, and community, possibly explaining the higher numbers of juvenile offenders (Macdonald, 1997: 15). Higher levels of physical deterioration caused by graffiti, vandalism, fly-tipping, and lack of care by home occupiers and landlords, leave more opportunities for crime, with less reporting to police and lower levels of surveillance (Hawkins et al., 1992: 13; Armstrong et al., 2005: 38).

The ESYTC found that the neighbourhood, and young people's perception of its effectiveness, had a profound effect on the early onset of offending, particularly with property crime. If young people perceived their neighbourhood to have a poor level of adult control, then they were more likely to start offending early, and be more persistent in their offending career, feeling that they were not likely to be caught. Statistically, those living in socially disorganised neighbourhoods with a transient population and a high proportion of young people, were more likely to be chronic offenders (McVie & Norris, 2006: 23). If the perception of residents is important for onset of offending in young people, then the report

by Wilson and Kelling (1982) is significant, as the presence of police on foot patrol in the streets was found to allay people's fear of crime and disorder. They proffered the 'broken window' theory that if a broken window is left unrepaired, then other windows nearby will also quickly be broken. They found this not only in poorer areas, but in wealthier ones too, indicating that it is not the people in the area who are significant (there are no more window breakers in that area than any other), but that an unrepaired window gives the message that no one cares, making the act somehow seem more acceptable (Wilson & Kelling, 1982: 3).

Local authority policy has a large part to play in the creation and maintenance of 'crime hotspots', as they can have a tendency to house crime-prone individuals and families together, pulling down the reputation of an estate, and making it less likely that more pro-social people would want to live there (Rutter et al., 1998: 226). High crime areas do not tend to act as communities, and these social factors are as important, if not more so, than the physical features of an estate (Rutter et al., 1998: 227). Local authority policy could have a positive effect if it encouraged neighbourhoods to adopt policies of non-tolerance to crime and disorder, and taught pre-12 year olds about neighbourhood control and intolerance of crime. This profound effect on the onset of offending was only found in younger people, aged up to 12. There was very limited impact noted on delinquency at age 16. It would seem that those who begin offending later do so because of factors other than neighbourhood organisation (McVie & Norris, 2006: 20).

Limitations of the RFPP

There is an attractiveness about the RFPP for policy makers, as it clearly identifies where resources can be concentrated to meet assessed risks and needs, thereby reducing the perceived risk to the public in a cost-effective way. This is attractive because it is easy for the public to see that the government is doing something about the problem of youth crime, but the question is what are they actually achieving? There has been much criticism of the RFPP recently, with much of this being levied at lack of robust research methodology. As previous stated, this approach came out of a public health model, but did not follow some of the methodological rigors that went with that. For example, medical research was based on highly measurable outcomes (death from lung disease), compared with the more subjective measures employed in criminological research, like self-report surveys, parent or teacher reports, and recorded crime statistics, none of which can reliably purport to reflect offending levels (O'Mahony, 2009: 104). There was also much

made of effect size in the medical research, with risks only being acknowledged when they suggested a three-fold increase in risk for those exposed, compared with those not exposed. This was not brought into the criminology arena, with researchers wholly relying on statistical significance to denote reliability, even if the effect size was negligible (O'Mahony, 2009: 104). The health model placed a great deal of importance on the skills of practitioners in diagnosis, whereas the actuarial system in place now appears to have almost completely negated this in youth justice practitioners (Smith, 2006c: 81). The methodological concerns are exacerbated by the subjectivity of definitions used within different research projects. Ideas on what constitutes 'neglectful parenting' might bring up differing results in different cultural groups or areas. It also assumes that everyone's definitions of criminality are the same (O'Mahony, 2009: 107).

One of the more universally used criticisms of the RFPP, even by proponents themselves, is the difficulty in ascribing causal links between identified factors and offending, which may only be correlational (Kemshall, 2008: 27). The proponents of this model acknowledge that the presence of these identified risk factors does not guarantee that a young person will become an offender, or vice versa. However, there has been a tendency to talk in terms of 'predicting offending' using factors deemed to be correlated with offending, which is not necessarily a sound leap of logic (Haines & Case, 2008: 9). This was acknowledged before the adoption of this actuarial system by the paper which most informed it, *Misspent Youth* (Audit Commission, 1996: 58), which stated: there is "no way of predicting accurately which individuals are going to offend". Farrington did not deem causality an important factor to be considered (Farrington, 2000: 7), but Rutter disagreed fundamentally, saying that for risk factors to be genuine, questions of whether the association was valid, whether there was a causal effect, what elements of each factor was causing risk, and whether it is true of all people and circumstances, all had to be adequately answered (Rutter, 2005: 2). The necessity of having answers to all these questions would certainly reduce the list of factors currently accepted, the proliferation of which is another criticism aimed at the RFPP, feeling that this reduced its effectiveness as a model (Haines & Case, 2008: 8). The research has largely relied on the factors identified through the Cambridge Study, with other research simply replicating the result by using the risk factor list, and checking the correlations with a new sample group, making the research largely self-fulfilling (Haines & Case, 2008: 11). This has allowed politicians to latch on to the idea that more and more research backs up use of the current actuarial system, seeming to increase its validity (Case, 2007: 93), allowing them to answer critics of their actions in an 'evidence-based' way.

There is a high risk of identifying false positives, bringing young people into the YJS needlessly, or false negatives, leaving young people who would really benefit with help (O'Mahony, 2009: 110; Case, 2007: 94). This potentially net-widening effect could have the effect of stigmatising and labelling young people who have never committed a crime, thereby reducing their potential to positive outcomes by policy decision (Case, 2006: 173). People can be assessed as being 'high risk' because their circumstances correlate with offending, but may not have the capacity to object (Haines & Case, 2008: 13). This is because of the aggregate nature of risk factor research, which is then applied to individuals, allowing no heterogeneity between individuals within a 'high risk' group (Case, 2007:94). This has been exacerbated by the dismissal of static risk factors, like gender or ethnicity, which could not easily be manipulated, as not relevant (Haines & Case, 2008: 10). However, although it is true that interventions would not affect this type of risk factor, these differences between individuals who offend may alter the significance of some risk factors in their lives compared with others. For example, it has already been mentioned earlier (see p60) that boys are more affected by offending peers than girls, and the next section on offending trends shows that girls and boys have different offending trajectories, which makes these differences potentially very significant in the decision about potential interventions.

The RFPP has been described as too narrow in its domains, ignoring almost completely structural and political factors, which can add to the social exclusion felt by some sectors of society, particularly at the moment, adolescents, who know they are often seen as being inherently dangerous and risky (Case, 2006: 171). The model has been described as "an attempt to peddle simplistic, but politically acceptable solutions to remarkably complex social, economic, and cultural problems" (Pitts, 2003: 14). If assessments concentrate on individuals, ignoring their social, economic, and political situation, this makes them personally responsible for change, whereas finding fault with society asks much more difficult questions of politicians and strategic policy-makers (Haines & Case, 2008: 12). Fortunately research is actively being conducted looking into these issues. Moffitt's Environmental Risk Longitudinal Twin Study is particularly looking into the effects of the environment in which young people live on their pathways into crime. They have found particularly relevant not whether a community was deprived, but whether that community had cohesion. They are putting this forward as a potential community level intervention to improve the cohesive nature of otherwise fragmented communities, which would then see a drop in anti-social and criminal behaviour by the young people in that area (<http://www.scopic.ac.uk/StudiesERisk.html>). Wikström's Peterborough Adolescent

Development Study has found that rather than significance lying in whether young people live in a deprived area, it is more important to look at the extent to which they are exposed to criminogenic factors within that environment, and how much time they actually spend there (<http://www.scopic.ac.uk/StudiesPADS.html>). This is beginning then to identify more of the mechanisms by which factors could be risky or protective.

This is relevant to the Australian Pathways to Prevention programme, which sees risk as a mismatch between need and available support, with the solution in the co-ordination of services around a family (France et al., 2010: 1202). They take as a given that most parents want the best for their children, whether they are able to achieve that themselves or not, which makes for increased engagement with services when they are fully involved with the process (France et al., 2010: 1203). Their model of working involves integrating all support from conception to adulthood, using universal services, which are therefore available to all, but co-ordinated with the full involvement of service users in planning and goal-setting. The use of universal services insures against the stigma sometimes associated with being targeted for interventions, implying failure. Particular attention is paid to life transition periods (for example, changing schools), or when worrying behaviour is being displayed (Freiberg et al., 2005: 145). The only employment of risk factor assessment was in the initial decision regarding where the project would be initiated, as particularly problematic areas of Brisbane were targeted, where a multiplicity of risk factors and other indicators like high levels of reported crime, were found (France et al., 2010: 1200). Their theories revolve around building strengths, thereby increasing families' resilience and ability to cope with problems (France et al., 2010: 1198).

This Australian model has been replicated to a lesser degree in some respect in the UK, with the growing importance being given to the Common Assessment Framework (CAF), which gathers relevant agencies around a family as a result of a referred young person, with the intention of assessing support needed as a result of problems observed, through identifying which aspects of the five outcomes from the Every Child Matters paper are not being fulfilled (YJB, 2006: 2). Participation in the plan of the family concerned is a pre-requisite, but this has not guaranteed their active input into the process. Unfortunately it still seems essentially to be a deficit model, looking at failures, and which agencies could support in that failure. It seems sometimes to be viewed with some suspicion by families, who often decline to become involved, possibly because there is still a stigmatising effect. However, it has brought agencies together for a much more cohesive service to families. Similarly, in Leeds there are the Intervention Panels, where a child with a multiplicity of

problems can be referred for specialist input, which includes a wide range of agencies. A 'team around the child' meeting is set up to ensure that goals are met. However, very little input is included from the family, leaving them very much subject to interventions, than part of a team to address assessed needs

(<http://www.leedsinitiative.org/InterventionPanels.aspx>).

Partly as a result of the adult-orientated structures in society, RFPP research has been done *on* young people, rather than with them. If young people were involved in consultation about their perception of their needs, then the list of risk factors would not be entirely adult-generated (Case, 2007: 100). Interventions based on the premise of what adults think the problem is with young people may be inherently questionable (Case, 2006: 175). This model is also usually a deficit one, centring on what is wrong and needs 'fixing', whereas if it concentrated more on positives, and factors which predict pro-social behaviour, the result might be more positive outcomes (Case, 2006: 177). This could fit within the parameters of the RFPP, if protective factors most likely to increase pro-social behaviour were prioritised and enhanced through interventions (Case, 2007: 101). Farrington's argument for reducing risk factors rather than enhancing protective factors was merely that more is known about them (Farrington, 2000: 10), but this surely just indicates directions for future research rather than intervention policy?

This model, which ignores the significance of societal structures, also negates the theories around social control, of which there have been several, looking to explain crime by the reduction in social controls, resulting in social disorder. This assumes, unlike the positivist stance, that all are capable of criminal activity, but that controls, either external (social control, Hirschi, 1969), or internal (self control, Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990) prevent some from doing so. Related to this was the concept of anomie, which is the inability of some people to access accepted social goals by legal means, causing the desire to obtain them by illegal means (Merton, 1938: 678). This is exacerbated for young people who have been marginalised and socially excluded, especially in times of high unemployment, which drastically reduces their ability to find legal means of supporting a desirable lifestyle (Baron & Hartnagel, 1997: 410).

Matza felt that he incorporated these models in his theory of drift, in which he described young people as capable of both pro-social and anti-social behaviour, drifting between the two depending on underlying factors in their lives. His theory defined young people as essentially the same and not inherently anti-social, as they tend to behave acceptably for the vast majority of the time. He felt that most people are neither free to make unfettered

choices, nor completely constrained, falling between the two (Matza, 1964: 27). He felt that young people are not free because this requires self control, which they may not have developed, so become drifters between delinquent and conformist behaviour because they experience a reduction in social control, but cannot make best use of it by good decision-making (Matza, 1964: 29).

Matza described the commonly-accepted risk factor list potentially as falling into the “cumbersome multifactor theory” (Matza, 1964: 23), which he felt made for an argument that everything is a risk factor, taking nobody any further. He argued that for something to be called a ‘factor’ it should be always true, whereas most of the identified risk factors only increase the likelihood of criminal behaviour, and therefore should be identified consequently as ‘contingencies’ (Matza, 1964: 23). However, although Case mounted a spirited criticism of the RFPP, he also said that he did not think it ought to be dismissed, because this would be “throwing the metaphorical baby out with the bathwater” (Case, 2006: 175). He called for a more young person-friendly risk and protective factor list, including the views of young people themselves (Case, 2006: 175). He also felt that the interrelations between factors should be investigated further, as they might prove to be key to effective interventions (see above for current research begun led by Moffitt and Wikström). In this way, the model could be more sensitive to differences within what has been treated as a homogenous group, as offenders can include females, different ethnicities, different social groupings, all of which might show a different outworking of risk factors (Case, 2007: 102). Some of these differences are reflected in the discussion of offending trends.

Offending Trends

Offending trends have been extrapolated from a plethora of studies, all agreeing that age and offending are inextricably linked, as the majority of crime, from a statistical point of view, is committed by young men. The figures quoted are for crime in general, however some offence-types differ considerably from the average (Smith, 2007: 641 & 646).

The peak age on onset for offending for those in mainstream school has been found to be 11 to 12, although ten per cent commit their first offence before they are eight years old. Few young people are likely to commit crime if they have not already done so by 14 (MORI, 2004: 17). Most young people claim they first committed an offence ‘for fun’, with boredom being the next most commonly cited reason (MORI, 2004: 29).

The 2005 Offending, Crime and Justice Survey found that 75 per cent of young people interviewed claimed not to have offended within the previous 12 months (Wilson et al., 2006:15). Seven per cent were found to be frequent offenders, having committed six or more of the 20 selected core offences in the past year, but 13 per cent had committed at least offence categorized as serious by the survey (see Appendix 1 for list of core offences, and those categorized as serious). However, only one per cent had committed frequent serious crime, but these were more likely to be male than female (Wilson et al., 2006:16-19).

Girls' offending peaks at the age of 14, with a steep and steady subsequent decline (Smith, 2006a: 4 & 5), whereas boys were variably found to have a rather later peak than girls, at 16 to 19 years (Wilson et al., 2006: 18). Although both boys and girls reduce their offending after this, girls have lower rates of offending anyway, and also show greater desistance (Smith, 2006a: 10). It has been observed that this crime-age curve, with offending peaking between the ages of 14 and 18 following a sharp rise, and declining equally quickly up to the age of 24, the rate of desistance dropping off markedly until the age of 35, from whence it is fairly continuous, is universal amongst many different countries, cultures and people-groups (Smith, 2007: 656). However, some studies have shown that while most offending follows this age curve, some does not. Offenders who do not desist after adolescence have less uniformity about their offending trajectory, which seems to be much more individual, dependent both on opportunities and decision-making skills (Smith, 2007: 672). While opportunity seems somewhat random, decision-making is a function of emotional reasoning, studies of people with brain lesions in emotional functioning areas showing vastly impaired decision-making skills (Goleman, 1995: 27).

The peak offending at mid-teenage and subsequent decline correlates with other statistics concerning risky behaviour, like car accidents, much more common up to the age of 25, declining subsequently, and illicit drug-use, relatively rare in preadolescence, but mushrooming at mid-teenage (Newburn, 2007: 591). This could reflect a lack of self-control, also at work in the decision to commit anti-social or criminal behaviour (Smith, 2007: 646). This relates to the development of emotional reasoning, in process during adolescence, but not properly defined until much later. Luebbbers et al. (2007: 1006) feel it is unreasonable to expect adolescents to behave in an emotionally intelligent way in the same way that it would be unreasonable to expect a toddler to be able to write – there are certain developmental processes which are needed first. This links to the theory that most

adolescents commit crime at some point, the decision not to being unusual (Moffitt, 1993: 20), and could provide a partial reason for this.

A commonly cited deterrent to offending has been fear of being caught, followed by concern about parental reaction (Phillips & Chamberlain, 2006: 14). Oddly, having interesting things to do in one's spare time was only cited by nine per cent in this survey, despite boredom being the second most common reason for offending onset (Phillips & Chamberlain, 2006: 10 & 14). Offending has been linked in some studies with aggressiveness in childhood, the majority of adult offenders having been described as aggressive and difficult to handle as children (West & Farrington, 1973: 100; Moffitt, 1993: 5). However some offenders with later onset do not fit this category, their offending more linked with low social status and parental criminality (Smith, 2007). It has been stated that most teenage offending desists soon after adolescence, but what factors influence this decision to persist or desist?

Persistence and Desistance

Desistance, from a classicist point of view, takes place when the disadvantages outweigh the advantages. Put in economic terms, everyone makes a cost-benefit analysis, however brief, of their choices, and chooses the option with most benefits, when set against cost (Becker, 1968: 176). If the individual has the option to gain money by committing a burglary, or by legitimate means, they will weigh up factors like the probability of being caught, the consequential punishment from the criminal justice system, and their propensity to gain enough money legally, or their willingness to commit an illegal act. To reduce crime, the system can increase the likelihood of conviction, or make the punishment suitably severe, so as to redress the balance in favour of being honest (Cornish and Clarke, 1986: 1). People were viewed as being essentially the same, just differing in their personal decisions (or agency) to commit crime. Concerns about this arose, especially for young people, because there were doubts over their personal agency. The existence of external and internal factors that might severely limit the choices available was ignored. This gave rise to the positivist point of view, which sought to find reasons for some people committing criminal acts in their background, physiology, psychology, or other such factors. They were thought to be compelled to commit crime, thereby having no real choice at all, citing factors like parental neglect, criminal role models, and the presence of specific syndromes (like ADHD) (Matza, 1964: 17). The influence of parental efficacy and style was developed by Glueck and Glueck in their

longitudinal studies (1950). It can be seen that the RFPP fits better into this model, although it has been widened out somewhat to include other types of factors, like those in the wider community.

As previously mentioned, some theorists assert that the majority of adolescents (particularly boys) participate in anti-social and criminal behaviour, and that to abstain is unusual, resulting in a consequential desistance for the majority of young offenders in post-adolescence (Moffitt, 1993: 20). Most adolescent-limited offenders never receive a conviction (Rutter et al., 1998: 287). Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) were first to attribute desistance to growing older, stating that maturity was a pre-cursor, but also linking this to self-control, and its improvement. However, others disagree that young people desist merely when they grow out of it, pointing to specific factors influencing that decision.

The debate has also been heated about the very definition of desistance, as it could be said that no one has completely desisted until they have died (Maruna et al., 2004a: 17). On the other hand, are desisters and persisters necessarily different groups? Researchers accept that the vast majority of offenders desist at some point (Shover & Thompson, 1992: 89), with desistance being a lifelong process of continuing criminal career termination, rather than a single event (Maruna et al., 2004a: 18). Desistance has been described as comprising different sub-processes of deceleration of offending, de-escalation of seriousness, reaching a ceiling of what one is prepared to do criminally, and specialisation (which has sometimes been found to point to a desistance process), but is thought to always be preceded by a specific decision to desist (Bottoms et al., 2004: 374). Primary desistance could be described as any lull in offending, with secondary desistance being when the offender changes their self-perception to that of a non-offender (Maruna et al., 2004a: 19). It is the latter which is of most interest in the desistance debate, although the former is a stage within the latter. Desistance is becoming more important to criminology, especially with the push for criminal justice interventions to work on desistance-related factors, rather than offence-related (or risk) factors (Farrall, 2004: 72). This has led to more emphasis in research on what factors promote desistance, and whether these can be manipulated by interventions, or strengths of offenders identified and encouraged, rather than endless assessment of, and attempts to reduce, risk (Farrall, 2004: 74).

The desistance debate centres mainly around two different strands: those who look at circumstances and structures in which young people operate, and whether these encourage desistance or persistence (involving social control from their environment), and those who look more to the individual's ability to think and decide for themselves, despite

what else is happening, which has been termed their 'agency' (the need for cognitive transformation for desistance). Many researchers have lent their allegiance to one or other side of this divide, but some have called it a false dichotomy, suggesting that both agency and structure together are important for desistance (Farrall & Bowling, 1999: 254). For the purposes of this chapter, these two strands will be considered separately, but with an understanding that combinations and consequential interactions are possible, and indeed may prove more compelling than individual factors.

To consider the structures strand first, this looks at changes occurring in an individual's life as he/she grows up and makes decisions, possibly resulting in a reduction of offending. The emphasis is on changes resulting in moving away from offending peers, and the overcoming of obstacles which might inhibit desistance (although it has been found that persisters experience more obstacles than desisters, and display less optimism about their ability to overcome them (Burnett 2004: 162)). There are also changes which can be made to the environment in which young people live, politically, socially, and economically.

The nature of adolescence has changed over the past few decades, with some researchers pointing to this transition period as a key point for desistance or persistence (Warr, 1998: 186; Moffitt, 1993: 21). The transition could be described as complete only when a young person has moved from full time education or training to full time employment, changed from their family of origin to family of destination, and moved away from their parents' or carers' residence to their own (Johnston et al., 2000: 3). This process has been lengthened because many young people cannot get full time employment until after they are of school leaving age, and are then moving on to further training of some kind. This increases the time during which young people are neither children nor fully adult, thereby finding themselves outside society. The national housing shortage, both for rented accommodation and affordable housing to buy, also delays this transition, meaning that young people are staying with their family of origin for longer. Many adolescents are between the social bonds of childhood and adulthood. When they establish their new adult social bonds, their offending often decreases. If many young people are not completing this transition until their mid twenties, they will be susceptible to this period of higher criminality for longer (Smith, 2006a: 6). Crime can be seen as a way to attain independence on the part of the adolescent, who feels they ought to be making more decisions for themselves, so choosing against adult advice is a means of achieving this (Smith, 2007: 671). However, for social bonding to be effective, emotional understanding and an ability to empathise with others surely must be crucial. Those unable to relate

emotionally to others will surely be less successful in complex social transactions than those who can. They are also more likely to stay with delinquents, relating more easily to others similar to themselves, thus continuing patterns of offending (Smith, 2006a: 7).

Specific experiences have been shown to be predictive of desistance, in particular joining the army or having a harmonious marriage to a supportive spouse (although this has been linked to spending less time with offending associates as perhaps being of more significance (Warr, 1998: 196)), and factors tending to prolong offending careers being incarceration and unemployment. These could trigger a 'turning point' effect, where the person decides they have had enough of this lifestyle (Rutter et al., 1998: 281). The outcome could be due to the individual's propensity to commit anti-social behaviour, itself influenced by prior life experiences, with those having a weaker anti-social propensity desisting sooner (Rutter et al., 1998: 282). People with problematic use of drugs or alcohol are also more likely to persist with an anti-social lifestyle, along with individuals diagnosed with emotional difficulties like depression and anxiety (Rutter et al., 1998: 291 – 297). These are also more common in people with alexithymia (difficulties with perceiving or expressing emotions, Salovey & Mayer, 1990: 7; see Chapter 2: 40). Turning point experiences most commonly leading to desistance are those which provide new opportunities, causing significant environment change, resulting in removal from anti-social peers as adolescents tend to offend in groups (Tarling, 1993: 81; Warr, 1998: 196), and increasing an individual's self-efficacy (Rutter et al., 1998: 306).

Desistance depends a great deal on opportunities – both to carry on offending and to stop (Smith, 2006b: 7). If a young person has opportunities in life of which they take hold, they can move away from the desire to offend. If, however, their opportunities lie in offending, this is then more likely to be chosen. Opportunities may be real or perceived, depending possibly on the personality and the backgrounds of each individual (Johnston et al., 2000: 4). This leads to the debate concerning whether the social exclusion of young people reduces their life choices sufficiently to increase their likelihood of choosing offending as a lifestyle (Johnston et al., 2000: 27). Socially excluded young people are those with combinations of linked problems, like unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime communities, poor health, and family breakdown (www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/social_exclusion_task_force/context). Improvement of the social capital available to young people to reduce their feelings of social exclusion could help them to make pro-social choices.

Desistance is more likely to occur in advantaged areas than disadvantaged, and much less likely in neighbourhoods where residents are dissatisfied with their local community, perceiving it to be disorderly (Smith, 2006a: 12-13). The ESYTC, which examined the group of children due to start secondary school in Edinburgh in 1998, found that neighbourhood factors, including deprivation levels, rates of recorded crime and the perception of disorder levels were the most significant in predicting desistance (Smith, 2006b: 12). Interestingly enough, social class and individual family circumstances were not found to be significant, indicating that improving local communities so that social bonds within those communities can be stronger could be an important step in assisting desistance from crime, as areas with high crime rates often do not act well as communities (Rutter et al., 1998: 227; McVie & Norris, 2006: 7). As already mentioned, community cohesion is an emerging trait, identified through Moffitt's current study, of areas with low levels of crime and anti-social behaviour, despite any existing poverty or disadvantage. Desistance could therefore be fostered through improving the community cohesion of fragmented areas. They suggest improving community participation in voluntary organisations, building up social organisation by creating clubs and events, and the creation of 'community health profiles' so they can be self-regulatory over time (<http://www.scopic.ac.uk/StudiesERisk.html>).

My experience of speaking to young offenders is that they can sometimes view life as a battle which they are unlikely to win, always being destined to a life of unemployment or low earning power. This does not necessarily produce a culture of dependency, where people are reluctant to come off state benefits, but may encourage them to work outside the legitimate labour force. This theory was developed by Agnew (1992), who refined strain theory to identify why young people decide to commit crime, and what influences their decision to persist or desist. His strain theory focuses on the influence of negative relationships, defined as not being treated as one would wish (Agnew, 1992: 50), which causes distress and, more importantly from the point of view of offending, anger. He felt that there were three basic causes of this: being prevented from achieving generally accepted goals (like economic and social success) by someone else, having positively valued stimuli removed by someone (or the threat of removal, which could include the illness or death of someone), or the presence of negatively valued stimuli (or threat of such). He expanded particularly the first type to include feeling under-rewarded for effort exerted, which may cause the individual to either reduce the effort they put in (for example by truancy), or increase the possible reward (for example by theft) (Agnew, 1992: 51-59).

Whether someone chooses to solve this strain using delinquent or conventional methods depends on a range of constraints, like the perception of the importance of the goal in question, whether they have high or low levels of traits like intelligence, creativity, problem-solving skills, self-efficacy, or self esteem. The list may well include EI, should this be an identifiable trait within young people. It also depends on the level of social support that is available around them (Agnew, 1992: 71). The usual social constraints of crime being undesirable may be absent, encouraging it to be viewed as a legitimate career choice (Johnston et al., 2000: 30). The identifying and solving of these types of barriers to desistance have been linked with desistance, which also relates to the RFPP, discussed earlier (Farrall & Calverley, 2006: 16).

The other strand explaining desistance concerns the agency of the individual, or their ability to make pro-social choices. Some researchers have said that the decision not to commit crime is a decision open to anyone, requiring a specific choice to engage in crime (Cornish & Clarke, 1986: 2). They have therefore linked desistance to factors which might influence this choice and make it not worth committing the crime. A study of people convicted of robbery found desistance to be related to factors like shock (like being wounded in the process of committing the crime), being fed up of receiving custody for criminal acts, the possibility of receiving longer prison terms if the behaviour continues, and individuals reassessing what is important to them (Cusson & Pinsonneault, 1986: 73-78), although it should be stated that this research was with older offenders, and may not apply to young people. Much debate has gone into the ability of young people to make logical choices, which takes no account of other factors in their life affecting their personal agency (not least the question about whether adolescents think in this way at all, or whether this develops with maturity). Offenders have been found to think very much in the present, finding forward thinking, and therefore consideration of consequences further removed than the immediate reward brought by the offence, difficult. They also seem more inclined only to consider the positive consequences of committing crime, feeling somewhat invincible where the possibility of being prosecuted is concerned (Burnett, 2004: 154).

However, The ESYTC found that impulsivity, one of the factors in Moffitt's argument for adolescence-limited offending, was not significant for desistance of criminal activity, so the fact that Moffitt found a reduction in impulsivity as adolescents grow up could be deemed irrelevant (Smith, 2006a: 13). However, this was not backed up by other studies, which found the inability to delay gratification to be an important predictor of offending behaviour (Smith, 2007: 667), which echoes the self control thesis of Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990).

It also concurs with the notion that the benefits received from criminal activity are more immediate than those to be gained from legitimate means. People with a poor ability to delay gratification are more likely to want immediate reward, and to be oriented to present gains rather than future goals, and therefore more likely to resort to criminal means for financial, and other, solutions (Nagin & Farrington, 1992: 510). This has previously been ascribed to a personality-trait risk factor for offending, implying poor malleability, but it could be due to impairment of emotional reasoning faculties, which may have a greater propensity for change through appropriate intervention (Goleman, 1995: 27; see Chapter 2: 37). Evidence from the ESYTC suggests that some 'adolescent-limited offenders', while no longer being arrested for their actions, continue with certain types of offending and behaviour not often brought to book, like workplace theft, heavy drinking, and fighting (Smith, 2007: 661). This could indicate that although official crime figures imply cessation of offending, the basic underlying mind-set may not have changed. Wikström has found in his latest research that self control is only linked with offending when paired with weak morality (<http://www.scopic.ac.uk/StudiesPADS.html>).

Morality may be a developing trait for some young people, as adolescence is also a time where personal opinions and ideologies are being formed. Teenagers may become interested in politics or political activity for the first time (Youth Parliament, 2011: 5), and will start coming into contact with the YJS through being of a criminally responsible age, either directly themselves, or indirectly through peers or family (Furnham & Gunter, 1989: 47-48). There will be an inevitable period where opinions about many things, including offending, are fluid, changing with each new experience. What a young person is prepared to do one year, they may firmly disagree with the following year, as their own sense of responsibility develops, and emotional maturation takes place (Furnham & Gunter, 1989: 7-8; Luebbers et al., 2007: 1006). It is also a time of rejecting previous constraints imposed by parents and gaining personal ethics about responsibilities and behaviour.

The Liverpool Desistance Study (Maruna et al., 2004: 225) found that desistance was much more related to thinking patterns than anything more external to the individual. They identified that desisters were those who had a 'positive illusion' about themselves (which has been thought previously to be a destructive thinking distortion which needed to be challenged rather than encouraged), where they felt the person doing the crime was 'not them', allowing them to distance themselves from the act. They also found that those who could see that their experiences as a warning to others (for example, other younger family members), were more likely to be able to view the past favourably and use themselves as

an example, which would only work if they had desisted. The final characteristic of desisters was that they had been able to see desistance as a rebellious act against 'the system' which had victimised them (Maruna et al., 2004b: 226; Court, 2004: 239). This goes against some of the current thinking regarding interventions with offenders, who are assessed and labelled according to their risk, which may inhibit the thinking patterns outlined above by insisting that offenders internalise the identified deficits (Maruna et al., 2004b: 228). This fits with labelling theory that someone who is convicted as a criminal will start to think of themselves in that way, acting accordingly (Smith, 2006a: 14; Trasler, 1979: 317). The ESYTC found that those not caught for their delinquent acts were more likely to desist from criminal activity than those who had (Smith, 2006a: 14), leading to debate concerning the prudence of pulling young people into the YJS as early as ten years old (Morgan & Newburn, 2007: 1035). However some researchers found that experience of the YJS encouraged desistance (Johnston et al., 2000: 29), although how these processes helped is unclear. Experience of supervision was found to help when pro-social modelling was used by workers, who also found a good balance between pushing and encouragement (Rex 1999: 377). Use of restorative justice methods can increase the social capital of offenders, helping them to see themselves as more pro-social, encouraging desistance (Bazemore & Erbe 2004: 46).

There is evidence to suggest that people who are aggressive and anti-social view themselves and others differently from those who do not find these activities acceptable. They are more likely to find aggressive behaviour rewarding in terms of problem solving, and therefore an acceptable way of behaving. They are also more likely to perceive neutral situations negatively. This is possibly a product of avoidant attachment (caused by negative and impatient parenting (Shaffer, 2002: 406; see Chapter 2: 30)), and a symptom of low EI (Hall et al., 2004: 202; Smith, 2007: 668), leaving them more likely to react to situations with aggression. This implies that for someone to change their acceptance of offending behaviour, they need to change something basic within their view of themselves and others, culminating in a rejection of their past behaviour and a new moral standing for their actions (Smith, 2007: 674). This possibly happens naturally in most people when their emotions mature so they are able to act with EI, but for a few, who for some reason lack the ability to attain emotional milestones (Salovey et al., 2002: 65), this growth may not happen spontaneously and needs appropriate intervention. Related to this, desistance has been found to be most effective when the offender wants to desist *and* feels that they can. If they have a fatalistic view of themselves, they are much more likely to return to previous behaviour patterns (Maruna et al., 2004b: 224). Those who are allowed to practice their

stated desire to desist are more likely to learn the habits that go with a non-offending lifestyle, and will consequently take on that persona (Farrall et al., 2010: 553). Many offenders state a desire to desist but continue to offend. Such is the desistance process, that they will need more than just a 'want' in order to achieve their aim (Burnett 2004: 152).

So, if desistance has been found to be related to addressing obstacles, 'turning point' events, changes in thinking and desire for offending, and acting like a non-offender until the act becomes reality, it would seem likely that combinations of these could work towards desistance in different people, depending on their situations. Desistance has been identified as a process (rather than an event), in which the subject is likely to oscillate around for sometime before eventually settling for a non-offending lifestyle (Farrall et al., 2010: 560).

Summary and conclusion

As has been seen, there are numerous approaches to explaining crime and its onset, ranging from the classicist view about the agency of the individual, to the positivist view that these choices are not choices at all, being severely restricted by the life and experiences of each person. In the midst of this sit the social control theories looking at anomie and levels of social control in place, ascribing delinquent behaviour to the deterioration of both. However, the approach currently adopted by the YJB, and associated agencies, centres very much on the RFPP, considering the reduction of assessed risks and the encouragement of positive factors the way to crime desistance. For this reason, the risk factor model has been used as the basis for this thesis.

Risk and protective factors can be divided into four domains: individual, family, school and community. Within these domains several factors seemed to stand out as having more impact on offending than others. Parental supervision was found to be of vital importance, with poor supervision strongly predictive of later offending. There was significant correlation between those showing aggressive behaviour at eight and those later convicted of crimes. Having an anti-social peer group is highly predictive of later anti-social behaviour, along with criminal behaviour and attitudes demonstrated by parents and siblings, making the individual and family domains very influential. These domains are also very significant in the shaping and exercise of EI, in that deficiencies in these areas may make deficiencies in EI more likely. Having been a victim of crime or bullying in the past appears to predict offending, as does truancy from school. In the community domain, neighbourhood disorder is important, both in its actuality, and in individuals' perception

regardless of figures. In this domain, structural obstacles to desistance can be placed, particularly if protective factors are enhanced through whole community interventions.

The YJB provided a comprehensive meta-analysis of available studies (YJB, 2005a), adding that alongside prevalence of the risk factors in a person's life, are the issues of salience (how strongly factors are linked with youth crime), and its modifiability (YJB, 2005a: 57). They concluded that although some risk factors prevalent in young people's lives are salient, they are not modifiable, so are less useful when considering interventions to address behaviour (for example, gender). This could, however, be improved by a wider study, questioning why these might be risk factors, and how society could be changed to lessen their impact. It may feel pointless to conclude that a young person has committed crime largely because of their poor upbringing, but it can be questioned whether this influence can be mitigated by interventions. Young people brought up in affectionless households have a higher risk of offending, possibly because their emotions have not been allowed to mature as young people (YJB, 2005a: 28-29). If EI can be taught, then this is useful, since it could indicate work to be done with young people. Similarly, it may be difficult to see how living in a community with a high crime rates and low levels of organisation could be altered, but could be useful for future social policy.

Analysing the origins of offending in this way, by identifying risk and protective factors, and analysing factors influencing desistance or persistence, is an important step towards affecting crime statistics with policies and interventions. In this climate of striving towards evidence-based practice by demonstrating links between a variety of factors, this justifies the work on which different agencies embark in order to address them. The strong links between families and offending justifies much work happening around parenting interventions, allowing for more investment in those areas (Moran et al., 2004). Traits of the individual, and reasons for desistance, provide evidence for Youth Offending Teams to embark on offence-focused work, diversion programmes, and social skills work – including the development of EI and empathy. The rôle schools can play as both protective and risk factors has backed up newer initiatives in schools to provide more pastoral support, classroom support, and behavioural interventions, which may well contribute to the year-on-year improvements in school attainment. It suggests tougher policies regarding truancy, and the funding of more Education Welfare Officers in our schools. The influence a community can have on its inhabitants needs to be examined further, with more policy action taken in this area. Housing, social policy, and environmental projects should be reconsidered in the light of this link, with more research required in the future.

Chapter 4: Research design and methodology

The last chapter located this research into wider literature on youth justice, noting the growth of academic and policy interest in risk and protective factors and the lack of attention to links between emotional intelligence (EI) and offending behaviour. This chapter outlines the purpose of this research more fully, alongside a discussion of research methods chosen, reasons for their use, and limitations. Since young people are at the heart of this thesis, merely using a quantitative questionnaire did not seem adequate to capture their thoughts and feelings. Therefore, a mixed methods design was used, firstly gaining a broad overview of how young people think they relate emotionally, and secondly interviewing a selection of young people in more detail. Demographic and offending related data were taken from the Youth Offending Information System (YOIS). These were used, along with high and low scores from the questionnaire, to compile a list of young people who were interviewed to add qualitative data to the questionnaire results. YOIS data were also used to see whether any correlations were evident between different aspects of young people's lives, offending, and EI. I also interviewed the Leeds Youth Offending Service (LYOS) Speech and Language Therapist (Therapist), who had conducted research into linked areas, and whose expert opinion added another dimension to the data gathered, and the implications thereof. This chapter also touches on validity and reliability concerns which arose with the questionnaire, but which are discussed more fully in Chapter 6.

Purpose

This research was an investigation into links between levels of EI and offending by young people (between the ages of 10 and 18), and whether low EI could be included as a risk factor in the risk and protection model of offending, as discussed in the previous chapter. Links were sought concerning aspects of the criminal career, namely onset, frequency of offending, seriousness, and duration. Links were also sought between EI and indicators of desistance, falling outside the risk and protective factor model (Smith et al., 1991: 8).

This was an important area for research, as limited investigation had previously been undertaken in the field of emotions, and risk and protection for offending behaviour. The construct of EI had not previously been applied to a sample of young offenders (although research had taken place both with adult offenders and sex offenders). Links between these constructs may add to the current model another aspect of both risk and protection

for the onset of offending not currently regarded. For the Risk Factor Prevention Paradigm (RFPP) to have academic integrity and practical use, it should be a working model, with facility for expansion as further factors for each side are discovered, making it a more holistic structure.

Links have been found by other researchers between EI and empathy. Through use of an empathy scale, this was tested on smaller groups from the whole sample, who were also asked in interview how they viewed their victims. Any discovery of links between victim empathy and EI could indicate how the burgeoning emphasis on this aspect of intervention might be improved and furthered.

Links implied by the data could be of practical importance. Further research could then look at causality, which was not addressed in this study. If links were found to be causal (and not merely correlational, or even spurious), then constructive interventions could be put in place to address EI in supervision plans. The Youth Justice Board (YJB) currently uses risk and protection factors in their assessment criteria, and also in guidelines for intervention, so should the factor of EI fit this model, it could be incorporated into the current framework. Alternatively, EI may fit into models of desistance, outlined in Chapter 3, also making it an important area for interventions. Further research may be needed in order to ascertain effective methods for developing EI (see Chapter 8: 252), although the theoretical model used in this research carries implications for EI improvement, in that it identified four different branches with abilities for each, which could be developed sequentially through an intervention programme.

Research design

This research was a cross-sectional design, to gain a snapshot view of EI levels in this sample group at a specific point in time, which is why causality could not be addressed. A mixed methods approach was utilised, to obtain a meaningful picture of how young offenders were functioning in this area. The sample in this research comprised young people given Supervision Orders supervised through the LYOS during the data-gathering period (approximately April 2008 to March 2010), born in the 1990s between the ages of 11 and 18. The research looked at differences and connections within that sample, as understood through two datasets: one using a quantitative questionnaire upon which statistical analyses were performed, the other using a qualitative method consisting of semi-structured interviews with a proportion of that sample.

Research tools

The research tools used were a general EI assessment of the whole sample group, to gain an EI level for each subject (each being used comparatively with the rest of the scores to assess relative level within the dataset), and semi-structured interviews probing more deeply into issues raised by some of the EI assessment questions with regard to their personal experiences. This method of triangulation helped to address the question about whether EI levels affect criminality, and also went some way towards looking at why this might be the case. The selected method of EI assessment was a self-report questionnaire, the Adolescent Swinburne Emotional Intelligence Test (ASUEIT). The interviews provided a way of checking the reliability of the ASUEIT for young offenders, as discrepancies were revealed, through greater questioning of understanding. This was also checked through comparison with known EI outcomes, and examining whether this test brought out common themes (for example, that girls usually score significantly higher on EI tests than boys, see Chapter 2: 33). Details from interviews helped explain EI levels themselves, and through use of an empathy questionnaire (Salovey & Mayer, 1998: 25), introduced how they were linked with victim empathy (in particular affective empathy, see Chapter 2: 39). These different methods backing each other up served to better validate the findings (Noaks & Wincup 2004: 75). The qualitative aspect of the data aided understanding of the social world occupied by young people supervised by the LYOS, offering potential reasons for their offending and EI levels. The plethora of information available on YOIS added further quantitative information to the basis of quantitative information, allowing analyses of other aspects of individuality, like ethnic origin and neighbourhood of residence. This information also allowed for an analysis of offending after the data gathering period, to see whether EI in any way predicted future offending.

The EI assessments were carried out during the first month to six weeks of a young person receiving a Supervision Order, so the effects of current interventions would not have had time to impact on their responses, although they were likely to have received previous interventions. This group were largely recidivists (repeat offenders), as young people who received Supervision Orders would usually have been to court on previous occasions. It was felt useful to concentrate on a largely recidivist group since this excluded young people entering the Youth Justice System (YJS) for very minor reasons, who may never return. In some cases, however, first time entrants may receive a Supervision Order because they have pleaded not guilty but were found guilty at trial, with an offence seriousness warranting a more intensive order than others available. This provided a

proportion of the sample who may not have been recidivists, but who had committed crimes of sufficient seriousness to warrant them useful to this study. The inclusion of more minor offences may have skewed the sample group towards a general population of young people, and away from the specific offender group being sought.

The EI questionnaire

Quantitative data were gathered using the ASUEIT (see Appendix 2), identified through extensive reading and contacting of different researchers, as most appropriate to this age group and sample type. The ASUEIT was a self-report questionnaire from Australia consisting of 57 questions, each answered on a 1-5 Likert scale (de Vaud 1996: 88). The reading age of this test was described as Key Stage Two (or Year 6 level; chronological age of 10 or 11), within the competency of most young people. However, there is a lower than average reading age among young offenders, identified through the Speech and Language Therapist's (Therapist) research in Leeds (Gregory & Bryan, 2009: 8), which could have caused some difficulties for these young people in completing this questionnaire.

Self-report surveys have had mixed reviews regarding their ability to accurately report reality, in particular concerning the possibility of causing questionnaire fatigue by the inclusion of too many questions, or too complicated a method of answering, requiring more consideration than is realistic (Brame et al., 2004: 258). There have also been questions around selection bias, and in particular the bias caused by self-selection of those consenting to complete the questionnaire. For example the National Youth Survey experienced a refusal rate of 25 per cent, raising questions about those omitting themselves, and how they would have affected the results (Brame et al., 2004: 258). The ASUEIT compared favourably in this sense with other surveys used successfully in research with young people, like the Youth Social Audit, which presented young people with a questionnaire containing 65 items on a five point Likert Scale, allowing for enough gradation, without confusing them with a minutiae of choice (Haines & Case, 2003: 90). There have been questions about the reliability of a five point scale, with some research indicating that use of an 11 point scale would be better (Batista-Foguet et al., 2009: 579), but due to the dearth of scales available, the five point scale of the ASUEIT was the only serious option.

The development of the ASUEIT in Australia

The ASUEIT was an adaptation of the earlier Swinburne University Emotional Intelligence Test (SUEIT), which had been designed for workplace adults (see Chapter 2: 26). There were two concerns with this: that the language would need adapting for adolescents, and that the original five factor model may not fit with the differences within an adolescent sample. The validation of the ASUEIT was conducted using two separate studies of adolescents in Australia. The first study was to test adolescents' comprehension of the test. Items they did not understand were crossed, and those with fewer than 80 per cent comprehension were changed. The modified items were then presented to a different sample group, who made the same judgment. The second study presented a larger cohort with a modified version of the test, which they completed in groups. After this, examination of the completed ASUEITs showed a slightly different four factor model (see Chapter 2: 27), and a reduction of items from 64 to 57 to remove the less reliable (Luebbers et al., 2007: 1003). The second study showed a good level of reliability across the whole model (see Chapter 2: 28). The questions in the ASUEIT were variously phrased to enable some of them to be scored negatively (for example 'I understand' and 'I do not understand' would each require the opposite score to be selected), to decrease the likelihood of socially desirable responding.

All the participants in the original study were attending high school, which was where the questionnaire was completed, and it was conducted in Australia. In the larger cohort, the biggest ethnic group was Oceanic (meaning White Australians), with other ethnicities as follows: European 10.6 per cent (106); African and Middle Eastern, 2.2 per cent (22); Asian, 10.1 per cent (101); People of the Americas, 0.8 per cent (8); and 8.6 per cent (86) unreported. The mean age of the boys was 13 years, with a range of 12 to 17, and the mean age of the girls was 14 years, with a range of 11 to 18. The majority of those in this sample were female, with 728 girls and 274 boys (Luebbers et al., 2007: 1005).

The use of the ASUEIT in this study

The sample in this study were mainly male (76 per cent), and mainly white (90 per cent). The age range ran from 11 to 18, with a mean of 15.8 years (standard deviation 1.7). Although the ASUEIT had been validated in Australia using different ethnic and gender demographics, and on a population of school attendees, it was the most relevant and accessible measurement tool available for this research. These differences made a pilot all

the more important to conduct, and increased the importance of the interviews as a reliability test that the young people were answering in a consistent and meaningful way.

Email contact with one of the ASUEIT's authors confirmed that this assessment tool had been approved for general use, and permission was given for its use in this thesis. A confidentiality agreement with Swinburne University was agreed and drawn up, as this was required by them for use of the test.

Piloting the ASUEIT

While this questionnaire had been tested and used with adolescents, it had never before been used with an offender population. To ensure that potential problems were identified and solved prior to full use with the sample group, it was piloted with 12 young people on Referral Orders. Referral Orders were chosen since they would not overlap with the client-group with whom the main survey would take place. The demographics of this group were similar to that which might be expected of young people on Supervision Orders, so it was felt to be a valid group to choose, but it was decided that using actual Supervision Orders may have hampered the progress of the research for this thesis, dwindling down the number available. The pilot consisted of completion of a consent form (see Appendix 3), and the ASUEIT (see Appendix 2) for each young person, and a pilot evaluation for each worker (see Appendix 4). I conducted two pilot questionnaires myself, to gain a better personal understanding of any issues, and see how the questionnaire worked in practice with young people. I felt this would better equip me to make best use of the evaluations from other workers. Twelve questionnaire and consent forms were returned and 10 pilot evaluations received. The consent forms had all been completed giving permission for their use, and all the questionnaires appeared to be completed properly, with a wide variety of responses being chosen throughout each one. Ten of the questionnaires had been completed with no missing responses, one of the other two having two questions unanswered and the other one having one question missed.

The pilot evaluations showed that all the young people seemed to understand the consent form with no further explanation needed. The workers reported that all of the young people were happy to complete the questionnaire, but that six needed further explanations. Only one worker reported that their young person needed help to actually complete the questionnaire. Further explanation was needed by four workers defining the word 'seldom'. One worker had to explain what 'vibe' meant. One worker, the same one who identified that help was needed, had to explain the questions about logic and problem-solving. They

particularly stated that their young person did not understand some of the questions. One worker said that they had to explain how a reversed question related to the available answers (for example, changing 'I do...' to 'I do not...'). Comments from workers about the questionnaire and its layout were useful. One found a repeated word in one of the questions, and also stated that the question itself was long and confusing. One worker commented that the young person thought the questionnaire was very long and repeated itself. They also commented that they felt this young person did not think about the questions as much towards the end, one commenting:

"maybe the questionnaire was a little too long".

Three workers commented that the layout seemed very closely packed with too many questions, as one noted:

"all crammed in. Some questions repeat. Felt a bit like a test. Suggested less questions or more spaced out".

The most common comment was that the questions were repeating themselves. Unfortunately this would appear to be the case on quick assessment, as there are some very similarly worded questions, but beyond slight frustration, this did not cause any major difficulties. The validity of the questionnaire may have been brought into question had actual questions been changed, so it was felt better to leave them as they were.

I experienced many of these same issues myself, and had to explain both 'seldom' and 'vibe'. I had to explain how the scoring changed for reversed questions, and wondered how much different workers would do this when completing with young people to ensure they chose the answer they really desired. The questionnaire felt too long, so that concentration on the part of the young person was lost towards the end, and also the writing was too small. Any changes had to be made with care not to invalidate the questionnaire, which meant that the number of questions to be included could not be altered. The questionnaire was re-typed, retaining the Swinburne University logos, credits, and copyright information, using a larger clearer font, also restyling the Likert scale with larger numbers. The wording could not be materially changed, so the word 'seldom' had to remain, but with the instruction that workers should explain what it meant at the start. Three mistakes in the questions were corrected (removing a repeated word, changing 'their' to the correct version of 'they're', and pluralising one word). This left the questionnaire slightly easier to read, which appeared to have been largely understood by

the young people who had completed it so far. The consent form remained unchanged, as there had been no problems identified.

The complete questionnaire presented to each participant eventually consisted of a cover sheet from the original questionnaire, the consent form, the two page questionnaire re-written in larger font but retaining the logo and credits of the university as on the original, and an addressed envelope for the whole pack to be put in and sealed immediately upon completion (see Appendix 5). The reading age of the test was Year Six (approximately 11 years), and since many of the young people have lower reading ages than this, workers were allowed to read any questions aloud that the young people could not read for themselves (all if necessary) without compromising the integrity of the test. It was advised that they should not offer further explanations, as this would have introduced difference in execution between workers, possibly skewing the results, although they could define individual words if the young person did not understand them. Arrangements were in place to obtain translations of the ASUEIT to other appropriate languages, as needed, to be checked with Swinburne University ensuring accuracy. However, this facility was not required.

Implementing the ASUEIT

Certain observations were made on using the questionnaire with young people, which may have impacted on the results obtained. It was found that some young people completed the questionnaires with very definite answers decided upon very quickly, the majority of which were either 1 or 5 on the scale, whilst others gave greater consideration to their responses, often arriving at a much less decisive 2, 3 or 4. It seemed that those in a much more concrete stage of their thinking development were likely to decide they either agreed or disagreed with the statement, rather than being able to judge in finer degrees. This could mean that the more intelligent (those operating at a more conceptual stage) were more likely to choose middle values than those of lower, or less developed intelligence. It is unclear how this may have impacted on the overall scores of those young people.

It was also observed that if young people became bored with the questions, especially if they communicated frustration at the apparent repetition, they were more likely to give middle values for the last few questions, as they did not want to consider the question properly and felt that a middle value was non-committal, also found by other researchers (Cicourel 2004: 168). This could be related to intelligence, but also to such conditions as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), where concentration is impaired. This was

not observed with the empathy questionnaire used as part of the interview, which was considerably shorter (Moser & Kalton 2004: 73); it would seem that young people were able to complete this one-sided questionnaire without losing interest part of the way through (see Appendix 6). A score of 3 was also observed for questions which did not appear to be understood by the young people. However, they were not always willing to reconsider after receiving further explanation of the question.

The scoring system given along with the questionnaire provided a percentile score for each area examined, and for the whole. This indicated a comparison between participants in this study and participants in the original study, which was of a different demographic make-up. So while the percentile scores were interesting to note, they did not provide a comparison with participants in this study. While it may have made for interesting observations to consider percentile scores generated by the data, only the non-percentile scores were used in the statistical analyses of the differences within this sample.

The ASUEIT questionnaires were used with the participants by colleagues at the LYOS. Return of these questionnaires therefore depended very much on their co-operation. The director of service was very supportive, communicating at the LYOS briefings (held every six weeks) how important he considered the research to be and therefore that he expected all should take part, unless there were compelling reasons against. Managers were asked to go through cases with workers in supervision to identify whether the questionnaires were being completed, and if not to encourage their use. The briefing was used to launch the research, allowing as wide an audience as possible, which included guidance on the administration protocol when using with young people. Subsequent briefings were used as reminders and for updates on progress. The co-operation of the IT officer from the LYOS was gained to obtain notification of the relevant young people as they emerged, and a monthly email was sent accordingly. This enabled me to contact case managers directly to remind them that a questionnaire should be conducted with a newly received Supervision Order. Despite this, the response was disappointing, with approximately 30 per cent return rate, despite very few refusals from young people themselves (only three refused out of 104, giving a response rate of over 97 per cent). To improve participation, a periodical prize draw (approximately three-monthly) was organised for staff who had returned questionnaires, which generated more interest.

All young people in the sample (n=101) completed, or were helped to complete, the ASUEIT. Some of the young people required help to complete the questionnaire, 30 per cent being identified as such, but too many practitioners had not answered the question for

this to be reliable. Two of the responses were identified as outliers on the frequency curve, with one being retained because the questionnaire was completed properly with no reason to believe that the responses to the questions were not genuine. The other was removed from the analyses, because the questionnaire was only partially completed, and the young person concerned wrote how he felt about the content of it: "I am not dum and most of these are Repeat (sic)". This left a final sample size of 100 (n=100). The completed responses were analysed for reliability using Cronbach's alpha (see Chapter 6: 155).

Semi-structured interviews

The questionnaire was followed by a number of semi-structured interviews conducted by myself to ensure continuity, building up a more complete picture of the young people in question. The research tool of semi-structured interviews was chosen because of the flexibility offered, and the chance to ask supplementary questions, as appropriate, and as inspired by the discussion (Kvale 1996: 287). This made it imperative that I conducted the interviews, as I had a full understanding of the issues involved and matters that might be of interest (Hyman et al., 2004: 89).

As I had worked for some years in the YJS, I drew upon my experience to use strategies to establish a rapport with young people, and was aware of the sensitivities likely for the young people. However, subjective potential with any interviewer should be acknowledged for interpretation of these conversations (Dunbar et al., 2003: 135). In this case I was likely to have been influenced by previous encounters with similar young people. This may have served the purpose of bringing a more reflexive element to the interviewing style, possibly drawing out better quality answers from often difficult to talk to young people, if handled carefully. However, all the participants were informed through the consent form that I was a youth justice worker, which may have shaped their view of me, and consequently altered the honesty of their replies, or their willingness to take part. If they viewed me as a member of staff, rather than a researcher, this may have introduced another barrier to their co-operation. All work on this thesis was conducted outside of my normal working time, to separate it from normal LYOS working practices. The young people interviewed were not on my caseload.

A fully flexible interview style might not have allowed for sufficient emphasis on the important questions to be answered, and may have been difficult for the young people. They were more likely to be able to answer specific questions, which could then be expanded. A question structure ensured that the relevant information was gained in a

reasonably short space of time, as young people were likely to become disengaged with the process had it been too lengthy.

It was decided that individual interviews were most appropriate, given the sensitive nature of the issues being discussed (Eder & Fingerson 2003: 44). Each young person in the process had a different experience to relate, and could have been unduly influenced in a group interview or focus group setting. There may have been too much scope for exaggeration of offending, or minimising of victim empathy, depending on the dynamics of the group in question.

It was hoped that interview information would back up young people's responses in the ASUEIT, adding weight to its validity in measuring what it purported to measure (Tashakkori & Teddlie 1998: 80). However, it was also useful to test reliability with this type of young person, allowing for further investigation as to whether these young people responded appropriately to a questionnaire in that format and of that length, and if not, whether this brought into question the results.

The responses of the young people in interview put flesh on the bones of what it means to be emotionally intelligent (or unintelligent), and how this has impacted on their decision making in real situations. This added meaning and insight to the discussions around offending and EI, linking the issues firmly to individuals, and the situations they inhabit and have grown up in, which all contributed to the outcome of their personality. Anonymised quotes were used from the young people themselves about their views of the issues being discussed (see Chapter 7).

Interviewee selection

The selection of interviewees was based on four criteria: young people looked after by the local authority (Looked After), low and high extremes of ASUEIT score, and low age of first conviction (an indicator of onset). The influence of parental relationship on young people, especially when problematic, has previously been shown to be significant both as a risk factor for offending behaviour and for low EI, which is why Looked After young people in the cohort were interviewed (Baldwin et al., 1997: 90).

Interviewees did not include those convicted of 'victimless' crimes, as some of the questions looked at victim empathy. Although it could be argued that there is no such thing as a victimless crime, and that someone somewhere has suffered as a result of the criminal actions, if that victim was so far removed from what the young person could

reasonably identify, then the discussion would lose much of its worth. For example, possession of cannabis might be a crime for which it is difficult to identify a victim, although it could be argued that society is a victim of illegal drug use. Whereas retail theft, even from a large store, will usually see young people convicted of such a crime able to identify the store owners and other shoppers as victims of this crime. However, where these apparently victimless crimes fell within the statistics used with the EI measurement, they were included in the analyses, as their position may have been of relevance.

Thought was given to the offering of inducements for participation in this aspect of the research, although it still formed an official contact for their order (which was likely to be attractive to them for their attendance, as it would reduce other contacts for that week, but would not be breachable if they missed or would not take part – in which case they would have received a normal supervision session). Fair trade chocolate was used as a ‘thank you’ (also offering an interesting opportunity to model an ethical lifestyle), as it was felt to be inappropriate, and beyond affordability, to give young people money as an inducement, an ethical issue encountered by others (Noaks & Wincup, 2004: 150). This was especially pertinent for Looked-After young people, who often have their income monitored and controlled by staff of residential homes to prevent them from buying illegal substances. Vouchers can quickly be turned into a form of currency, and were therefore dismissed.

A session that could be used to work with young people was offered to each caseworker, covering aspects of victim empathy, an obligatory part of any order, to help them to make use of the fact that their young person had thought about this in depth in order to answer questions, without letting them know the content of the interview. This consisted of two elements: one to help young people identify who their victims were and how much they had been affected, the other to help them look at the thoughts and feelings that might have ensued for some of those victims. It was hoped that this would increase the incentive for caseworkers to include their young people in the research, as it covered a necessary part of their supervision plan. The follow-up session was not mandatory, but merely a helpful use of victim consideration. It was made clear to each young person that their caseworker would not be informed about what they said. Only I had access to the written information and recordings of these interviews.

I did not interview any young people with whom I had previously worked, as this would have made the interview process uneven, comparing them to others not previously known. Interviews were not conducted with young people who had finished their orders, or who

were currently in custody without release before the end of the data-gathering, for reasons of difficulty of access.

Interview structure

The interviews began with a self-report empathy test (Mayer & Salovey, 1998: 25), similar in type to the ASUEIT using a five point Likert-type scale (see Appendix 6), which included questions like 'I don't give others' feelings much thought'; 'the suffering of others deeply disturbs me'; 'if someone is upset, I get upset too'. The questions covered assessment of one type of empathy (affective empathy), which has been more closely linked with offending and anti-social behaviour in research than cognitive empathy (Jolliffe & Farrington, 2006b: 548; see Chapter 2: 39). This test was chosen because it was devised by two of the researchers working on the Mayer and Salovey four branch model of EI (and therefore complemented that model-base by utilising a sufficiently different methodology to the cognitive assessment used for ability EI), and it was validated for used with adolescents, with a good level of internal reliability for a general empathy level (using alpha coefficient, $\alpha = .86$) (Caruso & Mayer, 1998: 11).

The interviews proceeded to ask the young people about the offence for which they had been given their Supervision Order triggering participation in the study, looking into their understanding of who the victims were, how they might have felt, and also their own emotions concerning the offence and its effects (see Appendix 7). They were asked to define a victim, which was compared with generally accepted definitions. Victims have been identified as falling into two categories: direct (those who were most affected by an action, for example someone who was robbed), and indirect (those still affected, but in a secondary way, for example, the family of someone who has been robbed) (United Nations, 1985; Meredith, 2009; see Chapter 3: 64). They were also able to explore how much they viewed themselves to be a victim in the events described, and how this affected both their attitudes towards the recipients of their actions, and around possible future desistance. They were asked about their own emotions regarding what they had done, giving insight into their perception of themselves.

Many of the young people being interviewed had long histories of association with the LYOS, which may have given them much victim awareness work in the past. Thought was given to how much this might have affected their victim empathy, or whether their own phrases in interview had been picked up from or influenced by interventions already undertaken. It could be that they had been given a greater awareness of victim issues

through direct work, which improved their cognitive empathy (see Chapter 2: 39, for a fuller discussion about empathy) but not their affective empathy, which has been more closely connected with desistance from crime (Jolliffe & Farrington, 2006b: 548). It should also be remembered that the ASUEITs were completed with these young people over a two year period, with the interviews only being conducted towards the end, therefore some of the young people would have matured, and may also have learned from the interventions which they received during this time. These considerations may also explain some inconsistencies between the young people's ASUEIT score and their demonstration of EI (EI increases naturally with age to some degree in any case (see Chapter 2: 17)), especially when the latter showed a greater EI level than the former.

The interview questions were written with both the importance of the information needed and the emotional health of each interviewee in mind (see Appendix 7). They were given opportunity at the start of the interview to review their consent agreement, and alter it if necessary (see Appendix 8). This, along with a personal introduction by me, provided an opportunity for us to build a rapport, which encouraged the sharing of information during the questions. An empathy questionnaire (see Appendix 6) marked the start of the interview, being less intrusive personally to them than the subsequent questions. The opening interview question was deliberately open and non-judgmental, offering the interviewee opportunity to give their version of the incident for which they received their conviction. It should be acknowledged, however, that different individuals reacted in differing ways to the interview process, some being more compliant, and others displaying a more antagonistic attitude (Tashakkori & Teddlie 1998: 97). It is possible that some young people were answering with socially desirable answers, professing empathy for victims that they did not actually feel, knowing what the social norm was (de Vaus 1996: 110). This is often behind minimisations that many young people use when talking about their offences, helping them to reduce their own sense of responsibility for what happened (see Chapter 7: 190 for a discussion on 'techniques of neutralization').

The interview was piloted to identify possible problems before use with the main sample group. The questions were devised to be general, but to ask about the young person's own specific offence, and to ascertain how much they appreciated of the effect they had on others and themselves. It was important to design an interview taking into account the time needed to complete the empathy questionnaire, so that the whole experience would not be beyond the coping ability of most young people.

Due to the reduction in time delays now operating in the YJS, there was not generally a long time lag between the conviction and the interview, but their memory of events may have been clouded, especially for prolific offenders. This could have impaired their ability to recall one particular incident among many. I was therefore equipped with a case summary from the YOIS records, with which the interviewee could be reminded of the specific incident if necessary, but this was only used if they were not be able to adequately recall otherwise. It was not used to apportion blame or responsibility, since the interviewee's own opinion of this was important for the study.

The interviews used this information about young people's offences held on YOIS to look at how they related to their victims, whether they could empathise with them, and their general attitudes to their own criminal behaviour. These were related to some of the ASUEIT questions, for example: "when I am upset with someone, I find it hard to tell how they might be feeling" enabled questioning into how their victim felt, or if they even acknowledged their victims' feelings or not.

These were emotive issues to discuss, which required sensitivity in order to maintain a good relationship with the interviewee, and to discern whether they were becoming distressed by the questions (Becker & Greer 2004: 248). A list of counseling agencies was brought to each session, along with the name of the caseworker and the LYOS nurse for that young person's area team. The interviewee could then be asked whether they would like input from one of the appropriate agencies, or for their caseworker or team nurse to be involved in their care. However, the questions were no different from any that could reasonably be asked of a young person on a court order, and as such should not have caused unnecessary distress. I am not aware of any young people who needed further support in this way.

The empathy questionnaire

Interviews included use of the empathy scale used in previous research by Mayer and Salovey (Caruso & Mayer, 1998: 25), which indicated that empathy is positively correlated with, but distinct from, EI. This was piloted to maximise the benefits of its use. The questionnaire appeared to have been understood by all young people with whom it was tested. The only explanation needed was for the word 'empathy', which was in the title. It was decided that the word 'empathy', although it could have been changed for something more straightforward, was a useful piece of vocabulary for young people to learn and

understand, particularly as there are often references during interventions, Referral Order panels, and review meetings, to 'victim empathy'.

The empathy scale loaded on five factors (Salovey & Mayer, 1998: 11). A spreadsheet was devised using the given system that created a score for different sections of this questionnaire, and an explanation devised from the research for each section as follows: suffering (being upset when you see someone or something else mistreated), positive sharing (sharing other people's positive emotions), responsive crying (how easily you respond to situations by crying), emotional attention (how much attention you pay to other people's emotions), feeling for others (how much you can understand what other people might be feeling) (see Chapter 7, individual interviews; see Appendix 9). This was discussed with each young person in the pilot, all of whom agreed with the assessment of themselves in each section. Therefore the conclusion was made that in these cases, the methodology for assessing empathy was accurate. It was noted, however, that there was a significant gender difference in the section 'responsive crying' with boys obtaining particularly low scores in this area. This would appear to be commensurate with issues surrounding masculinity and the ability of males to express emotion in the same way as females, discussed in the literature review (see Chapter 2: 33). It is also consistent with the slightly lower general score gained by boys as compared to girls in the testing of the ASUEIT with adolescents in Australia (Luebbbers et al., 2007).

Interview recording

Each interview was digitally recorded, where consent for this was obtained, or notes taken at the time of the interview and written up soon afterwards to reduce the risk of inaccuracies (Hyman et al., 2004: 89). This allowed direct quotes to be used, so the young people most directly involved in these behaviours could have a voice within the research (Eder & Fingerson 2003: 49).

Interviewees were informed about their right to complain and the appropriate procedure for this. After the interviews, brief feedback was given to help them process their experience, and draw benefits from it, including emphasising that their case-worker would not have access to the information they had shared. The safety of the participants was aided by the fact that I was an experienced youth justice worker, with a history of good engagement with young people and training in child protection, suggested as good practice (Kvale 1996: 117).

All information was anonymised, but formed the basis for individual case studies within the thesis. Care was taken to ensure that individuals were not identifiable through characteristics described, pertinent especially when considering a small population of young people, for example those in the care of the local authority. Care was also taken in the writing up of the thesis that conclusions were appropriate, given the limitations of the data, and potential problems were acknowledged in the discussion.

Analyses of further offending

The YOIS information system allowed analyses to be done on offending figures subsequent to the data-gathering period. Unfortunately, many of the questionnaires did not carry dates, so it was almost impossible to tailor the subsequent period of interest to the date of completion, so the year of 2010 was selected, as being after the questionnaires were completed, and offending analysed for that calendar year (see Chapter 6: 178). With the interview cohort, the dates of each interview were known, so their offending was looked at in the subsequent 12 months. However, it should be noted that some of the young people reached the age of 18 within this time period, which meant that any new offending would have gone to the Probation Service rather than the LYOS, so we would therefore not be informed. These data were used to identify whether EI levels had any predictive quality for different aspects of persistence or desistance.

Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods research

The research design outlined above was a pragmatic choice of mixed methods, based on the tools available and the data needed. This required the blending of two different types of data, quantitative (using the ASUEIT) and qualitative (through the semi-structured interviews). There has been much debate over choice of research methods, beginning with quantitative, moving towards qualitative, and culminating with different methods of mixing the two. This process of development is outlined next, to inform about the choice made for this thesis.

Quantitative research

Quantitative research was dominant in the post war period. It begins from the assumption that the phenomenon under observation exists, which is then measured using a tool, validated as measuring what it purports to measure (Dellinger & Leech, 2007: 319). It is therefore essentially data driven, looking to test theory through the research process

(deductive) (Morgan, 2007: 71). It also starts with the general, and moves to the specific, stating that the specific can be understood by the trends of the general (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004: 14).

Quantitative research can provide the researcher with numbers which they can use in a variety of statistical packages for analysis of patterns and correlations. To allow meaningful analysis a large amount of quantifiable data needs to be collected, arguably less detailed than qualitative data, but which can give researchers a broad overview in relation to a research question. Using numbers can help with generalising of results to, and comparisons with, different populations. It can be easier to identify trends, but this is sometimes at the cost of finer complexities within datasets. This broad sweep approach can gain very specific answers to research questions, and can be illustrated easily through figures and tables (Tashakkori & Teddlie 1998: 115).

There are pros and cons with this type of research. In its favour is that it is generally quick to administer, produces seemingly precise numerical data, often more readily accepted by people in authority who may be looking to form policy as a result. It allows for large numbers of participants to be studied, and it can be easier to study cause and effect, allowing for the control of other variables (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004: 19). However, categories and theories used may not reflect the experiences of participants because they were devised in advance of their consultation, phenomena may be missed because of the emphasis on testing for a specific hypothesis, and knowledge gained may be too general to be applied more specifically (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004: 19). Data tend to be hard, which may make them more reliable for generalising out to a wider population, but can result in a less detailed write-up of observations (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004: 14). It is more difficult to judge whether the scale used measures what it purports to measure, since there is little supplementary information through which conclusions can be confirmed (Oppenheim 2004: 97). Using a scale, like the Likert scale, where responses are numbered, requiring respondents to place themselves on that scale, brings in the possibility that respondents who do not understand the questions will have this masked by selecting a middle response (Cicourel 2004: 168). Some of these reservations were of concern with use of the ASUEIT in the research for this thesis, as outlined in Chapter 6, and was partially the reason for the use of mixed methods.

Qualitative research

Qualitative research gained popularity through the 1970s, as constructivists debunked what the positivists were doing as outdated. The constructivist researchers felt that as reality is multiply-constructed, it could not be measured by a one-dimensional tool, but needed to be more value based (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004: 14). This method takes into account that the researcher cannot be fully detached from the participants, so is by definition, subjective. The researcher uses the specific to move out to the general, with the result that writing tends to be much richer in character, and with softer data (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004: 14). Research begins with self created beliefs, which are moulded by the research process, as the construct is developed (inductive) (Dellinger & Leech, 2007: 319). The research is therefore much more theory driven, and specific, dwelling within the context from which the participants are taken (Morgan, 2007: 71).

There are advantages with this method, as data may be more meaningful, being based on the participants' own understanding and experience. It is a useful method for using with a small number of participants but in a very in-depth way, and is arguably the only way to describe and understand complex phenomena, usually the case when the subjects are people. Individuals can be examined in more detail, and cases compared with each other more easily, without ignoring participants' individual context, culture, and values. The study can be altered in response to changes observed during the research and theories developed through experience, allowing other avenues not previously anticipated to be explored (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004: 20). This approach can gain valuable data regarding the circumstances around the measured concept, potentially leaving the researcher more able to come to firm conclusions about observed correlations (de Vaus 1996: 11). This is especially important given the complex nature of the social world under observation (Silverman 2005: 10). Sense can also be made of atypical cases, as there are more data available than with quantitative techniques (Tashakkori & Teddlie 1998).

However, the results may not be generalisable, set as they are within an individual situation, although they can be used in a wider sense through the development of theory. There are difficulties in making predictions, with hypotheses being more difficult to test. The results may have lower credibility with those in authority and decision-making positions, being based on softer data. Data collection and analysis can be more time-consuming; the results will by definition contain much more researcher bias, as it is more subjective (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004: 20). The advantages of the rich data available through interviews, and difficulties, not least in the extraction of what is useful for the

hypotheses, points to a methodology combining a broad sweep of data from a larger sample, using the only tool available (the ASUEIT), with more in-depth conversations with young people about their own thoughts and feelings. However, mixing the two has also shown itself to be methodologically contentious.

Mixed methods research

There has been much discussion about what constitutes mixed methods research. The following definition is a useful starting point:

“Mixed methods research is the type of research in which a researcher or team of researchers combines elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches (e.g., use of qualitative and quantitative viewpoints, data collection, analysis, inference techniques) for the broad purposes of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration.”

(Johnson et al., 2007: 123)

If quantitative research is deductive, and qualitative research inductive, then mixed methods research could be said to be abductive, moving between the two back and forth, allowing theories to be shaped by the research process but also able to test hypotheses as they suggest themselves (Morgan, 2007: 71; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004: 17). The pragmatic basis on which it rests allows methods and research tools to be chosen as best fit for the research questions, as they arise, so not being limited only to one methodology (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004: 17).

Pragmatism as a philosophy claims the middle ground between dogmas, with the aim of finding workable solutions for research problems. There is a pluralism and a relativism which some may find difficult, for example that theories are true to the degree that they work, and that current truth can change. There may be ideas that are called truth today, which are found to be untrue tomorrow, thus making truth a relative and changeable concept. This may be said to cause unsatisfactory answers to questions, reducing their usefulness (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004: 18). However, one of the overwhelming claims of researchers working in this area is that research questions, rather than the metaphysical assumptions, are the important issue, playing a greater role in selection of research methods in a “needs-led” way (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004: 17-18; Morgan, 2007: 67). It was felt in the research for this thesis that a mixed methods approach would offer the best opportunity for answering the research questions.

There are different types of mixed research, sometimes a combination of qualitative and quantitative techniques within each stage of the research, and as a result much more intertwined. There could also be a qualitative stage followed by a quantitative stage (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004: 20). However, there could be combinations of these within what is actually undertaken, for example a within-stage mixed model design. Possibly the very fact that there are numerous combinations illustrates that research design is highly dependent on what is needed to address the question (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004: 20). Researchers may be put off by the fact that there is no one exemplar way of conducting mixed methods research, thereby causing them to lose confidence in its use (Bryman, 2007: 10), but in truth this offers a freedom of use without the constraints of methodology.

Researchers need to be mindful, however, not to be confused regarding the purposes of their chosen design. Answers need to be found to questions about what is going to be mixed (this has included two different types of qualitative tools in the past, for example), when this mixing is going to occur, and why it is going to be done (Johnson et al., 2007: 118-122). Reasons for mixing methods usually fall into one of several areas. It is useful for triangulation, which is the use of several data sources to study one phenomenon. Corroboration is then sought to add weight to the validity of the findings (Shepard et al., 2002: 336; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004: 19), although care must be taken not to assume that any corroboration is 'proof' of findings as 'fact' ('reflexive triangulation', Noaks & Wincup, 2004: 9-10). Using two different types of dataset can be complementary, examining both the similar and different aspects of both. Fresh perspectives can be gained, adding breadth and scope to the study in question, which was the thinking in the research design for this thesis. Alternatively, consecutive methods, when used, can show development over time, possibly better answering questions of causality (Shepard et al., 2002: 336). The use of the two methodologies together can help to determine whether observed correlations are real or spurious, vital for accurately addressing the research question in hand (de Vaus 1996: 290).

Methods can be mixed with different levels of dominance from the two extremes, with some studies being quantitatively dominant, looking to the qualitative to add richness to the data, or they can be qualitatively dominant, which would follow a more inductive path. The middle path offers equal importance to both sides. This needs to be decided and made explicit, along with the sequencing of the research, which can be concurrent or consecutive (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004: 19; Denscombe, 2008: 272). The use of a

mixed methods design in this study was pragmatic, and its execution was consecutive, but overlapping, in nature. It was begun with the quantitative ASUEIT questionnaire (to check the general trend, and answer questions regarding links between EI and offending), after which qualitative interviews took place with a proportion of the sample (to check the validity of the findings, and provide further understanding of the contexts in which the young people are situated). As the interview also had an empathy scale within it (quantitative), this made the design both mixed model and mixed method. The two methods had equal dominance, as the study was started with well-grounded theory (both of EI and of attachment), and hypotheses which were tested, but which had the potential to be moulded by the responses of the young people themselves in their interviews.

Many researchers using mixed methods have been unsure about the integration of their data at the analysis stage, with much confusion as to the best method for this (Bryman, 2007: 9). This may not necessarily be a problem if the intention never was to integrate at the analysis level, but could also lead to an under-use of the data collected. There are many reasons why researchers do not take the opportunity to integrate data at analysis. They may consider the audience to which they are writing, feeling conscious of a bias towards one method or another, or they may have their own methodological preferences. The structure of the study may make it difficult to use both, especially if one emerges as more dominant. Teams of researchers who use members with specialties on one side or the other may find that this split militates against integration, but the nature of the data may show one to be more useful than the other, thereby gaining priority. There may be ontological issues (the study of 'being' or existence), especially when one side clearly shows the phenomenon as existing, but the other is not so clear. There was potential for an ontological issue in this research, had the questionnaires clearly showed the EI phenomenon as important in offending patterns, but the young people themselves not appreciating this.

Mixed methods can be useful for studying underlying vulnerability, better representing marginalised people (Shepard et al., 2002: 335; Johnson et al., 2007: 123). Studies completed in such areas are keen to show how much more depth and understanding can be gained from using this type of approach. A study completed on families living with HIV/AIDS used a consecutive quantitative and qualitative model, with the quantitative being dominant. They used a scale to measure caregivers' burden, and from this selected a small number to interview in depth about their experiences. They found that gaining the caregivers' own perceptions was a valuable aspect of the context in which the quantitative

data set (Shepard et al., 2002: 338). Another study of child bereavement of a parent used a simultaneous mixed methods approach in which each dataset was treated with equal dominance. They used two scales to measure children's concept of death and their adaptation, and also an open-ended questionnaire. The researchers gained very specific information about the children's own experiences and perceptions, which they could not have obtained from merely asking the adults. The children responded with knowledge which the adults were not aware they knew, directly informing where support for these children should be targeted (Shepard et al., 2002: 341). This was an important factor for this present study, as vulnerable young people were asked for their own opinions and consequently given a voice in the research.

Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods research – the compatibility debate

For some time, the research world has had three different approaches available – quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods. This could be said to have emerged during the 1990s, but mixed methods were first used in sociological fieldwork during the early part of the twentieth century. It was somewhat overtaken by a “paradigm war”, which saw mixed methods subsumed firstly by positivists, favouring quantitative research methods (1950s to 1970s), and subsequently by constructivists, who favoured qualitative research methods (1970s to 1990s) (Denscombe 2008: 271).

Debate has continued as to whether paradigm gulfs rendered mixing qualitative and quantitative methods impossible, commonly referred to as the incompatibility thesis (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004: 14). This view emphasises differences between the two approaches, rather than gains from merging the two. Both approaches have some agreement, as they use empirical data to answer research questions, and have validity safeguards (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004: 15). However, the debate is rather more complex, depending on the viewpoint of the protagonists.

Researchers placing an emphasis on methods, focusing on developing strategies for data collection, analysis, and interpretation, are less likely to have philosophical difficulties with using a mixed methods approach. The paradigms (or shared beliefs among a group of people, or a world view (Morgan, 2007: 53)) become less important (Creswell & Tashakkori, 2007: 303). However this has also been a source of controversy among those who would say that mixed methods researchers have ignored important philosophical bases instrumental to the formation of research questions, and the nature of the reality being observed (Creswell & Tashakkori, 2007: 305).

Some researchers would see methods as being inextricably linked to philosophical assumptions (Creswell & Tashakkori, 2007: 304). They feel that seeing mixed methods as just being concerned with data collection and its use is missing the important precursor of the viewpoints sparking the research in the first place. Research questions themselves are drawn out of cultural, philosophical, and value-systems, creating potential difficulties for mixing methods, as different perspectives are surely incompatible (Creswell & Tashakkori, 2007: 305).

Another perspective often cited as showing the incompatibility of different epistemology, or research methodology, is the paradigm perspective (Creswell & Tashakkori, 2007: 305). If paradigms are world views, then surely they cannot be interchangeable, as to do so would mean to change one's whole rationale for thinking. As mentioned previously, the quantitative researchers were largely positivist in philosophy (although this title was awarded to them by the constructivists, who felt they had an outmoded way of thinking (Morgan, 2007: 56)) The positivists used quantitative techniques to test previously written theory, whereas the constructivists argued that theory should be constructed through the research process, and championed qualitative techniques as the favoured method through which this could be accomplished (Dellinger & Leech, 2007: 319).

The philosophical basis for a mixed methods approach has often been pragmatism, which considers using what works and is appropriate to the research question. (Morgan, 2007: 67). This approach could be said to de-accentuate the importance of the philosophical stance as a first approach. However, this is criticised by those asking how research questions are decided upon, which are not in themselves important, only becoming so as a function of the philosophical and value base of the researcher looking to frame the question (Morgan, 2007: 68). Choosing a pragmatic philosophical base, although it negates the philosophical argument for some, has raised further questions for others who stress that pragmatism is a philosophy in itself, with beliefs and values, and therefore holds true with the incompatibility thesis that paradigms cannot be mixed (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004: 19). Researchers aligning themselves with this philosophical base should decide whether they can cope with the pragmatic definition of truth being changeable (what is true today may not be true tomorrow), and also the belief that something can be useful but false (Miller & Fredericks, 2006).

Traditional clashes between qualitative and quantitative techniques have largely been subsumed now by an acceptance that the best research method is the one which fits the research question (Tashakkori & Teddlie 1998: 21). This led to an increase in the

popularity of mixed methodology incorporating both qualitative and quantitative elements. In the complex world of human society, a mixed methods approach can provide valuable triangulation allowing better understanding of reality (Tashakkori & Teddlie 1998: 42). The sample in this research for the whole questionnaire was a probability cluster sampling, with the interviews coming both from purposive case selection (for example, young people looked after by the local authority), and outlier sampling (the top and bottom deciles on the EI scale). This mix of sampling has been identified as a defining characteristic of mixed methods research (Teddlie & Yu, 2007: 77 & 85). Similar research designs have been used with young people in other projects, recognising the value of combining quantitative and qualitative especially when considering the complex world inhabited by young people (Booth & Sheehan, 2008: 726 & 729). Data arising from the two methods were treated separately as answering different aspects of the research question, with a triangulation element to help address the effectiveness of the ASUEIT.

Access

Access to the LYOS for these research processes to be completed, and to YOIS, was negotiated with the Director and Assistant Director of the service, and an agreement was signed by me, Leeds University, and LYOS (see Appendix 10). This agreement briefly outlined the purpose of the research, how the sample would be selected, and the type of research tools to be used. It identified what other information would be accessed, and described how this would be stored and used in order to guarantee the protection of each young person. In return for this I provided training for LYOS staff, which included an exposition on the facets of EI, and some exercises designed to help young people develop associated skills. The LYOS added support to the research by making use of the questionnaire by workers with young people a mandatory part of Supervision Orders for the duration of the data-gathering, which was in practice approximately a two year period from April 2008, in order to maximise staff co-operation. This did not affect the rights of the young people to choose not to take part, as consent also had to be obtained for the data to go into the analysis. Young people did not suffer any repercussions if they refused to complete the questionnaire for any reason, but very few took this option, most seeming to be content with their inclusion.

LYOS data

The negotiated use of data from YOIS allowed for further examination of the young people taking part, according to information held on this database. Information held in this way is fairly exhaustive, consisting as it does of factual information, like ethnic background, religion, education history, and care history (used to build the sample set for the young people looked after by the local authority), to the somewhat more subjective results of interviews with young people detailing a range of issues, like how well they get on with family, how motivated they are to address their offending, and what they admit their substance use to be. However, the YOIS database was not designed primarily to inform this type of research, although it has had great use in this. Its purpose is to help inform those who are putting together a relevant intervention for each young person, and aimed at communicating information for this end. Subjective judgments of colleagues in that context are less of an issue, as potential risks are flagged up for further investigation. Therefore this has to be recognised in using the database for research (Scott, 1990: 84).

These data were used to create a more rounded picture of each young person in the sample, providing vital information on differences in EI, and why this might be the case for each individual. Data held on YOIS about their offences and offence gravity were compared with their EI score to examine links. They were also used to create the sample groups for interview, and then used in more detail to flesh out those young people who were interviewed, allowing their use for individual case-studies.

YOIS data, detailed in Chapter 5, fell into two categories: ASSET data on the sample group, inputted by practitioners from their assessments of young people, and other data through court processes and characteristics of young people in the system. The figures used in Chapter 5 incorporated all young people on any intervention within the first 12 months of the data-gathering period (subsequently called 'the period'), namely from April 2008 to the end of March 2009. Some data used were collated by LYOS IT staff through processes to which they have access, but general staff do not. This was limited by the type of processes the computer software allowed, which sometimes caused unavoidable gaps in data available.

ASSET data as recorded on YOIS provide important insights into the details of young people's lives. ASSET has found reasonable levels of accuracy when relating scoring to reoffending levels, as Figure 4.1 shows, with higher scores showing a higher reconviction rate.

Table 4.1: Percentage reconvicted within 12 months by current ASSET score bands (from 'ASSET', Baker et al., 2003)

Score band	No. of cases	Percentage reconvicted
0-4 (low)	203	26.6%
5-9 (Low-Medium)	204	33.8%
10-16 (Medium)	238	49.2%
17-24 (Medium-High)	209	64.6%
25-48 (High)	227	75.8%
All cases	1,081	50.6%

The YOIS database is a very detailed source of information, requiring only pertinent information to be sifted from it, otherwise the plethora of information would have become too complicated to process, possibly drawing in extraneous information which would detract clarity from the process (de Vaus 1996: 22). It was decided what information specifically needed to be gathered by the designing of a form (see Appendix 11).

Table 4.2 Information gathered from YOIS

Information gathered from YOIS
Ethnicity
Gender
Whether they had a Schedule One offence (against minors)
Age at first conviction
Looked-After status (and the specifics of how they were accommodated if relevant)
Whether they had ever been permanently excluded from school
Special Educational Needs
Whether they had ever been in custody
Whether they had ever received ISSP (Intensive Supervision and Surveillance)
Whether they had Prolific Young Offender (PYO) status
How many and the details and gravity (between one and eight, with eight being the most serious) of any previous convictions
Current offence and gravity
Whether the Anti-Social Behaviour Unit (ASBU) had any involvement and to what level
Individual scores on the assessment tool (ASSET) and subsequent supporting evidence

This narrowed down the information requirements to specific important areas. Information found to be important in the onset of offending was taken, as detailed in Table 4.2 above.

The last section included information on twelve areas identified by the YJB as risk factors for offending, and covered the following areas:

Table 4.3 Areas identified by the YJB as risk factors for offending

Areas identified by the YJB as risk factors for offending	
Living arrangements	Physical health
Family and personal relationships	Emotional and mental health
Education (or training/employment)	Perception of self and others
Neighbourhood	Thinking and behaviour
Lifestyle	Attitudes to offending
Substance use	Motivation to change

Information was taken regarding whether they had a risk of serious harm assessment completed (required when certain trigger offences have been committed, like assault, or burglary of a dwelling, which in itself makes completion of this assessment a less subjective process), what level was given (low, medium, high, very high), and whether a risk of vulnerability assessment was completed, and the level given (low, medium, high, very high). These levels give an indication of the risk they are perceived to be to others in the community (risk) or themselves (vulnerability). Risk of Serious Harm (ROSH) assessments are much more widely used now, after a detailed training programme. The same cannot be said for risk of vulnerability assessments, which have no such triggers, and are completed at the discretion of individual workers (with some line-management oversight).

Information gathering for demographic and other data was simple, having decided what information was needed. It was decided to record all information already suggested by research to be risk factors for offending. For example, it is known that those who have been permanently excluded from school have a higher incidence of offending than those who have not, so it was an important statistic to record (Graham & Bowling, 1995: 42). It has also been found to be significant if young people have ended up in local authority care (Melrose et al., 2000: 12-13), but is it significant what type of care they have received? It was noted from YOIS whether young people were in a residential home or with a foster carer to see whether this had an impact. As well as being significant for offending, however, living arrangements and family relationships could also be significant for the

development of EI, illustrating complications around the effects of any one risk factor. It may be that young people with a combination of being in local authority care and a poor EI are more likely to be drawn into crime than those in local authority care alone.

The quality of the information on YOIS can only be as good as the person who inputted it, with plenty of scope for debatable judgments about risk, dearth of supporting evidence, out of date assessments that have not been updated, and erroneous information. Some data were more reliable than others, for example, the record of offences and their gravity was very reliable, and inputted through the team working at court, whereas whether they have been permanently excluded depended on whether the worker concerned had asked that question, and whether this had been verified by the relevant school. Sometimes that information was simply missing.

Information regarding other important risk factors, like whether they had offending friends, depended on the quality of the interview conducted at the assessment stage, and whether the worker backed up their score in the relevant section of the assessment with evidence. Some assessments were very detailed and well executed, whereas others were scantily written with little evidence supporting the score given for each section. The scores given in each section range from nil to four, depending on how criminogenically important the assessor feels the information to be. However, this is very subjective, requiring judgment. Training on ASSET writing has shown some variation in the type of scores different workers give, even with the same information (Baker et al., 2005: 54). Judgment is meant to be made on criminogenic importance, that is, linked to offending. This does not take into account whether something might be significant for their life or development. Having said that, because most people would agree that it is significant to record whether someone smokes cannabis or not, it was likely to be recorded even if it was not felt to be significant for their offending. There may, however, be needs not deemed criminologically important and therefore left out entirely. This also highlights difficulties with personal judgment, as some people may not see any significance in a young person drinking alcohol, judging the section to be scored nil, whereas someone else with a different set of beliefs might score the same young person higher for the same consumption level.

One aspect of ASSET which has created inaccuracy and out of date assessments in the past has been the ability of workers to duplicate one ASSET to the next order, without reviewing any of the information. In the LYOS, this led to many assessments simply being copied again and again, without amendments being made. This has been addressed more

recently by management, but could still be a factor in the accuracy of some assessments. It is unknown how much this practice has been more widely spread than just LYOS.

The YOIS database allowed for post-questionnaire and interview data on further offending to be gathered, to see whether any of the factors under examination were correlated with desistance, or with continuance (and the severity) of further offending. For this purpose, data were gathered on offences committed by the sample in the period January to December 2010. These were inputted onto SPSS to look for significant correlations in the same way as the other data. Information on further offending of the interview cohort was gathered when the interviews had been completed, looking at their offending in the subsequent 12 months, to compare desistance or persistence with interview responses. Offences were included if they were listed for court during the periods described and a guilty plea or conviction recorded.

Ethical considerations

This research was planned with due regard for the ethics codes devised and used by the British Psychological Society. This was to maintain the rights of participants in the research, responsibilities towards them, and their welfare. It was designed for the advancement of criminological research, thereby hopefully providing a means to improve the service young people can expect from Youth Offending Teams.

The research plan allowed individualities arising from a variety of demographic and other elements to be taken into consideration, like culture, age, and gender. Informed consent was gained for all participants whose data entered the dataset. The issue of whether young people under the age of 16 were able to give their own consent was discussed with LYOS management, who decided that since the processes of the research were within the bounds of what they could be expected to do on a court order (for example, discussing their offence and completing assessments), all the young people would be able to give their own consent for inclusion. The consent form was agreed with the LYOS management as giving sufficient information for informed consent to be possible (see below for a fuller discussion around consent). All information was kept safely both during and after the data-gathering, and other staff involved made aware of the need for confidentiality in information they obtained for the study (Kvale 1996: 114).

It was expected that workers would return all questionnaires, with the young person's signed consent (if obtained) (see Appendix 3) sealed in envelopes (given to the young

people to seal at the appointment) through the internal mail to me, ensuring that no-one else had access to the information containing identifying information, including their caseworker. Only responses with accompanying consent were entered into the dataset, the rest shredded as confidential waste. Responses used in the study were stored so that no-one else had access to them. They were immediately anonymised upon receipt, the only identifier being their YOIS ID number, not transferable by anyone without YOIS access into individual identities (de Vaus 1996: 337).

Activities used for data-gathering were designed to ensure that they safeguarded the participants' mental and physical health, and did not compromise their personal values or dignity. Should any distress be felt, steps were taken to help them through this or to signpost on to other agencies as appropriate. Nothing happened that the participants could not have reasonably expected during their standard intervention work.

As stated earlier, I am a member of staff on the LYOS, which threw up issues concerning how this affected the research process. No one within my caseload (past or present) was interviewed, ensuring more uniformity of approach. In relation to a member of staff, young people may have felt less able to refuse to co-operate with the process, as there is a clear power imbalance. However, this did not appear to be the case in practice, with some refusals, but most appearing happy to take part.

Consent

It was agreed by the Director of LYOS that consent could be given by the young people themselves, as no individual young people were identified in the study, all data being anonymised for the purposes of the thesis (de Vaus 1996: 336). For this to be informed, a statement of consent was read out to each young person before commencement of the ASUEIT, detailing what the study was about, how their information was going to be used, who would have access to it, and who the researcher was (they knew that the researcher was a LYOS practitioner) (de Vaus 1996: 334) (see Appendix 3). They were made aware that they could withdraw consent at any point, and that their information would be removed from the study as a consequence, should they wish. They had to acknowledge that they understood this information before signing, which was piloted previously with young people on Referral Orders, to check for clarity. The pilot was checked to ensure the consent form made it clear they were not under any obligation to sign for their information to be used.

For the interviews, informed consent was needed again, similar to the ASUEIT consent, but also including whether the young people agreed to the interview being recorded for later transcription, or preferred notes to be taken, and that they understood their right to specify any information they wish to be excluded from potential analysis during the interview (see Appendix 8) (Mason 1996: 57). It explicitly laid out the boundaries of the promised confidentiality, ensuring they understood that this (in line with normal LYOS practices) was limited should they talk about issues which were likely to cause themselves or others harm. In these instances, it was also made explicit where that information would go, and to whom. This also applied should interviewees talk about criminal matters not already dealt with by the police, although they were advised not to talk about such matters (Noaks & Wincup 2004: 87). The interview questions only referred to crimes already resulting in conviction, ensuring that no interviewee felt obliged to talk about other unresolved matters.

Each potential interviewee's caseworker went through the consent form with them, and passed completed forms to me. The interview was treated as a statutory contact for that young person with the LYOS, but did not detract from their right to refuse to answer any questions, stop recording at any point, or decline to take part in the interview at all in the event. Their choice to take any of these actions was made explicit at the beginning of each interview, when the consent agreement was reiterated, and they were made aware of how their information was going to be stored and used. This ensured mitigation of any pressure brought to bear on the young person by their caseworker to take part. A discussion was held with the deputy director of LYOS concerning whether consent should be sought from parents of interview participants. Having seen the interview structure, she decided that because the issues under discussion all came within what could be normally expected on a Supervision Order, for which the LYOS already had parental consent, consent need only be applied for from the young people themselves, who were free to refuse to take part without penalty.

Interpreter services were available, but not needed in practice. All interviews took place at appropriate locations to ensure privacy, ease of access for the young people (for example, near their home), and my safety by the presence of room alarms and security (as this was one to one), and consultation with YOIS, where information on the risks posed by young people is carefully recorded.

Expert interview with the LYOS Speech and Language Therapist (Therapist)

LYOS is fortunate, but fairly unusual, to have the services of a Therapist. She was initially with the LYOS to conduct a study into the speech and language capacity (both in use and understanding) of young people on ISSP during 2008 to identify whether there was any notable difference between this cohort and the general population, which would then have implications for future interventions. She also looked into how well young people understood emotional vocabulary, and for this reason was interviewed in this research for her views on the questionnaire, and the importance of speech and language skills to young people in their understanding and expression of emotions, and also the links with offending. It was felt that this would add depth to the research, and tap into the findings of the research project already undertaken.

Previous research had suggested that speech and language difficulties were a significant and undetected factor for young people who offend (Gregory & Bryan, 2009: 6). This project found that 78 per cent of the boys assessed were in need of Therapist treatment, but only 12 per cent of the girls (although girls only made up 15.5 per cent of the whole cohort). This equates to a total of 65 per cent of the whole cohort being assessed as in need of some Therapist input due to deficiencies in speech and language. These difficulties were largely undetected, since only eight per cent were under local Speech and Language services. Twenty per cent were identified as being 'severely delayed' in their speech and language skills, with six per cent being assessed as 'very severely delayed'. This has obvious implications for success in education and employment, where the ability to effectively communicate is vital. It also has implications for young people's ability to express how they feel. Improvements made through Therapist interventions in the ISSP cohort demonstrate this, as one ISSP worker commented:

"Previously he would become very upset, angry and would shout and become verbally abusive when he did not like something. Over time he has learnt how to stay calm, express what he is not happy about and have a discussion. Great improvement."

(Gregory & Bryan, 2009: 51)

The Therapist's comments about the ASUEIT are detailed in Chapter 6.

Data analysis

The qualitative and quantitative data in this thesis were used in different ways, with statistical analyses on data from the ASUEIT being processed using the SPSS package taking the form of a bivariate analysis, examining the degree of correlation between offending levels (both frequency and seriousness) and EI level (as depicted by the ASUEIT score). Chi squared calculations were completed with ordinal and nominal data (where the groups were large enough for validity), and Spearman's rho correlations were calculated for scale and ordinal data, as the EI data were nonparametric (after correcting for question reversal error, see Chapter 6: 148). Multivariate analysis could have been appropriate to discover more in-depth significant connections between other variables, but in this instance, as the whole sample size was only 100, it would have led to very small cell sizes, reducing the significance of links found. Training was undertaken in this area to develop further my abilities in using SPSS. Advice was also sought from supervisors regarding the most effective analytical tools to be used from within the package. The empathy and EI scores were compared using bivariate analysis to determine the significance of any relationship, with expected scores of between 0 and 1, as the correlation should be positive (de Vaus 1996: 171). However, there were very few empathy questionnaires to analyse, so results of this should be viewed with caution.

Use of NVivo for analyses of the interviews was considered. This is a popular software package specifically designed to process unstructured data, but not thought necessary in this instance, as it was more important to look at what the young people were saying as a whole, than reduce their words to coding or key words. NVivo would have been useful had this research been conducted by a team, had more than one type of unstructured data, or had the sample of interviews been larger. However, since there were only 13 interviews, the analysis of these could be achieved manually. Trends were sought, with several themes arising as a result. Responses were compared with the questionnaire results to see whether their score in the ASUEIT was commensurate with what they were able to communicate. Their responses were also used to see whether EI could be assessed using more of an interview technique, with a different hierarchy of EI abilities identified as a result. In this way, interviews could be used to assess how well the ASUEIT measured EI ability, and how this compared with their empathy scores, from that questionnaire.

Summary and conclusion

This chapter set out the chosen methodology for the research for this thesis, identifying the reasons for the choices made both in design and research tools. The research followed a mixed methods model, incorporating a quantitative questionnaire, the ASUEIT, and qualitative interviews. The ASUEIT was used as the only available tool for young people following the chosen model of EI (see Chapter 2 for more details about this), but backed up by qualitative interviews with a selection of young people from the ASUEIT sample. The reasons for this choice were to mitigate some of the disadvantages of the questionnaire (and of quantitative research generally), check for validity, and to incorporate rich data from young people themselves, more likely to provide insights into their thinking and reasoning around their offending. It also provided an opportunity to verify some of the abilities model of EI, by asking young people specific questions about their understanding of their own and others' emotions. Reasoning around desistance and persistence were more effectively explored through asking the young people themselves, which also gave an opportunity for the voices of young people to be heard, sometimes missing from youth justice research (Case, 2007:100).

Other sources of data were incorporated into this thesis, including the Therapist interview, and most importantly, the use of YOIS. The next chapter details information taken from YOIS detailing the sample in this thesis, and the impact these factors had on the effectiveness of the chosen research tools.

Chapter 5: Sample description

So far, the key themes within both the emotional intelligence (EI) and the Youth Justice System (YJS) have been explored, with a subsequent discussion about the research design for this thesis. This chapter puts the sample used in this research in the context of the wider Leeds Youth Offending Service (LYOS), showing how representative they were of the whole. It also demonstrates the ways in which this sample, and Leeds as a city, has individual characteristics, showing the need for care in any wider generalising of the results.

In order to describe the characteristics of these samples, and compare these with the wider LYOS, data from two main sources were used: the Youth Offending Information System (YOIS), and data from use of the ASUEIT questionnaire, devised specifically for adolescents.

YOIS data

Two elements of ASSET were used to determine the characteristics of this sample, in comparison with the whole LYOS: scores given by practitioners in the twelve sections which comprise ASSET (see Table 4.3 in Chapter 4: 115) (and the total of all scores), including their risk and vulnerability ratings, and qualitative comments recorded to describe issues pertinent to the young people's lives.

ASSET scoring is based entirely on criminogenic need (factors thought to increase a young person's risk of reoffending), so there may be significant issues for young not reflected by the scoring because they are not deemed to have influenced their offending behaviour. In ASSET these are usually evidenced in a free text box below, as they may be indicative of vulnerability. These issues have been highlighted in the qualitative data analyses (See Chapter 7).

December 2009 saw the introduction of the Scaled Approach which, among other changes, replaced Supervision Orders with the Youth Rehabilitation Order (YJB, 2010). This changed ASSET scoring so that each young person now also carries a score for static factors, which is added to the usual dynamic factors to make a composite score, giving a new maximum of 64 (YJB, 2009). However, young people in the sample group were all subject to Supervision Orders imposed before the introduction of the Scaled Approach, so the previous scoring system was used for these analyses.

Each section in ASSET is scored out of four, with nil being not associated (or no problem), and four being highly associated (or a serious problem) with their offending (criminogenic need), giving a total ASSET score potential of 48.

Figure 5.1: Total ASSET scores of young people in the sample

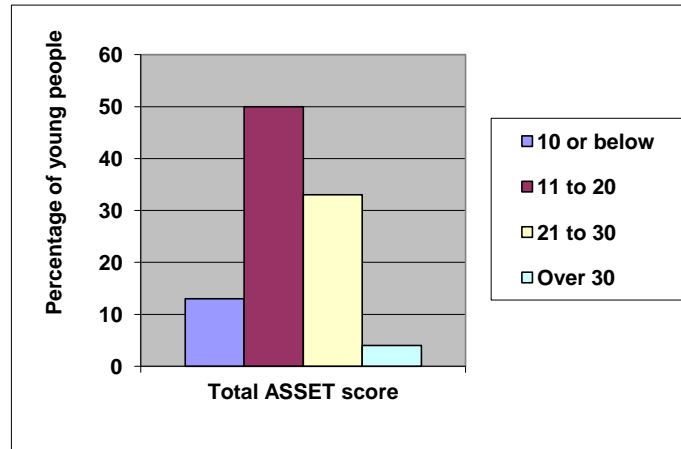


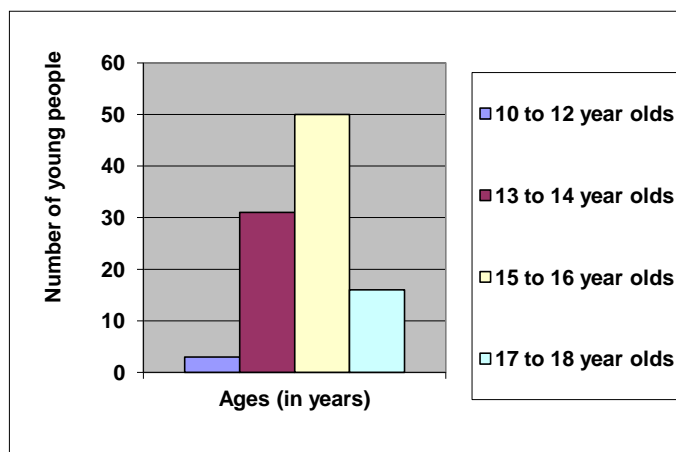
Figure 5.1 shows the frequencies of ASSET scores across the sample. The mean ASSET score was 17.8 (with a standard deviation of 6.5). This compares to the wider LYOS figures of 13.5 (first ASSET completed during the period) (with a standard deviation of 7.6). However the wider figures included other orders, like the lower tariff Referral and Reparation Orders, and Final Warnings (a pre-court disposal). Therefore it would be logical for the overall mean score to be lower than the mean of those who received Supervision Orders, who were likely to have spent longer in the YJS or to have committed more serious offences.

Socio-demographic data

The sample completing the ASUEIT questionnaire was three quarters male, and a quarter female. This compares to LYOS data for all young people involved with the organisation which was just under 70 per cent male. This reflects the over-representation of boys within the YJS (see Chapter 3: 60).

The possible age range was 10 to 18 (defined as young people with criminal responsibility), with actual ages ranging from 11 to 18. The mean age was 15 years (with a standard deviation of 1.4), exactly the same as for the wider LYOS.

Figure 5.2: Frequency of ages in the sample



The ethnicity of the sample was 90 per cent white, three per cent black, six per cent mixed-race, and one per cent Asian. LYOS data show ethnicity to be broadly similar, with a slightly higher representation of white young people.

Young people in local authority care (Looked After) have been identified as being at higher risk of offending than other young people, and LYOS was criticised by a previous inspection report (Joint Inspection of Youth Offending Teams of England and Wales, 2008: 25) as having an excessively high representation of young people within this category. In this sample, 14 per cent were identified as currently being Looked After. This compares to the wider LYOS figure of six per cent. This discrepancy could be because Looked After young people may be more likely to stay within the YJS, moving up the tariff to Supervision Orders. This higher level of criminalisation of Looked After young people is of concern, which was why it was highlighted in the inspection report. Reasons for it are unclear, but it could be that they are more likely to be reported to the police for offences committed at home (in a local authority children's home) than those living with relatives. A protocol was agreed in Leeds between the LYOS and the local authority to minimise reporting of such offences as criminal damage in the home by use of restorative justice activities like direct repairing of damage caused. However, reasons for higher levels of criminality in this group run much deeper, with the potential for significant attachment difficulties, and associated difficulties (which also includes EI, see Chapter 2: 29), all of which makes this group an interesting one for further investigation.

Looking at the individual sections of ASSET, 'living arrangements' is the first section to be scored, and is detailed in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: ASSET scoring for Living Arrangements

ASSET score	0	1	2	3	4	Mean score
Young people in the sample with this score	29	28	36	5	2	1

Analysis of the qualitative data inputted by workers indicated that nearly half of the sample experienced disrupted living arrangements of some description. This included situations where the young person had been moved around within care provision, had been made to leave by a parent or carer, or had simply moved around with their family. However, the scoring tended to reflect current living arrangements rather than any historic disruption, also likely to have had a significant effect on the young people affected by lack of stability in this area. This has also been found through research particularly in the area of young people's accommodation needs (Arnall et al., 2007: 26). There were no whole LYOS data available for the individual ASSET areas.

'Family and personal relationships' are assessed in ASSET, the results of which are detailed in Table 5.2

Table 5.2: ASSET scoring for Family and Personal Relationships

ASSET score	0	1	2	3	4	Mean score
Young people in the sample with this score	11	28	37	17	7	2

The qualitative data showed that over half of the sample had significant contact difficulties with at least one parent, usually meaning very little or no contact, identified in the Cambridge Study to be significant for offending (Farrington, 1977: 388-389; see Chapter 3: 67). Reasons for this included death, incarceration, abuse victims who are not allowed access, and loss of contact for other reasons such as the parent moving away. There were 28 per cent of children reported by their resident parent as having no contact with their non-resident parent (Lader, 2008). This demonstrated a much higher level of contact difficulties in this sample group than in the general population (this general population being defined as children under 16 years, which is younger than the sample, but the same survey found no correlation between contact levels and the age of the child (Lader, 2008)).

In the sample, over one-third were described as having family involved with offending, and nearly one-seventh were noted as having current or previous domestic violence in their family. Nearly one-fifth of the sample had parents with mental health or addiction issues. Of great concern is that over one fifth were commented on as having experienced very significant bereavement, such as the death of a sibling or a parent. This was sometimes through violent means or suicide, both of which placed the young people concerned in an extremely vulnerable position.

The ‘neighbourhood’ section of ASSET requires the practitioner to consider whether the neighbourhood in which the young person resides has a criminogenic link. This was scored as detailed in Table 5.3, which shows that this was skewed towards the lower end of scoring, indicating that not many workers assessed this as being a significant criminogenic factor. However, this may be underplaying community factors, which have been identified as representing a whole domain of risk factors (see Chapter 3: 69), possibly revealing a need for training in this area. This was reflected in the research conducted about ASSET by the YJB, in which the ‘neighbourhood’ section was rated by practitioners as the least helpful (Baker et al., 2003: 16). This could mirror a general lack of appreciation for the importance of structural factors in young people’s environment, where risk factors have centred more on the individuals and their families than the effects of the locale (McVie & Norris, 2006: 7, see Chapter 3: 79 for a fuller discussion of structural determinates of desistance).

Table 5.3: ASSET scoring for Neighbourhood

ASSET score	0	1	2	3	4	Mean score
Young people in the sample with this score	40	29	26	5	0	1

The ‘lifestyle’ section is designed to assess how young people use their spare time, whether they have any friends who offend, or leisure activities, which put them at risk.

Table 5.4: ASSET scoring for Lifestyle

ASSET score	0	1	2	3	4	Mean score
Young people in the sample with this score	4	26	36	29	5	2

It can be seen from Table 5.4 that lifestyle was often judged as being a significant criminogenic need. 40 per cent of the sample was described as having offending peers, a significant risk factor for offending (see Chapter 3: 63). Fewer than one in ten young people were identified in the free text evidence box as having significant issues with peer pressure. However, there is also a tick box to be checked either 'yes' or 'no', concerning whether peer pressure is an issue, and 63 per cent of the cohort were positively highlighted. So this discrepancy was possibly a result of poorly written ASSETs simply not commenting on peer pressure, rather than absence of concern. Eight per cent of the sample was identified as being parents themselves, above the figure for Leeds as a whole (five per cent at 2006, Children Leeds, 2008: 5, itself higher than the national level).

The 'perception of self and others' section requires the worker to assess how the young person views themselves and other people with whom they come into contact. This includes aspects like whether the young person has discriminatory views of others, feels discriminated against, or how high their level of self esteem appears to be. This was assessed for the sample as detailed in Table 5.5. With a mean score of 1, it would seem that workers did not perceive much of a problem in this area, but it could also be that questions of prejudice are difficult to ask about, or possibly less likely to be answered honestly, encouraging socially desirable answers. The structure of an ASSET interview may cause difficulties in this area, as there are no lists of questions to ask, depending instead on the creativity of the worker in asking questions to prompt a conversation covering these issues. This section is perhaps more nebulous than others, which workers may find more difficult to assess.

Table 5.5: ASSET scoring for Perception of Self and Others

ASSET score	0	1	2	3	4	Mean score
Young people in the sample with this score	21	41	27	9	2	1

Young people tended to score fairly high on the 'thinking and behaviour', compared with many of the others. The assessments for this are shown in Table 5.6.

Table 5.6: ASSET scoring for Thinking and Behaviour

ASSET score	0	1	2	3	4	Mean score
Young people in the sample with this score	3	22	38	29	8	2

This is closely linked with anger management, as 40 per cent of the sample was specifically mentioned in the qualitative data as displaying significant difficulties in this area. Those registering some difficulty with managing anger amounted to 64 per cent of the sample, as evidenced by the checking of a tick box. Anger management is an important element of managing all emotions, and the high incidence of the young people in this sample having at least some issues with their anger demonstrates some kind of link between young people who offend and ‘emotional management and control’ (one of the four key areas of EI according to The Mayer and Salovey four branch model on which this research is based (Mayer & Salovey, 1997), see Chapter 2: 18). Impulsivity is an area highlighted in the literature review as a significant risk factor for offending (see Chapter 3: 63). In YOIS, apart from specific comments about this area, this is evidenced by the checking of a tick box. In this sample, 73 per cent were identified in this way as impulsive.

Health

‘Substance use’ (use of legal drugs, like alcohol and cigarettes, and illegal drugs, like cannabis) featured strongly in many of the ASSET evidence boxes, with scores reflecting this concern, as detailed in Table 5.7.

Table 5.7: ASSET scoring for Substance Use

ASSET score	0	1	2	3	4	Mean score
Young people in the sample with this score	30	30	24	12	4	1

These figures may not include young people for whom substance use was an issue but not a criminogenic need. This is better reflected in the qualitative data which showed 42 per cent to have problematic cannabis use (in terms of both amount consumed and frequency), and 35 per cent to have problematic alcohol use (including binge drinking, dependency, and behaviour implications). The importance placed on this aspect of young people’s lives is demonstrated in the LYOS by the inclusion of substance use workers as

part of the multi-agency teams. Research has backed up links between drug use and criminal behaviour (Bennett et al., 2008: 117), and alcohol use with offending (Collins, 2003: 174), so an effective practice approach necessarily includes substance use work.

'Physical health' is another ASSET area, often scored very low, as the following scores in Table 5.8 for the sample demonstrate.

Table 5.8: ASSET scoring for Physical Health

ASSET score	0	1	2	3	4	Mean score
Young people in the sample with this score	82	13	5	0	0	0

This would not appear to include consideration of such health needs as ADHD or autistic spectrum disorders, which could be seen, along with other behaviourally-affective disorders, as being a physical health issue. However, ASSET writers have mainly viewed these as fitting the 'emotional and mental health' section. Sexual behaviour could also fit this section, but tends to be reported more in the 'lifestyle' category. This highlights one of the potential difficulties with ASSET, as different workers will not perceive the sections similarly, making comparisons between them difficult.

'Emotional and mental health' was scored, not surprisingly, as significantly linked with offending in a large number of the sample ASSETs. The scores for this section are detailed in Table 5.9.

Table 5.9: ASSET scoring for Emotional and Mental Health

ASSET score	0	1	2	3	4	Mean score
Young people in the sample with this score	18	38	33	8	3	1

Behind these scores lies more detailed evidence in the qualitative data. Eight per cent were recorded as having either attempted or thought about committing suicide, and nine per cent were also recorded as having self harmed (these were not necessarily the same cases). However, considering the way ASSETs are formulated - in part through an interview which may be the first contact a worker has had with a young person, and if

under 16 years old, with a parent or other appropriate adult, there may have been some under reporting of this type of information.

It may be of significance at this point to mention that in this sample, nearly one fifth were described as having experienced some form of abuse (defined as one or more of neglect, emotional, physical, or sexual abuse). This is likely to have caused significant emotional difficulties for the young people involved, which may or may not have been criminogenically linked. This figure could include some false negatives for similar reasons as for suicide and self-harm.

A typical participant in this research was therefore a white male aged 15 years, who may have experienced disrupted living arrangements, who is likely to have had contact difficulties with one of his parents. He is likely to have succumbed easily to the influence of his friends, who may well be offenders themselves. He will have displayed anger management difficulties, and tended to react with impulsivity. He was of good physical health, but may have used alcohol and cannabis in a manner, both in volume consumed and frequency, which could be seen as problematic.

Offence-related data

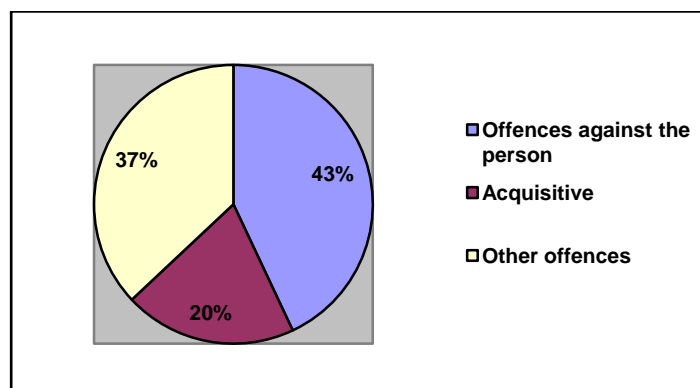
The whole LYOS data included all interventions open during the period (totalling 2957 interventions for 1897 individuals, as some young people will have had more than one order during the period), a breakdown of which is detailed in Table 5.10. This shows that 46 per cent of orders within the period were either Final Warnings or Referral Orders, much lower level interventions than subsequent ones, incorporating many very minor offences of young people who never re-offended. The sample group, being all Supervision Orders, were likely to have had a more problematic profile than these in terms of the risk factors discussed in Chapter 3, which should be remembered in the comparisons of the sample to the whole LYOS. However, these wider figures also included 19 per cent custody or Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programme (ISSP) related interventions (not including ISSP as a bail condition), a much higher tariff than Supervision Orders, with ISSP designed to give the court a robust alternative to custody.

Table 5.10: All interventions given in LYOS during the period

Intervention	Number	% (approx)
Final Warning Programme	697	24
Referral Order	667	23
Supervision Programme	609	21
Detention and Training Order (DTO)/Custody Programme	231	8
DTO Post Custody/Licence Programme (excluding ISSP)	189	6
Probation Orders (eg Community Rehabilitation Orders)	164	6
Action Plan Programme	113	4
ISSP (including bail ISSP)	99	3
Reparation Programme	99	3
Attendance Centre Order	61	2
Other Orders	28	1
Total	2957	101

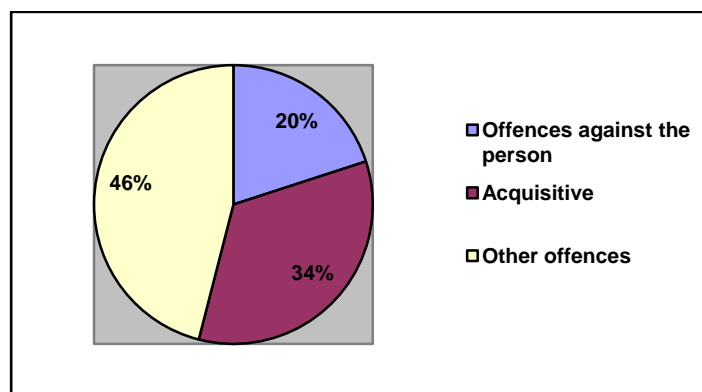
The offence types, which reflected the main offence committed per conviction, included in the sample were categorised into acquisitive (offences like burglary and theft), those against the person (offences like robbery and assault), and other (offences not fitting into the other two categories, like cannabis possession or breach of statutory order). The breakdown of offence types within this sample is detailed in Figure 5.3.

Figure 5.3: Offences by type within the sample



It is worth noting that breach of statutory order comprised 39 per cent of all offences in the 'other' category (and 14 per cent of all offences), possibly reflecting the LYOS re-criminalising the young people on orders. Offence types within the whole LYOS cohort broke down as in Figure 5.4.

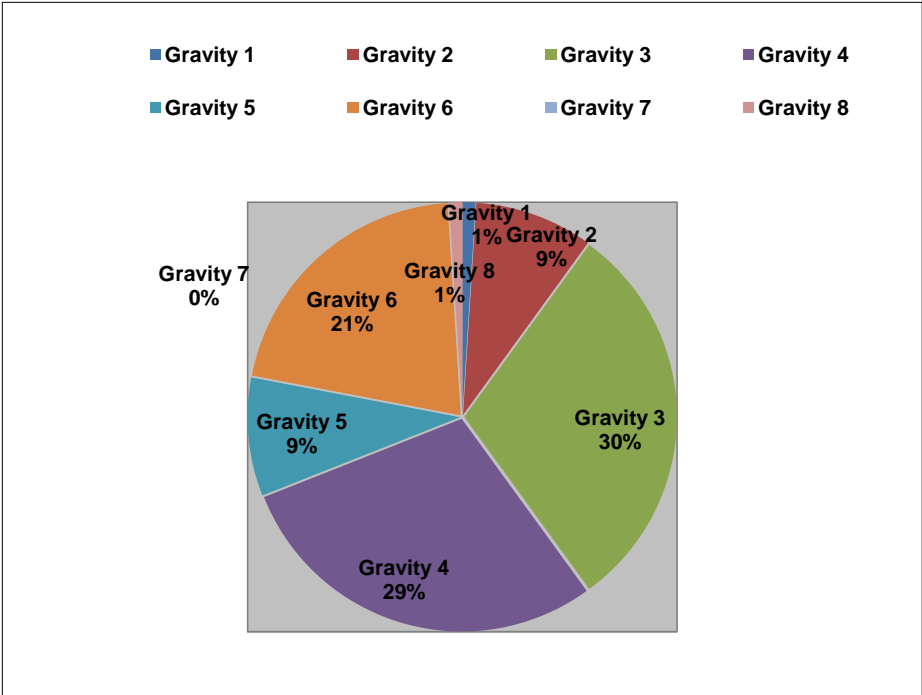
Figure 5.4: Offences by type, whole LYOS



This reflected 5226 offences committed by 2601 young people within the period. Within the other offences, 29 per cent were breach of statutory order, bail, or conditional discharge (and 13 per cent of all offences). So the level of breach within the sample was 10 per cent higher than the wider YOS, possibly reflecting that more serious or persistent offenders, who may have been in the system longer, were more likely to breach their orders than those on lower level interventions. Reasons for this may be that Final Warnings do not carry an enforceable programme, rather offering voluntary sessions for up to three months. Also, when Referral Orders are breached, firstly they are returned to an emergency community panel, who decide whether the young person should be sent back to court, or whether they can be verbally disciplined through the panel system. This provides a buffer between young people on Referral Orders and being taken back to court for breach, possibly reducing the incidence of breach (since being returned to emergency panel is not recorded officially as a breach) for this order as a whole.

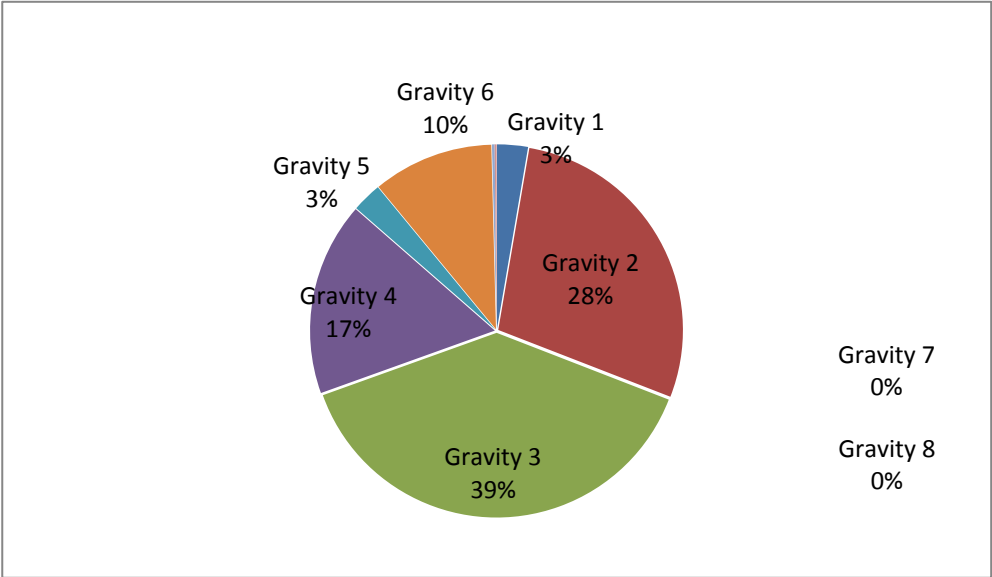
Offences are given a gravity rating for court purposes of between one and eight, where eight is the most serious. For example, criminal damage is given a gravity of two, whereas burglary of a dwelling is rated six (see Appendix 12 for the full list of offences and their gravity ratings relevant to this sample). Figure 5.5 shows the spread of offence gravities within the sample. The mean gravity score was 4 (with a standard deviation of 1.4). Nearly half of the offences with a gravity rating of four were for breach of statutory order, discussed above.

Figure 5.5: Gravity rating of the main offence which resulted in the Supervision Order for each of the sample group



The gravity ratings within the whole LYOS cohort for convictions within the period are detailed in Figure 5.6, with a mean gravity score of three. Of the gravity four offences, half again were for breach of statutory order. There were negligible numbers of gravities seven and eight. 1.5 per cent were listed as unknown.

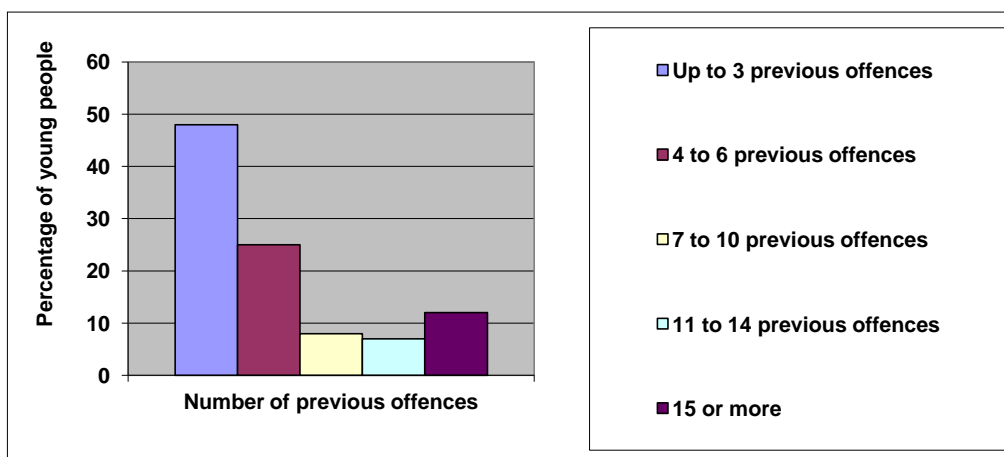
Figure 5.6: Gravity rating of offences committed by young people in LYOS within the period



The numbers of previous convicted offences were recorded, rather than previous convictions, as convictions are counted as disposals at court. For example, a young person may be in court for three separate offences which are being dealt with together, resulting in one disposal and one conviction count, whereas totalling the actual offences committed and dealt with through the court is a better measure of the criminal behaviour in which they have been engaging and for which they have been caught. This necessarily means that Police Reprimands and Final Warnings were not included, since they are pre-court disposals.

The number of previous offences which resulted in conviction for young people in the sample is detailed in Figure 5.7.

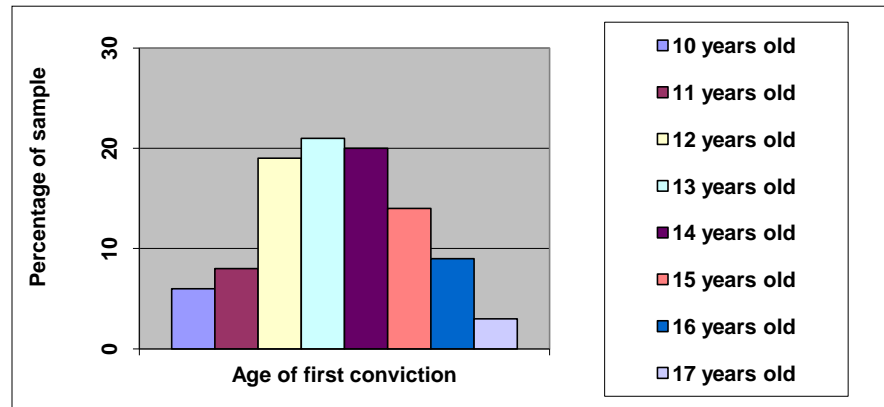
Figure 5.7: Number of previous offences resulting in conviction within the sample



The mean number of previous offences in the sample was 6 (with a standard deviation of 5.4). There were no comparable data from the LYOS, as previous offences are recorded as number of convictions rather than number of offences.

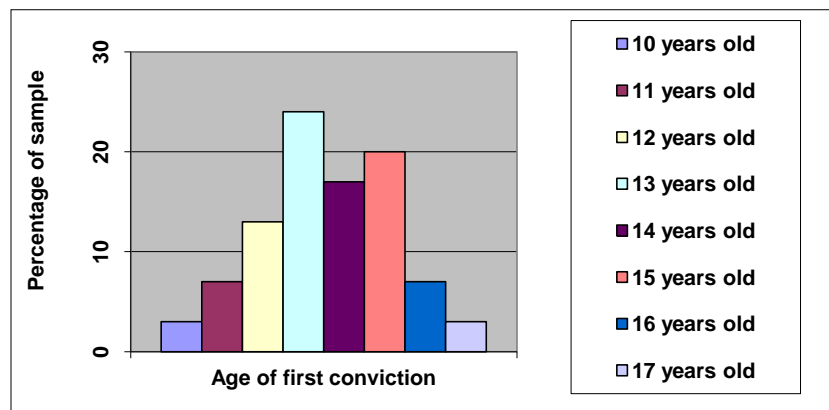
Low age of first conviction has been shown to be a predictor of late criminal desistance (Sutton et al., 2004: 12-13). The sample group displayed the characteristics detailed in Figure 5.8. The mean age of first conviction in this sample was 14 years (with a standard deviation of 1.8), assuming the mid-point between each age year (that is, those convicted at 10 count as being 10.5, to account for the fact that these young people were between 10 and 11 years old, and so on).

Figure 5.8: Age of first conviction of the sample



The whole LYOS cohort statistics on this aspect are detailed in Figure 5.9 below. The mean age of first conviction within the whole LYOS statistics was 14 years (with a standard deviation of 7.6).

Figure 5.9: Age of first conviction of the whole LYOS



The most serious disposal available to the court is custody. Of those completing the questionnaire, excluding young people currently in custody for logistical reasons, 12 per cent had previously been in custody. An alternative to custody often suggested to the courts is Intensive Supervision and Surveillance (ISSP). In this sample group, 18 per cent had previously been or were currently on ISSP. There were no comparable LYOS data, although five per cent of interventions open during the period involved ISSP (not including bail conditions), and custody accounted for eight per cent of all interventions open during the period.

Persistent young offenders (PYOs) have been categorised as follows:

“a young person aged 10 to 17 who has been sentenced by any criminal court in the UK on three or more separate occasions for one or more

recordable offence, and within three years of the last sentencing occasion is subsequently arrested or has an information laid against them for a further recordable offence." (Home Office, 1997)

In this sample group, 44 per cent were categorised as such. However, this category has been redefined since the start of this research, and renamed Prolific and Priority Offenders, giving no comparable data from the whole LYOS for PYOs.

The 'attitudes to offending' section of ASSET showed a fairly even split across most of the scoring range, which unfortunately identified a majority of young people with a problematic view of their offending, as can be seen from Table 5.11.

Table 5.11: ASSET scoring for Attitudes to Offending

ASSET score	0	1	2	3	4	Mean score
Young people in the sample with this score	11	26	30	27	6	2

In the qualitative evidence section, low victim empathy was specifically highlighted by workers in nearly a third of the sample cases. This is a subjective area, the inclusion of which in an ASSET may depend heavily on the practitioner asking the right kind of questions in their analysis of the offence. Victim empathy is extremely unlikely to be considered in what may be thought of as a 'victimless' crime, such as cannabis possession, therefore providing little information about such young people's attitudes and ability to empathise with others.

'Motivation to change' requires the practitioner to identify how much they think the young person to whom they are talking is ready and willing to change, maybe as a result of LYOS interventions or other factors. The research into ASSET conducted by the YJB found that both 'Attitudes to Offending' and 'Motivation to Change' were deemed most useful by practitioners (Baker et al., 2003: 15). However this did not seem to be reflected in the positive factors, with practitioners who had given a score for 'motivation to change' indicating that they did not have a problematic attitude in this area not identifying this as a corresponding positive factor in that section, despite it being one of the options (Baker et al., 2003: 50). This suggests some inconsistency in the completion of ASSET, possibly with positive factors not being given enough importance. The scores for this can be seen

in Table 5.12, which is the final section of ASSET scored in this way, and acts as an assessment of how successful practitioners feel interventions will be.

Table 5.12: ASSET scoring for Motivation to Change

ASSET score	0	1	2	3	4	Mean score
Young people in the sample with this score	23	34	29	11	3	1

YOIS allows for an involvement with the Anti-Social Behaviour Unit (ASBU) to be recorded. However this depends on the practitioner asking the young person or their family about this at interview, or checking the ASBU list of ASBOs that have been given, the latter of which would not reflect Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABC), or lower level interventions. Therefore, the figure for ASBU involvement recorded in YOIS presented here may be an under-estimation. In this sample, 15 per cent of the young people were recorded as having contact with the ASBU, with five ABCs and nine ASBOs, plus one at the monitoring stage. However, as already mentioned, it is likely that this figure was much higher in reality, especially for the monitoring and ABC stages, as these figures are not officially recorded in the same way as ASBOs.

It should also be noted that the use of ASBOs with young people seems to have declined in recent years. The number of new ASBOs issued in 2006 was 34 per cent lower than 2005, although the rate of breach had increased, causing greater criminalisation (www.nya.org.uk/policy/facts-and-statistics/making-a-positive-contribution). Within the whole LYOS during the period, there were 109 breaches of an ASBO, reflecting two per cent of all offences committed. Since the change of government in 2010, the new coalition have presented proposals to abolish ASBOs and replace them with a variety of other, as yet largely undefined measures, which has further decreased their use and enforcement (Strickland & Bardens, 2010: 1 & 9).

Education, training and employment data

Education provision and attendance has been highlighted as an important risk or protective factor in the literature review (Graham & Bowling, 1995: 39-41; Farrington, 1997: 392-393; see Chapter 3: 68). Of those of statutory school age in this sample group, only 38 per cent attended a mainstream school accessing the 'normal' curriculum. Of the 62 per cent who had alternative provision, 12 per cent were on roll at a Pupil Referral Unit

(PRU), 16 per cent at a Special School (usually for Mild Learning Difficulties or Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties), 26 per cent attended alternative provision arranged through their mainstream school, and eight per cent were on a reduced timetable at their mainstream school. In the whole LYOS cohort within the period, 73 per cent were in mainstream school (although not all were attending adequately), 12 per cent were on an alternative programme through their mainstream school, and nine per cent were at a Special School or PRU. Four per cent had other provision, and three per cent were in custody. The higher level of mainstream school attenders reflects the fact that lower level Final Warnings and Referral Orders were included.

It should be clarified, however, that these figures do not reflect actual successful attendance of young people on their provision, merely what the provision was. YOIS has not been used by the LYOS to record actual hours attended, but recent criticism of this has led to a change in policy for this in the future, which should see a more accurate assessment of education being accessed than currently available. This is also true of part time provision (less than 25 hours per week). Many provisions have been severely limited in the hours offered to young people, which is clearly an issue, especially since this educational non-attendance is a strong risk factor. This will also be recorded more accurately in the future, but those figures are not currently available.

Permanent exclusion from school has been identified as a serious risk factor for offending (Graham & Bowling, 1995: 42). A fifth of this sample had been permanently excluded at some point during their educational career. However, it is important to note that this observation depends on responses from interviews with young people and their parents (and therefore on the question being posed at all) or from information requested from schools, which may not accurately reflect the history of each young person's educational experience. Therefore it is likely that this figure is somewhat higher. There were no comparable data for the whole LYOS on this. Nationally 0.12 per cent of pupils aged 10 to 18 were permanently excluded from primary, secondary or special schools in 2008/9 (DfE, 2010a). Comparison of this with the sample therefore reflects the over-representation of permanently excluded young people within the YJS. Furthermore, 78 per cent of the exclusions were boys (DfE, 2010a), who are over-represented in both the criminal justice and permanent exclusion statistics.

Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) were also over-represented in both the sample and the whole LYOS. SEN within the sample were identified in over a quarter of the respondents. To put this into context, in the general population, less than three per

cent of all pupils had statements of SEN in January 2010, but, significantly, a further 18 per cent had non-statemented SEN (DfE, 2010b). Even the higher figure was significantly lower than in the sample figures, showing that young people with SEN are more likely to enter the YJS than those with no SEN.

Two sections of ASSET concern education: 'statutory education', and post-16 'education, training, and employment'. The young people in the sample entitled to statutory education (n=74) were scored on ASSET as detailed in Table 5.13. The high mean score in this section demonstrates the difficulties many young people within the LYOS have experienced with the education system, and then beyond (see Table 5.14).

Table 5.13: ASSET scoring for Statutory Education

ASSET score	0	1	2	3	4	Mean score
Percentage of young people in the sample with this score	15	27	38	16	4	2

Young people within the sample no longer entitled to statutory education (n=26) scored as detailed in Table 5.14.

Table 5.14: ASSET scoring for Education, Training, and Employment

ASSET score	0	1	2	3	4	Mean score
Percentage of young people in the sample with this score	25	18	39	18	0	2

These figures should be taken in conjunction with the fact that the qualitative data showed 30 per cent of the sample to be not in any education, training or employment (NEET) or recorded as not accessing any statutory education provision (a figure likely to be higher for recording reasons discussed earlier). The whole LYOS data showed very similar figures of 33 per cent NEET young people (although the provision for four per cent was unknown). The latest government figures for NEET young people aged 16 to 18 was 13 per cent (DSCF, 2009a). Persistent absentees (those absent for more than 52 half days a year) accounted for nearly six per cent of secondary school enrolments (DSCF, 2009b), but this did not include the thousands of young people who were not on any school roll, for a variety of reasons. The number of young people missing from education in this way is not known because they have dropped out of the system. This would no longer have been the

case if the national database of children and young people (called ContactPoint) had caught up with all children and young people born in the UK, and been used to ensure all eligible children had an allocated school when they were of an age to start. However this was abolished by the 2010 Coalition Government.

Risk data

ASSET also includes assessments of risk of serious harm and vulnerability, which result in scorings of none, low risk/vulnerability, medium risk/vulnerability, high risk/vulnerability, and very high risk/vulnerability, the scoring for which is in Tables 5.15 and 5.16. Any young person rated medium risk or higher is then the subject of a Risk Of Serious Harm assessment (ROSH) followed by a Risk Management Plan, which identifies how that risk will be managed. Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements are also included in this section, where relevant. Certain trigger offences also always require a ROSH to be completed, for example burglary (dwelling), assault, and robbery. Young people deemed at medium vulnerability or higher are subject to a Vulnerability Management Plan (VMP). Clearly these types of assessments are not carried out on young people in the general population, so it is difficult to make comparisons.

Table 5.15: ASSET scoring for Risk of Serious Harm

Risk of serious harm	No risk	Low risk	Medium risk	High risk	No rating given
Percentage of young people in the sample with this rating	16	40	35	4	5

Table 5.16: ASSET scoring for Vulnerability

Vulnerability	Percentage of young people in the sample with this rating
No vulnerability	9
Low vulnerability	52
Medium vulnerability	27
High vulnerability	4
Very high vulnerability	2
No rating given	6

Based on the information outlined above, a typical participant in this research would be a male young person first convicted at the age of 13 years, with around six previous offences which resulted in prosecution, currently convicted of an offence against the person, which might have had a gravity rating of four. He may have displayed low victim empathy, and judged as being of low or medium risk of causing serious harm to others, but probably of low vulnerability. He is likely to have been receiving his education in an alternative provision, rather than mainstream school, which would have been considered related to his offending by his ASSET writer.

Emotional Intelligence questionnaire data

The Adolescent Swinburne University Emotional Intelligence Test (ASUEIT) provided scores for total emotional intelligence (EI), which were further broken down into four constituent parts: emotional recognition and expression (Recognition and Expression), understanding emotions (Understanding), emotions direct cognition (Direct Cognition), and emotional management and control (Management and Control), detailed definitions of which can be found in Chapter 2 (see page 19).

Comparisons with the original research cohort

There do not appear to be any documented instances of the ASUEIT being used with any other research cohort, so the LYOS cohort has been compared with the original research cohort by looking at the means and standard deviations (Luebbers et al., 2007). This gives a picture of how the LYOS young people's EI compared to a more general population of young people of the same age (albeit different nationality, and with a different gender skew). Unfortunately, the calculations received for percentile EI (the percentile position the LYOS cohort would have had in the Australian cohort) were incorrect, which is why only the means and standard deviations have been used. The LYOS data had some difficulties with reliability, which were resolved somewhat by taking out the reverse score error (see Chapter 6: 148 for more details about this). The means and standard deviations quoted here are for the subsequently adjusted dataset.

For total EI, the mean of the original research cohort was 180.8, with a standard deviation of 19.8. This compares to a mean in the LYOS cohort of 170.5, with a standard deviation of 28.6. Therefore, it can clearly be seen that the original cohort generally scored higher than the LYOS, but that the LYOS contained greater extremes. The first section of EI, Recognition and Expression, ranged from 10 to 50. The mean for the original research

cohort was 45.8, with a standard deviation of 7.1. The mean for the LYOS cohort was 31.4, with a standard deviation of 6.7. The second section, Understanding, ranged from 19 to 95. The mean Understanding score from the original research cohort was 65.8, with a standard deviation of 9.4. The mean Understanding score for the LYOS cohort was 58.1, with a standard deviation of 10.2. The third section, Direct Cognition, ranged from 10 to 50. The mean Direct Cognition score from the original research cohort was 26.2, with a standard deviation of 5.4. The mean Direct Cognition score for the LYOS cohort was 27.9, with a standard deviation of 6.8. The last section, Management and Control, ranged from 18 to 90. The mean Management and Control score from the original research cohort was 43.0, with a standard deviation of 7.7. The mean Management and Control score for the LYOS cohort was 53.6, with a standard deviation of 9.1.

The LYOS scores, in all but the last section, were lower than for the original research cohort, and with a higher standard deviation (except Recognition and Expression, where the standard deviation was slightly higher in the original research cohort). This indicates that young people from the LYOS achieved a lower score on total EI, Recognition and Expression, Understanding, and Direct Cognition, possibly showing that they are more likely to obtain lower scores than a general population of young people. It also indicates that there may be greater extremes within the offending cohort than the general population. For Management and Control, the LYOS cohort scored unexpectedly higher than the original research cohort, although still with a greater variance. This would appear to go against the hypothesis that young people from an offending sample would score lower than young people from a non-offending sample. This may be because of the difficulties experienced in the use of the ASUEIT with this sample, and could indicate that it may not have adequately measured what it purported to measure. This is discussed in greater depth in Chapter 6.

The interview cohort, and constraining practicalities

Those who completed the questionnaire were filtered to provide an interview cohort. Four criteria were used for this: those first convicted at age 10 or 11 years, those in local authority care (Looked After), those scoring an EI level of 150 or under, and those scoring a total EI level of over 180 (although one scored 179) (it should be stated that these interviewees were selected before validity tests were run on the ASUEIT, so the high and low scorers selected were based on the dataset before it was adjusted for the reverse score error (see Chapter 6: 148 for more details)). Excluded from the cohort were those

who had finished their orders before the interviews commenced, those in long term custody, and those refusing consent.

In the event, interviewing these groups of young people became problematic, since it was impractical to interview those whose orders had finished, as they had no further contact with the LYOS, and similarly complex to interview those who were in custody at the relevant time. Adding to these two factors the freedom that informed consent rightly gave the prospective participants to decline to be interviewed, it became clear that numbers of available young people were going to be too small. The criteria were therefore extended to increase the scope of each group: the top and bottom ASUEIT scores for eligibility were changed to below 160 and above 180 (except in the case of one who scored 179), and the age of first conviction was increased to 12 years of age. One of the young people in the bottom ASUEIT scores group had been convicted of sexual offences. Research has shown sexual offenders to have particular difficulties with emotional language and empathy (Moriarty et al., 2001:750; see Chapter 2: 41), so this could be explored further within the context of this study. It was not practical for a group of sexual offenders to be interviewed as they are relatively rare within the YJS, and high rates of denial of the offence would have frustrated the interview process. This eventually supplied an interview cohort of 13, including one sex offender, representing approximately one eighth of the total sample.

The interview cohort eventually consisted of the following attributes, identified through examination of YOIS: 12 out of the 13 were male, they were all white, five were Looked After, three were first convicted at age 10 or 11, six were Prolific Young Offenders, five had alternative education provision to mainstream school, five had identified SEN, seven had substance use issues, eight had difficulties with anger management, one had an ASBO, four had at some stage been permanently excluded from school, five had an EI score of less than 160, and two had an EI score above 180.

The purpose of the interviews was partially to test further the validity and reliability of the questionnaires by providing more qualitative data, which could then be compared back to their ASUEIT, and to their offending history and personal characteristics. The changing nature of criminal careers was also investigated, looking at the possibility that EI might be a significant factor in any specific sector (for example, onset, or desistance). It was also hoped that some useful insights might come out of exploring these issues with young people, which would give them a voice within the research. In identifying the different groups to interview, it was hoped that insight into the influence of this factor might be

ascertained, although the low numbers involved could only give an indication of possible trends or suggestions.

Summary and conclusion

This Supervision Order sample of 100 taken from the LYOS between April 2008 and March 2010 varied slightly from the general population of LYOS clientele, because they were all either recidivists or serious offenders. This was deliberate to ensure they were less like a general population of young people, and more an offending population. The whole LYOS figures also accounted for young people on the much lower tariff orders of Final Warnings and Referral Orders, which made up nearly half of all interventions given during the relevant period (of 12 months from April 2008). It would be expected, based on research about risk and protective factors for youth crime, for example that more serious and repeat offenders are likely to include a higher proportion of Looked After young people, and those with problematic school or ETE provision (see Chapter 3: 68).

These comparisons have shown that in most respects, the interview sample was very similar to young people generally involved with the LYOS. The areas of difference were in ethnic mix, where the sample had a lower proportion of black and Asian young people than the wider YOS, otherwise being similar; the sample contained a significantly higher proportion of Looked After young people at 14 per cent, compared to the wider LYOS, which was six per cent; the sample group committed a much higher proportion of offences against the person than in the wider LYOS, where acquisitive crime was more common (easily explained by the inclusion of the lower level orders, a common intervention for offences like shop theft); the mean gravity rating for the offences committed was four for the sample, and slightly lower at three for the whole cohort; education showed some differences, with only 38 per cent of the sample being in mainstream school, as compared to 73 per cent for the whole LYOS; ASSET scores reflected the slight difference in characteristics of the sample from the whole LYOS cohort, having a mean score of 17.8, compared to 13.3.

The EI scores from the questionnaires were compared with the original research cohort, which showed the sample as having lower mean EI scores in all areas apart from the Management and Control, which was unexpectedly in the opposite direction. The analyses of the questionnaires are detailed in the next chapter, along with discussions regarding the reliability in practice of the ASUEIT.

Chapter 6: ASUEIT – key findings and validity/reliability checks

The previous chapter identified the characteristics of the young people represented in this sample, who completed the ASUEIT questionnaire. In this chapter, the use of the ASUEIT with this sample is discussed in terms of its reliability and validity alongside the reasons for choosing it for this empirical study. This is followed by a presentation of the statistical correlations found between the ASUEIT results (representing each young person's emotional intelligence (EI) level), and assessment and offence data. This is followed by an investigation into how well the model fit with the questionnaire responses from this sample by use of principal components analysis, with a view to identifying whether a different model base was implied by the data.

The difficulties which arose from use of the ASUEIT with this sample are discussed in detail to ascertain where they occurred and for what reasons, to aid other researchers. These difficulties fell into two categories: those occurring through administration difficulties in this study, and those occurring because of the self-report nature of the ASUEIT. Suggestions for a tighter administration protocol for future use of the ASUEIT with this type of sample are made as a result of these analyses. Despite these difficulties, some correlations were found between aspects of the ASUEIT and factors associated with offending, possibly enabling some inferences to be made, taking the above issues into consideration. The statistics were processed using information gained from the Youth Offending Information System (YOIS), identifying potentially significant risk and protective factors, and criminal career information, which were then checked for correlations with EI.

The Adolescent Swinburne University Emotional Intelligence Test (ASUEIT)

The ASUEIT questionnaire was introduced to the whole Leeds Youth Offending Service (LYOS) at one of the six-weekly briefings, ensuring the presence of most staff. The research aims were presented, and the consent form and questionnaire explained in detail. Verbal instructions regarding the principles of delivery and acceptable levels of explanation were given to staff, to maximise standardisation of understanding and response (Moser & Kalton 2004: 76). It was explained how they could introduce the questionnaire to young people, and how much help they could give (including the necessity of explaining the word 'seldom', how this might be explained, and highlighting that young people may not understand the word 'vibe', see Chapter 4: 94 for a discussion about this); any questions were answered. It took almost two years to reach the eventual

total of 100 questionnaires, after which feedback was requested from workers (see Appendix 4). Only three young people refused consent for their questionnaires to be used (giving a response rate of over 97 per cent; two young people completed the questionnaire but refused consent for them to be used in the research, and one did not complete it), but this demonstrated that they had genuine choice. One questionnaire from an autistic young person was abandoned by the worker after two questions had been completed with the comment: "He just doesn't understand about emotions because of his autism". This implied that the worker felt his answers would not have been valid, since he could not seem to answer the questions. This was therefore not included in the sample.

Limitations of the ASUEIT in this study

When analysing the completed questionnaires, it soon became clear that some of the potential issues raised in the pilot continued to cause problems in the completion of the questionnaires in the final sample. Other issues not previously surfacing from the pilot also became evident. Evaluations from workers were requested post-data-gathering, to gain more information about the administration of the ASUEIT. Several workers returned comments, which have been used in the following discussion about the limitations of the questionnaire in this study.

Leaving aside the question regarding whether the results of the ASUEIT in this study loaded onto the original model from Swinburne University (addressed later through principal components analysis), these difficulties fell into two basic categories: those occurring because the administration protocol was not sufficiently robust to deal with specific difficulties with these young people, and those arising because of the nature of the ASUEIT itself. The first category discussed is that surrounding way the questionnaire was administered. Best practice would have been for one person to have administered the questionnaire to all of the participants. This would have ensured consistency of delivery and explanations, and reduced the likelihood of socially desirable responding, since there need not have been any prior relationship between respondent and administrator. However, for practical reasons this was not possible, although given the difficulties outlined later, this should be considered for future use of this questionnaire with this type of young person. Given that using just one administrator was not possible, a more robust administration protocol could have been written, with some scripted aids for explanations, which would have increased consistency in this area. It was clear that the young people in this sample would not have been able to complete the questionnaire independently, which

should be considered with any further use of this questionnaire. The workers were given verbal instructions on how to administer the questionnaire with their young people, but no specific guidance on how to explain such concepts as reverse scored questions, which could be confusing to interpret. Examples should have been given on effective explanation of which direction a young person might wish their answer to be, aiding them through the double negatives. These questions should also have been flagged up to the workers so they knew when to apply this type of explanation. Completion time of the questionnaire might have increased, but this might have been mitigated by requesting that it be completed over two sessions, therefore reducing the likelihood of questionnaire fatigue. A list of difficult words should have been identified at the start, so workers had a glossary from which to refer in explanation.

The second category discussed includes those difficulties which arose because of the nature of the questionnaire, and its use with this type of sample, not necessarily issues which could be resolved through any administration methodology. These include such aspects as the questionnaire appearing like a test, possibly not so accessible to young people not used to attending school or sitting down to complete a list of questions. As a self-report questionnaire, it also required a level of self awareness for meaningful completion, with which the young people may have struggled. This may not have been evident because of the Likert scale, ensuring an answer of some description. Young people from this type of sample group, with the specific challenges they present (high levels of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Special Educational Needs, communication difficulties; see Chapter 5 for a fuller discussion of these) may need a different type of test to ensure that results are meaningful. This presents a problem, since there were no tests currently validated for use with young people, other than self-report.

Limitations caused by the administration methods in this study

The ASUEIT is a self-report questionnaire using a Likert scale between one and five, where one means 'very seldom', two means seldom, three means 'sometimes', four means 'often' and five means 'very often'. Questionnaires of this nature use a variety of techniques to ensure reliability, for example reverse-scoring some of the questions to prevent people deciding they are 'usually a five', or reducing the chances of socially-desirable answering (possibly made more likely through the use of their own caseworker to administrate the questionnaire, with whom they would already have had a relationship). They also use similar questions at different points to check that respondents are

answering congruently throughout. Both of these techniques were used in the ASUEIT, but both appear to have caused problems for respondents. The reverse scoring proved confusing, with young people who may have been certain about their thoughts regarding a particular question, seemingly becoming confused as to which end of the scale they wanted to select. Throughout the questionnaires, there were several alterations indicated by changes of 'seldom' to 'often', or 'very seldom' to 'very often' (and vice versa) indicating confusion in this aspect. However, it was impossible to tell from looking at the completed questionnaires whether they had in fact selected their desired answer. It was also unclear how much assistance was given by workers on this matter, also mentioned in one of the pilot evaluations. The Speech and Language Therapist (Therapist) expressed concern about this:

"I think the reverse scoring of some of them makes it difficult, you know like it its where it says I find it hard or I can't do things, and the other things like I can and I think – there's not that many reversed – but I think the ones that are I think they're. It's almost like they're presented with a double negative and it's like what's it actually asking me? Which way, which side does it need to be?"

A more detailed administration protocol was needed to help workers explain these questions with consistency and clarity. However, the difficulties with the reverse scoring, how this was addressed in this study, and how this could be mitigated in future use, are discussed later, when looking at the reliability analyses, as this clearly caused a reduction in the reliability coefficient.

The repeating of questions for validity was the cause of much annoyance for many of the young people, also mentioned in the pilot evaluations. Some of the young people seemed to feel that they were being "tricked" in some way by the repeated questions. The workers using the questionnaire showed this to be a common theme, as reflected in the following comments, which were taken directly from their post-use evaluations:

"Some of the questions were very similar to the other ones, and the young person became a bit frustrated".

"What I found difficult was that a number of the young people found it difficult to differentiate between some of the questions – haven't I just answered that question? was quite a common response".

This difficulty might have been better addressed if workers had warned the young people that some questions may look similar, clarify that they were slight differences, explaining

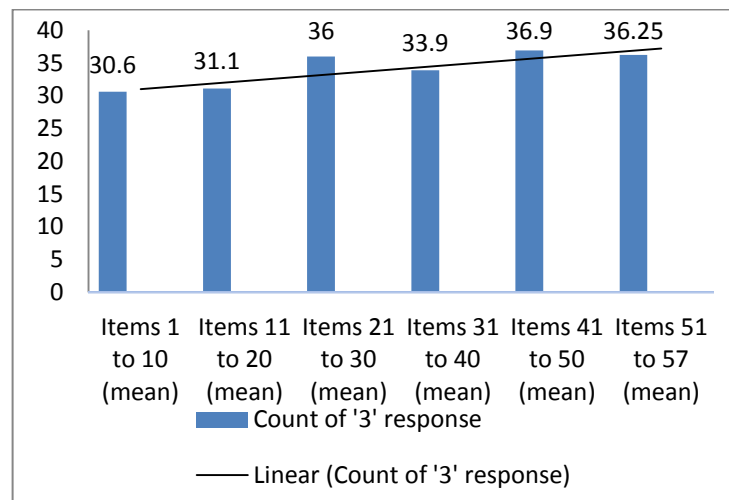
that they may need patience during completion. A script for this explanation might prove useful for future use of this questionnaire to maintain consistency. Unfortunately in this study this difficulty was not sufficiently anticipated, so no methodology was given with the administration explanation to workers, leaving them all to justify the apparent repetition of questioning individually. This difficulty may also have been reduced had workers taken two sessions to complete the questionnaire, as the young people may have forgotten what they had previously been asked, and therefore not felt so impatient with apparent repetition. However, no guidance was given on this.

The questionnaire consisted of 57 questions over two pages. This proved to be very long, and tried the concentration and patience of many of the young people completing them. Questionnaire fatigue is a common issue with this type of tool (Conner & Waterman, 1996: 37), but is likely to have been magnified with a group of young people who had high levels of ADHD, conduct disorders, low literacy levels, and exclusion from school resulting in missed education (see Chapter 5: 138). Feedback was requested from workers after use, although only a few responded, but these were coupled with the pilot evaluation to provide a better picture of the ASUEIT in practice. Workers mentioned the length of the questionnaire in particular:

“I have to say that one of the young people that I filled the questionnaire in with found it a bit long and therefore did not take it seriously and just ticked any answer”.

The questionnaire responses in many cases showed a pattern of answer deterioration towards the end, identified through more questions being missed, and particularly an increase in use of the possibly non-committal middle value of three (meaning ‘sometimes’) as the questionnaire progressed. It can be seen from Figure 6.1 that the mean number of responses selecting the middle value (‘3’) rose through the progress of the questionnaire. More young people were choosing a response of ‘3’ towards the end of the questionnaire than at the beginning. This might have been exacerbated if the young people had considered the questions unimportant (Conner & Waterman, 1996: 41). This could have been mitigated by administering the questionnaire differently, perhaps over two sessions, or with a break in the middle, but this should have been a general principle applied to the whole cohort, so would have needed to be part of the initial explanations to workers on administration protocol.

Figure 6.1: Mean number of '3' responses in the ASUEIT



Communication and general levels of understanding have been highlighted earlier through the work of the LYOS Speech and Language Therapist (Therapist) as being a particular difficulty for young people who offend. She commented:

“ In the normal population with kids it’s like 10 per cent have got some sort of communication problem...it is definitely skewed ‘cause we were up to about 20 (per cent). Partly it’s because their education’s been so affected by their social situations that they’re in, and the fact that their behaviour’s often so bad. I guess in some ways it would have been more valid for this population to use something that’s been standardised in primary school children”.

The Therapist also commented that she felt that although the questionnaire generally had simple language, it was still ‘wordy’ and contained some ‘old-fashioned language’, particularly picking out the phrase ‘snap out of it’ and the word ‘seldom’ as examples of this. Unfortunately the actual wording of the questions was not something that could be changed from the validated original. It may also have reflected some of the cultural differences between Australia and the UK.

The Therapist, who worked intensively with young people on Intensive Supervision and Surveillance (ISSP) (see Chapter 4: 120 for details about that project) found that many of them had a poor understanding of vocabulary, which would have impacted on how well they understood the questionnaire, given that it was validated for secondary school cognitive levels. With this lack of language understanding, it would be useful to conduct some kind of emotional vocabulary assessment, as this is the basis for all other levels of

EI on this model (see Chapter 2: 19). Feedback illustrated the variety of comprehension problems just outlined, as the following comments from a variety of workers show:

“a number of the young people struggled with the language...”

“another young person I worked with...at the time was displaying quite extreme behaviour and was unable to recognise anything more than ‘happy’ or ‘angry’ so again the questionnaire proved difficult to do”.

“I can see it would have been a useful tool, and even generated a good response, from an older or more reflective young person, but with the type of young people on junior ISSP the length of the questionnaire as well as the required levels of self awareness and reflection made the questionnaire very difficult to use”.

“he got really frustrated...he thought it was a really pointless thing to do, but clearly was quite a good example of someone with really low emotional intelligence”.

Some words were identified at the pilot stage as being potentially difficult to understand (in particular, ‘vibe’), and workers were advised to explain this word, plus any others which the young people appeared to find difficult, when they appeared. It may have been more effective to more specifically identify which words these young people could not understand, and provide a glossary of explanation to which workers could refer, or change them for more understandable words with the same meaning. This would be recommended for future use of this questionnaire.

Limitations resulting from the ASUEIT as a self-report test

This style of questionnaire had the disadvantage of being in a worksheet-style format, which addresses a visual learning style. The LYOS have begun using learning style questionnaires (identifying young people as being auditory, visual, or kinaesthetic learners) with all young people entering the system, after a pilot with ISSP young people. Many have demonstrated a high level of the kinaesthetic learning style which favours practical and physical activities. Kinaesthetic learners may find this type of exercise difficult to complete, thereby increasing the early onset of questionnaire fatigue, possibly starting when they were first faced with it. One of the pilot evaluations commented that it looked like a test, which of course it is. However, this could be very off-putting to young people, many of whom had been out of mainstream school for a long time, and had identified Special Educational Needs (SEN) (see Chapter 5: 139). One worker said:

“The young person has SEN and found the questions really difficult. He got really frustrated with the whole process and I remember thinking that a lot of his answers contradicted each other”.

The cohort with whom this tool was validated in Australia was a group of students in mainstream school, who were therefore school attenders, and not specifically offenders. They did not have comparable levels of SEN, and therefore would have had a higher mean cognitive ability (Luebbbers et al., 2007: 1005). This would have meant they were likely to have found the test less forbidding.

An issue with all self-report questionnaires is whether the respondent's view is realistic. For example, this questionnaire begins with the statement 'I can tell how others are feeling'. A young person may think that they can tell this, where in reality they may not. Therefore, although they may have answered the question honestly, they may have overestimated their abilities. An example of this was the outlier respondent number 78, who scored extremely highly in his ASUEIT for EI. This was achieved by having a good week where he was very sure in himself that he had the skills being enquired about, resulting in responses entirely consisting of ones (very seldom) and fives (very often). In a future session, he was asked about the impact of his latest offence on his mum, but he could only identify two emotions throughout the whole session: 'good' and 'not good', which are arguably more reflections of general mood than specific emotions. This was at a time where things were not going so well for him, and he subsequently received a period of custody as a result. This shows that the test could be answered very differently depending on what is happening in a young person's life, and is therefore very susceptible to circumstantial change. Using test-retest (where the test is re-administered after a certain time period had elapsed to check how stable the answers were) could have identified this formally as a reliability issue, but unfortunately time and resource constraints did not allow for this. There was also evidence here that the answers of respondent 78, while sincerely meant, were inconsistent with reality. This case demonstrated the way an immature, concrete thinker might answer questions on this type of scale, being less able to distinguish between middle values, therefore giving extreme answers throughout. This may have been much more widespread than respondent 78, but the extent would be almost impossible to gauge. A competence test requiring actual identification of different types of emotions in a variety of circumstances might have revealed a more accurate picture of respondent 78's abilities and understanding.

This is part of the argument that ability EI cannot be measured by a self-report questionnaire, which is inevitably filtered through the eyes of the respondent, and may also reflect other issues like how they are feeling (as in respondent 78's case), and the level of their self esteem. It may mean that the ASUEIT is measuring trait EI (but along a model base which excludes some of the more general personality traits in its items) rather than ability EI. However, if the measurement of trait EI in this sense also correlated with aspects of offending, this need not necessarily negate its usefulness. However, it may be that if the measurement of ability EI is of primary importance, then a different test would need to be used (and unfortunately one which is not currently available). It would be interesting to compare the results of self-report questionnaire and competence tests, which has been done with adult assessment tools (O'Connor & Little, 2003: 1983-1902), but clearly not with ones designed for young people because of the lack of validated competence testing for young people within this group. It may be that this needs to happen before the question of which type of testing is most appropriate for use with young people who offend to inform about their offending careers.

Using a skills based assessment tool might also have mitigated against the difficulties of young people who did not really understand a question, but were still able to make a response (which experience seemed to indicate was most likely to be '3' if they did not understand, but could also have been random), with no possible way of identifying this. However, with a variety of workers conducting the tests, it was also very difficult to ensure that all young people had the same level of explanation. It is likely that some received a very good level of support, whereas others were merely given the questionnaire to complete themselves, despite the administration protocol explained at the briefing event. It may be that the only way to overcome this is for only the researcher to administer all questionnaires. However, as previously discussed with regard to other practical difficulties encountered, a more stringent administration protocol could have been given, which had much more specific guidance written down for workers to refer to as needed. Clearly young people from this sample group could not have completed the questionnaire independently.

This last view that many of these young people do have low EI was summed up by the Therapist:

"I think ... as a group they've got poor emotional intelligence...we know that by the things like their lack of empathy, and their complete lack of understanding of the impacts of what they're doing on all sorts of different levels, and their poor

vocabulary around emotional terminology, and by extreme behaviours, why they can't negotiate or talk about it. They kick off to release the pressure. So we make that judgment based on what we observe".

One worker's feedback demonstrated how feelings of frustration that cannot be appropriately expressed turn into something more aggressive:

"one of the young people I did the questionnaire with...initially engaged well and seemed to give reasonably honest answers for the first few questions, but due to understanding, and emotional immaturity, very quickly became reluctant and resistant (and even aggressive!) to the questions".

As the Therapist observed:

"aggression can be a way of expressing emotion when there isn't any other way".

This observation is significant with this cohort, particularly given that 64 per cent were identified as having anger management problems (Chapter 5: 129), and the number no longer in full time mainstream school may have been related to an inability to manage anger in the school environment.

There are clearly some difficulties associated with use of the ASUEIT, with this cohort in particular, but it was the only one based on this model of EI validated for use with young people available at the time. Workers also commented that completing the questionnaire with a young person allowed them to discuss emotions and other related areas like victim awareness with them, as one worker commented:

"it developed discussion with myself and the young person about feelings and how they express them".

This illustrates some of the potential benefits for young people of interventions which include discussions about emotions, making the reliable assessment of EI and statistical correlations found with aspects of offending, possibly more important. Given the concerns with this method of assessment, outlined above, reliability tests were undertaken on the responses from the cohort.

Reliability testing of the ASUEIT

The experiences of workers administering the ASUEIT indicated that there might be reliability concerns when used with this cohort. The dataset was tested using Cronbach's

alpha to quantify its internal reliability. Alpha scores identify how consistent responses within a questionnaire are by comparing every combination possible. Alpha values higher than .7 are considered acceptable (Field, 2009: 675) (a value of 1 would indicate complete consistency, probably only possible if all the questions are identical, and an alpha score of 0 indicates no consistency, only possible if the questions were completely unrelated). The alpha values reported from the original cohort were very encouraging (see Chapter 2: 28). However, the responses from this cohort were disappointing in their demonstration of the reliability of the questionnaire, but possibly not surprisingly, given the discussions above.

Table 6.1: Means, standard deviations, and reliability scores of the ASUEIT

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha (α)
Total EI	173.91	15.29	57	.65
Recognition and Expression	30.66	4.58	10	.25
Understanding	62.17	6.15	19	.38
Direct Cognition	30.35	4.16	10	.20
Management and Control	51.32	8.14	18	.59

It can be seen from Table 6.1 that the alpha scores are all below acceptability in indicating reliability ($<.7$). The inter-item correlation matrices (how much each item correlated with each other, which should be $>.3$ (Field, 2009: 678), and certainly should not be negative) showed a high number of negative correlations, indicating contradictory items. One of the most problematic aspects of the questionnaire administration was the reverse scoring, which has been discussed earlier, which might be an explanation for these results. Further Cronbach's alpha analyses were done on the dataset *without* reversing the scores which had previously been reversed to see whether this improved reliability, indicating that the young people had indeed misunderstood the direction in which their preferred answer lay.

Table 6.2: Means, standard deviations, and reliability scores of the ASUEIT without reversing the reverse-scored answers

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha (α)
Total EI	172.06	31.71	57	.93
Recognition and Expression	31.49	6.74	10	.71
Understanding	58.31	10.37	19	.82
Direct Cognition	28.42	7.20	10	.81
Management and Control	53.69	9.10	18	.68

Table 6.2 shows that the alpha scores are vastly improved, with an extremely satisfactory score for total EI ($\alpha=.93$). For total EI, the corrected item-total correlations were all over .3, or very close (see Appendix 13 for total EI inter-item statistics). For Recognition and Expression, items 20 and 47 had low correlations, with the effect of increasing the alpha score if deleted, so that subscale might be improved if those two items were not included. For Understanding, items 5 and 52 reduced the alpha score, with a correlation less than .3, so this subscale might be improved by excluding these items, although the difference is very small. For Direct Cognition, all the correlations were satisfactory. The Management and Control subscale had the lowest alpha level, reflected in poorer inter-item correlations. When items with inter-item correlations lower than .2 were excluded, the alpha score rose above .7, demonstrating that the excluded items (items 15, 19, 37, 40, and 49) detracted from the assessment of this subscale. Further use of this questionnaire excluding these items might make the assessment more robust. However, most of the items not correlating well with particular subscales did correlate reasonably with total EI, making them valid for inclusion in the whole questionnaire (with the exceptions of items 5, 20, 40, and 49, which had inter-item correlations in total EI of between .2 and .3). There were some negative values in the inter-item correlation matrices, possibly the result of some reverse scored questions being answered successfully as designed (and therefore needing to be reversed for analysis, causing negative correlations). Possibly some workers explained the reverse scoring effectively, whilst others did not, causing a mixture in terms of response accuracy. As discussed earlier, a more rigorous administration protocol may produce different results, and would be important for other studies using this questionnaire.

Distribution

The dataset used initially (reversing the reverse-worded items, as designed) produced a normal distribution (with two outliers, one of which was respondent 78, discussed earlier), as can be seen in Figures 6.2 and 6.3:

Figure 6.2: Frequency distribution of Total Emotional Intelligence from the questionnaires

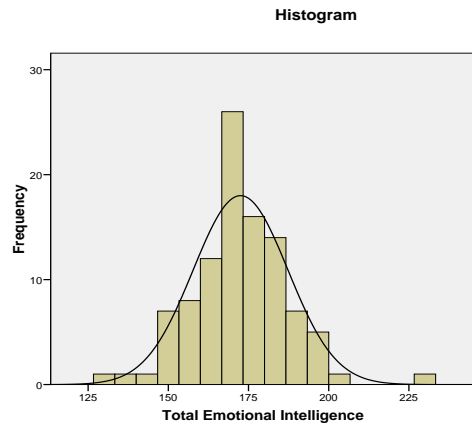
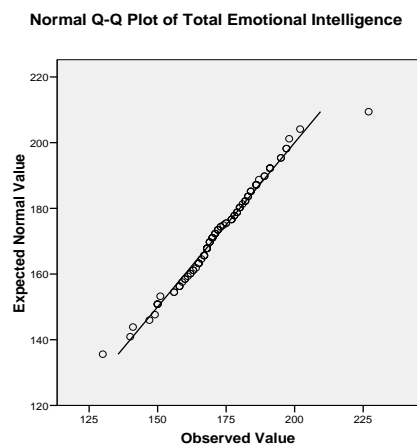


Figure 6.3: Total Emotional Intelligence from the questionnaires, Q-Q Plot



However, when the new dataset, without the reversing of the reverse-worded items (but with a significantly higher reliability level), was analysed, the distribution was no longer normal, as can be seen from Figures 6.4 and 6.5:

Figure 6.4: Frequency distribution of Total Emotional Intelligence, non-reversed

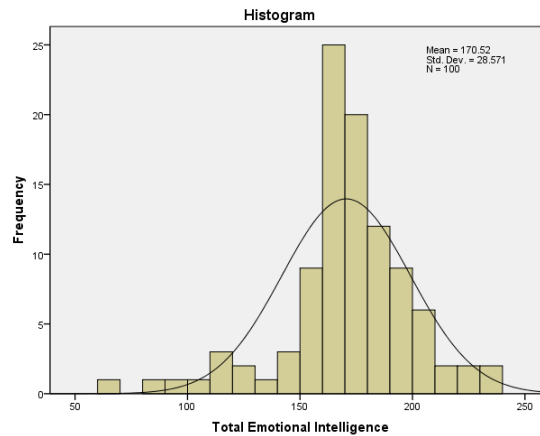
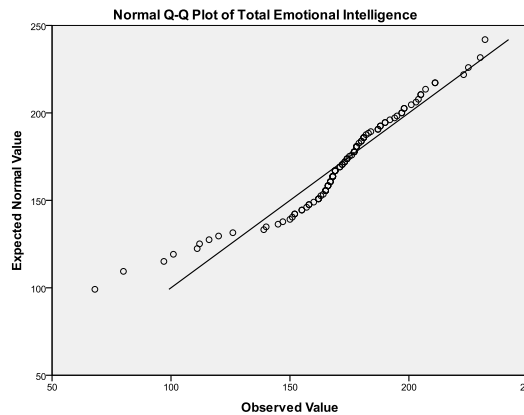


Figure 6.5: Total Emotional Intelligence, non-reversed, Q-Q Plot



Given the reliability results, the non-reversed dataset was used in order to look for statistical correlations, using nonparametric tests, as the data were no longer a normal distribution.

Statistical correlations of ASUEIT with known correlates of EI

Age and gender have been found through previous research to correlate with EI. Using Spearman's Rho (r_s) correlations, EI scores were compared with age, since research has shown these to be highly correlated (Geher & Renstrom, 2004: 7; see Chapter 2: 15), with EI increasing as people mature, with development slowing after the 20s. Testing the correlation between age and total EI using the ASUEIT did *not* show statistical significance ($r_s = .12$; $p = .12$, one-tailed). However, there was significance with the EI branch of Understanding ($r_s = .17$; $p = .04$, one-tailed), indicating that as age increases so the understanding of emotions by a young person also increases (see Chapter 2: 18 for a fuller outline of the four branches of EI). However, this was the only section showing a

correlation with age. This could mean that the ASUEIT was not working as it should in assessing the cohort's EI levels, or it could mean that with this cohort, there was little link with age, possibly due to a range of variation in development levels (and possibly milestone delays). Interestingly, one other research project, with adult offenders, also did not reflect an increasing level of EI with age (Hemmati et al., 2004: 695-706), so it could be that an offender population is different from a non-offender population. However this has not been the thinking of other criminological researchers, in particular Matza, who felt that people drift in and out of offending, and Moffitt, who has propounded the difference between adolescent-limited offending and life-course persistent offenders (Matza, 1964: 29; Moffitt, 1993: 20; see Chapter 3).

Many research projects would suggest that girls tend to score more highly than boys in EI (Salovey & Mayer, 1990: 10; see Chapter 2: 33). A Chi² calculation was done to test whether this was the case within this sample, but the results were non-significant (Pearson Chi² (0.15, df 2, $p=.54$), although the assumption for minimum cell counts was breached because of the dearth of girls within the LYOS, so this figure may not be accurate. An independent *t*-test showed that there was no real difference between the girls' total EI scores ($M = 172.75$, $SE = 5.18$) and the boys' ($M = 169.82$, $SE = 3.40$). This difference was not significant $t(98)=-.437$, $p=>.5$. The fact that two factors found through other research to correlate significantly with EI do not have the same correlation in this study raises a cautionary note in the first instance for the ASUEIT.

Statistical correlations using ASSET scores

Correlations of total EI with ASSET

Despite the limitations outlined above, many of the young people appear to have answered the questionnaire properly (indicated by the high alpha score), so correlations found may be indicative of links which could be further investigated through more longitudinal research. Correlations between total EI, each of its four constituent parts (Chapter 2: 19), and other variables within the dataset were examined. These included age of first conviction, number of previous offences, type of current offence, gravity of the current offence, total ASSET score (an assessment of criminogenic need and risk of reoffending), and the individual ASSET scores within the 12 sections.

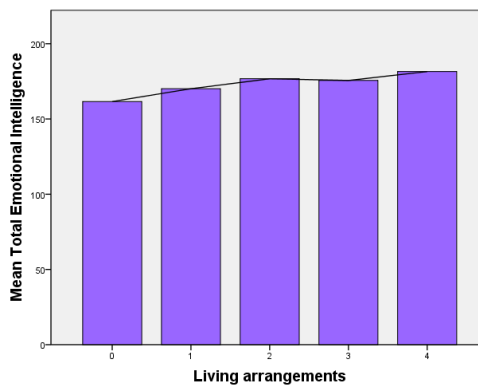
Tests for statistical significance in correlations using Spearman's rho for nonparametric scale and ordinal data are presented; where the direction of correlation was known, 1-

tailed statistics are reported. Using these tests revealed some areas of significance (taken to be $p \leq .05$) and some areas considered to be approaching significance (taken to be when p is nearing .05, generally $p \leq .075$). However, they also showed areas of positive relationship, not consistent with the hypothesis that ASSET areas would be negatively linked with EI. These are also reported, as there may be reasons for these apparent relationships which could be investigated further in future research projects. However, they could be spurious, possibly resulting from administration difficulties with the questionnaire or the small sample size.

Total EI was not found to be correlated with total ASSET score ($r_s = .05$; $p < .32$, one-tailed). As ASSET is an assessment predictive of re-offending, this would imply that EI does not predict re-offending (although this will be looked at again later in this chapter with the results of the data examining recorded offending during 2010).

Total EI was not significantly linked with living arrangements, given that the one-tailed test predicted a negative relationship. However, there was a positive relationship between them, indicating that as assessed living arrangements became more problematic, EI increased, illustrated in Figure 6.6:

Figure 6.6: Mean total EI and living arrangements ASSET section

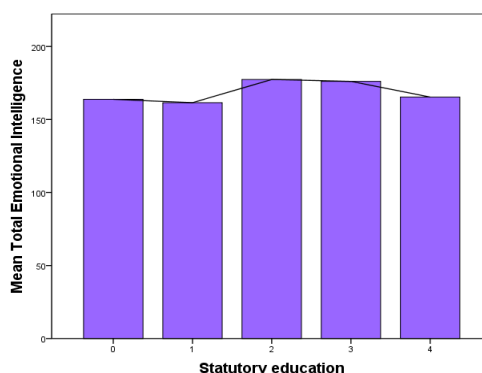


This was not the expected direction of relationship, and is therefore difficult to explain. However, it could be that those who have experienced difficult living arrangements (which might include young people who have moved frequently, or have lived with a number of different relatives) have developed emotionally through dealing with those difficulties. However, as with all ASSET assessments, these scorings are meant to reflect criminogenic links, rather than any other needs in this area, so those who are scored highly in this area are felt to be offending at least partly because of their living arrangements. This may have created a mis-match between needs and assessment

scores, as a young person may have needs in an area not considered criminogenically relevant, and therefore have been scored at a lower level than if all needs in an area had been considered.

Total EI also showed a significant correlation with the statutory education section of ASSET ($r_s = .20$; $p < .04$, one-tailed), as demonstrated in Figure 6.7:

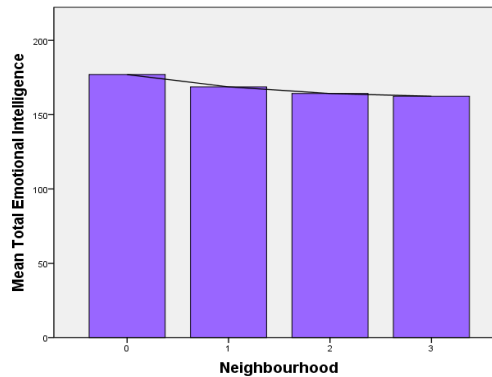
Figure 6.7: Mean total EI and statutory education ASSET section



The nature of this correlation is not clear. It would seem from Figure 6.7 that EI was lower at the top and bottom of the range, but increased in the middle ranges. So those experiencing some difficulties with statutory education gained higher mean EI scores than those either experiencing no difficulties, or severe difficulties. It may be that those who were scored highly in this area were those who were not attending their educational provision, thought to be a significant criminogenic factor, whereas those attending special provision (for example in a Pupil Referral Unit, or alternative timetabling) may have been scored at a mid-range. Unfortunately further information of this type about the scoring rationale for each young person was either not collected or not available, so this must remain speculation at present.

Total EI showed an approaching significance in correlation with the neighbourhood section of ASSET ($r_s = -.15$; $p < .07$, one-tailed). The direction of this correlation can be seen in Figure 6.8, with fewer neighbourhood difficulties linking with higher total EI levels. This was an expected direction of correlation, possibly for the reasons outlined in the 'broken windows' theory discussed in Chapter 3 (see Chapter 3: 70), linking neighbourhood deprivation with other factors like anti-social behaviour, higher levels of criminality, and low cohesion between residents.

Figure 6.8: Mean total EI and neighbourhood ASSET section



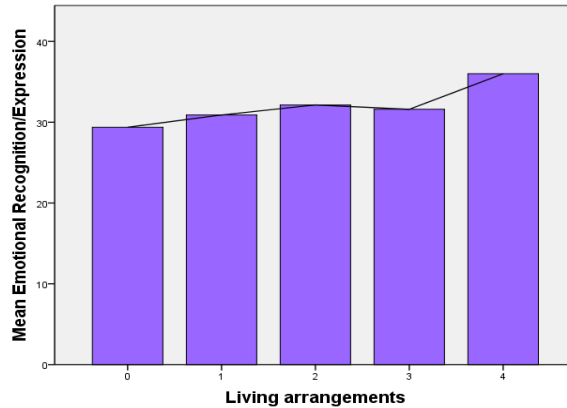
Correlations between individual branches of EI and ASSET

According to the model used for this research, EI can be broken down into four constituent parts: perception and expression of emotions (Recognition and Expression), understanding and analysing emotions (Understanding), use of emotions in decision-making and problem-solving (Direct Cognition), and emotional management and control (Management and Control) (see Chapter 2: 19 for a more detailed description of these four branches). Some investigators evaluating this model have suggested that it holds more validity in its constituent parts than in the total EI that is the result of adding these together (Fiori & Antonakis, 2011: 333; see Chapter 2: 21). Breaking down the questionnaire responses into these separate parts, the significance of different aspects of assessed criminogenic needs can be more particularly pinpointed to specific areas of EI.

Correlations between Recognition and Expression and ASSET

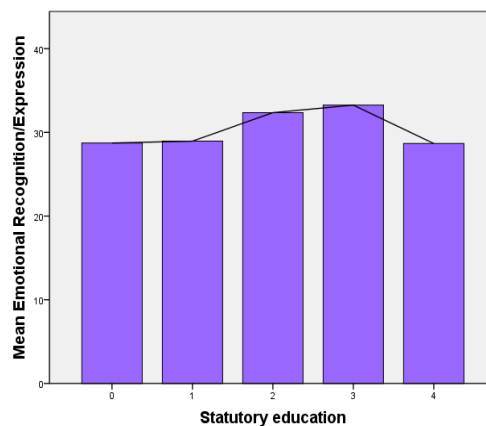
As with total EI, Recognition and Expression and the living arrangements section showed a positive relationship, although were not significantly correlated with the one-tailed hypothesis, see Figure 6.9:

Figure 6.9: Mean Recognition and Expression and living arrangements ASSET section



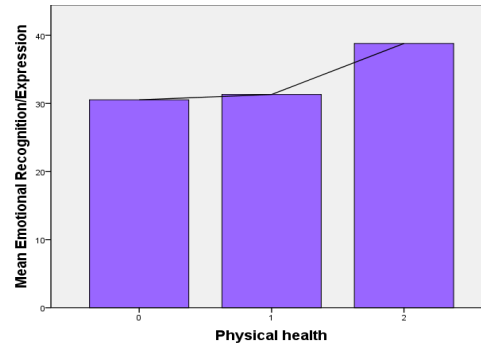
Recognition and Expression was again positively related with statutory education, against the hypothesis, although there was a marked dip between those scoring 3 and 4 on this ASSET section. It may be that those judged as having *very* severe criminogenically linked educational difficulties were those catered for in alternative provision but not accessing this effectively, possibly indicating those with more extreme behaviour difficulties. This can be seen in Figure 6.10:

Figure 6.10: Mean Recognition and Expression and statutory education ASSET section



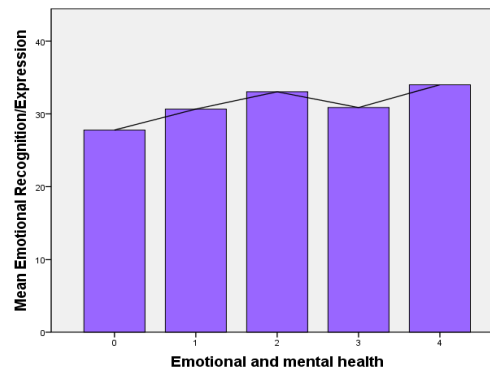
Recognition and Expression was also positively related to physical health, a non-significant result with the hypothesis. However, it is rare to find physical health judged as being a criminogenic need, which can be seen in Figure 6.11, as only scores of 0, 1, and 2 were used:

Figure 6.11: Mean Recognition and Expression and physical health ASSET section



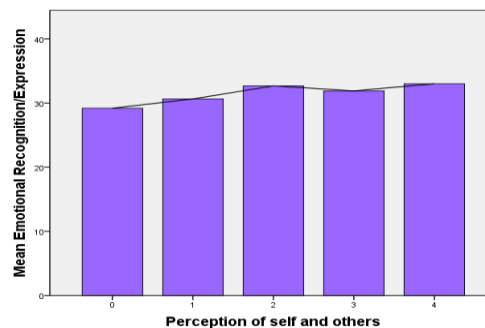
Recognition and Expression was positively related to emotional and mental health, which was a real anomaly, as it would have been logical to think that those assessed as having difficulties in this area would also have had difficulties with EI. This may indicate the limitations of using the non-reversed dataset. This relationship is demonstrated in Figure 6.12:

Figure 6.12: Mean Recognition and Expression and emotional and mental health ASSET section



Recognition and Expression also showed a positive relationship with the perception of self and others ASSET section, which is completely opposite to the result obtained by using the reverse-scored dataset, which showed a negative correlation of approaching significance. This positive relationship is demonstrated in Figure 6.13:

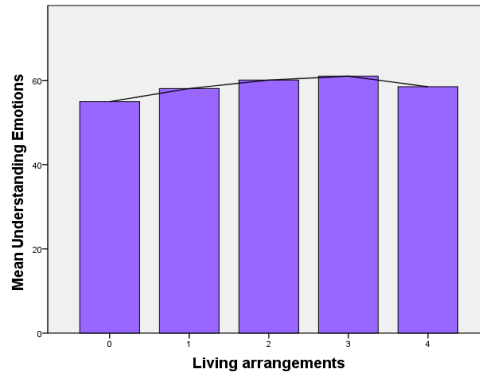
Figure 6.13: Mean Recognition and Expression and perception of self and others ASSET section



Correlations between Understanding and ASSET

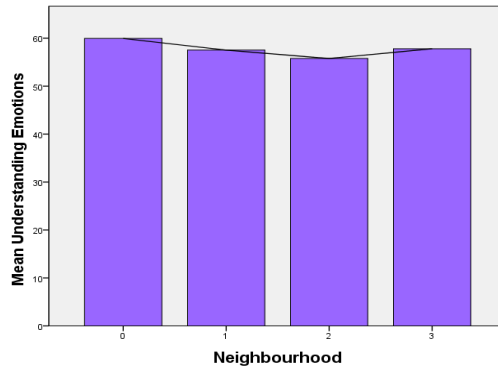
As with the other areas of the EI model, Understanding was positively related to living arrangements. Again, it can be seen from Figure 6.14 that although the general trend was positive, there was also a drop in EI at the higher end of the ASSET score.

Figure 6.14: Mean Understanding and living arrangements ASSET section



Understanding showed a negative correlation with the neighbourhood section of ASSET which was of approaching significance ($r_s = -.16$; $p < .06$, one-tailed), see Figure 6.15:

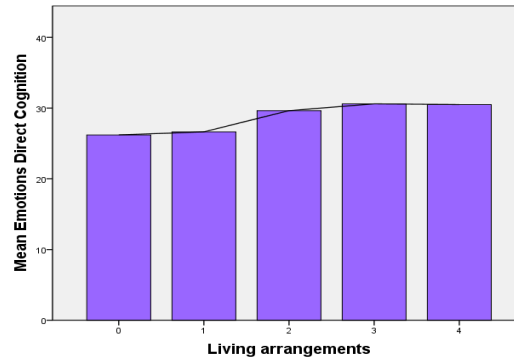
Figure 6.15: Mean Understanding and neighbourhood ASSET section



Correlations between Direct Cognition and ASSET

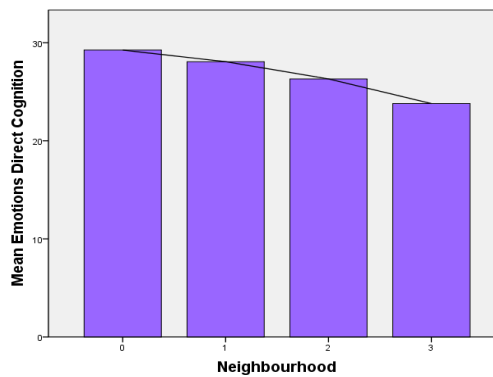
Direct Cognition also showed a positive relationship with the living arrangements section of ASSET; see Figure 6.16:

Figure 6.16: Mean Direct Cognition and living arrangements ASSET section



Direct cognition had a correlation of approaching significance with the neighbourhood section of ASSET ($r_s = -.16$; $p = .05$, one-tailed), demonstrated in Figure 6.17:

Figure 6.17: Mean Direct Cognition and living arrangements ASSET section



Direct Cognition showed a positive relationship with physical health:

Figure 6.18: Mean Direct Cognition and physical health ASSET section

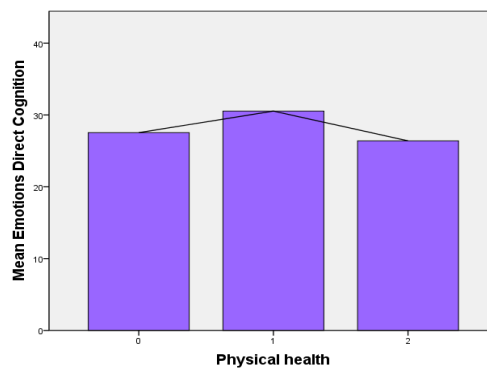
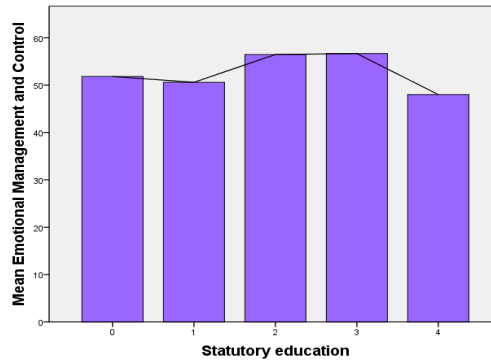


Figure 6.18 shows that the highest EI was found with those scoring in the middle for physical health, rather than those with no health difficulties, or those with more severe difficulties, but the same considerations around the fact that this is measuring criminogenic rather than general needs discussed earlier should be applied.

Correlations between Management and Control and ASSET

Management and Control was found to be positively related to statutory education, which is illustrated in Figure 6.19:

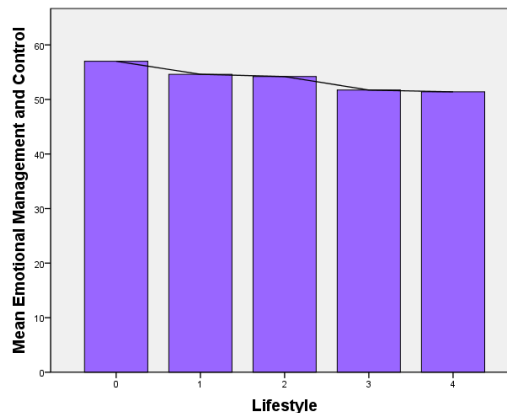
Figure 6.19: Mean Management and Control and statutory education ASSET section



It can be seen from Figure 6.19 that, again, the middle scores of ASSET were associated with higher EI scores, with a dip in EI at both ends.

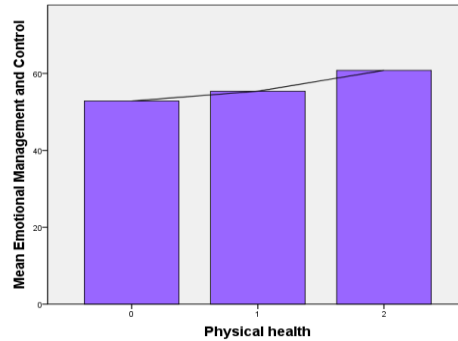
There was an approaching significance in the negative correlation between Management and Control, and the lifestyle section of ASSET ($r_s = -.15$; $p < .07$, one-tailed). As can be seen in Figure 6.20, when lifestyle was judged to be more problematic, EI was lower. This correlation was more in line with expectations.

Figure 6.20: Mean Management and Control and lifestyle ASSET section



As with other subsections of EI, Management and Control was positively related to physical health, as can be seen in Figure 6.21:

Figure 6.21: Mean Management and Control and physical health ASSET section



Summary of correlations of EI with ASSET scores

Tables 6.3 and 6.4 summarise all the correlations (significant, and those approaching significance), and the positive relationships found for total EI, and for the separate branches of EI and ASSET. It can clearly be seen that the majority of the relationships were positive, which was unexpected, and against the hypothesis. If the non-reversed dataset reflects a more reliable measure of EI than the reversed dataset, it is difficult to identify why there were so many positive relationships between different aspects of ASSET with EI, as the opposite was expected. This indicates that in this study, those with more difficulties in these areas were scoring higher EI levels, on average. However, it has already been mentioned that ASSET specifically measures criminogenic need, so needs not thought to lead to offending are not included in the assessment. This may mean that the ASSET sections do not adequately measure general needs in any particular area, which could have been a more useful benchmark for comparison with EI scores. This highlights the difficulty of using an assessment which is designed for a specific purpose in a different context. There is also debate about the accuracy of ASSET, as it depends heavily on subjective worker opinion (see Chapter 5: 116). The only negative correlations were concerning neighbourhood, implying a link between worker assessments of how criminogenic young people's neighbourhoods and those young people's EI, with increased criminogenic risk correlating with decreased EI.

Table 6.3: Correlations of EI with ASSET Scores

Area of investigation	Spearman's rho (r_s)	p value <
Total emotional intelligence and neighbourhood	-.15	.07
Understanding and neighbourhood	-.16	.06
Direct cognition and neighbourhood	-.16	.05
Management and Control and lifestyle	-.15	.07

Table 6.4: Aspects of EI positively related to ASSET Scores

Area of positive relationship
Total emotional intelligence and: living arrangements
Total emotional intelligence and statutory education
Recognition and expression and living arrangements
Recognition and expression and statutory education
Recognition and expression and physical health
Recognition and expression emotional and mental health
Recognition and expression and perception of self and others
Understanding and living arrangements
Direct cognition and living arrangements
Direct cognition and physical health
Management and Control and statutory education
Management and Control and physical health

Statistical correlations using other data from YOIS

The ASUEIT data were banded together into three groups for total EI (up to 160, 161 to 180, above 180, as it was felt that within this dataset, these values represented low, medium, and high), and two groups for each of the four constituent parts, to enable enough data in each cell for the requirements of Chi² test assumptions. The Chi² test assumes that all cells (sub-groups formed in the comparison) have a frequency of at least

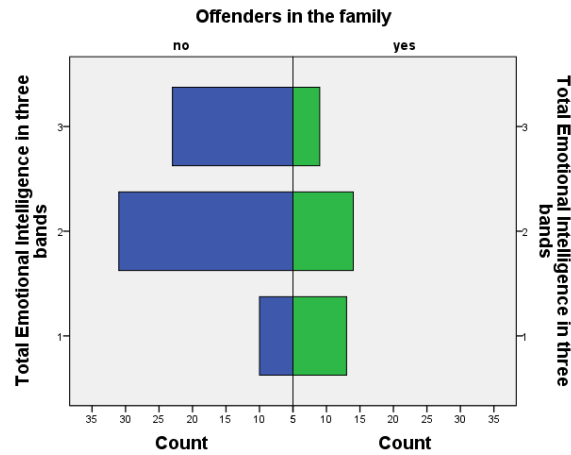
five, otherwise correlations may be invalid (Field, 2009: 692). This assumption meant that some areas could not be investigated in this way, including whether they were a parent, whether they had ever self harmed or considered suicide, whether they had ever been in custody, been involved with the Anti-Social Behaviour Unit, had alternative educational provision than mainstream school, were Looked After, or their gender and ethnicity. These are dealt with later through the use of *t*-tests. These aspects aside, Chi² tests allowed for correlations to be investigated between EI and other categorical data. There were several areas where a correlation might have been expected (because of previous research), but none found: having anger management issues, having ADHD, having offending peers, being impulsive, experiencing abuse or domestic violence, not attending school, having been permanently excluded from school, or having Special Educational Needs. Generally accepted correlations between low EI and increased drug and alcohol use were also not found in this sample (Brackett & Mayer, 2003: 199; Brackett et al., 2003: 234). However these were all subjective aspects of ASSET, requiring practitioner judgment written in an evidence box, the limitations of which were discussed in Chapter 5 (see page 116) so may not have been highly influenced by workers' opinions .

Offending history did not show any links with EI, although this, as measured by previous offences resulting in a conviction, was very highly correlated with ASSET ($r = 5.91(1)$; $p = .016$ (1 sided), $\Phi = -.243$ (small to medium effect size)). There were no correlations between EI scores and whether the young people had ever been with ISSP (an alternative to custody for the courts, see Chapter 5: 131), or whether they were a Prolific Young Offender (PYO) (see Chapter 3: 136). There were no correlations between EI and their age of first conviction (chosen as an interview sub-sample for this research, see Chapter 4: 98), or between EI and the number of offences for which the young people had been previously prosecuted. No correlations were found with the young people's risk of causing serious harm, as assessed by workers.

In terms of known risk factors, when total EI was compared with whether the young people had known offenders within their family (which also increases the risk of offending, Roe & Farrington, 1997: 178), there was a statistically significant correlation (Pearson Chi² (χ^2) = 5.53, df 2, exact significance .03 (1 sided), with a small to medium effect size (Phi (Φ) = .24), indicating that young people who had offending family members generally had a lower level of EI than those who did not. This is illustrated in a histogram in Figure 6.22. This shows that the young people identified in their ASSET as having offenders in their family were more likely to have an ASUEIT score in the lowest bands. Young people not reported

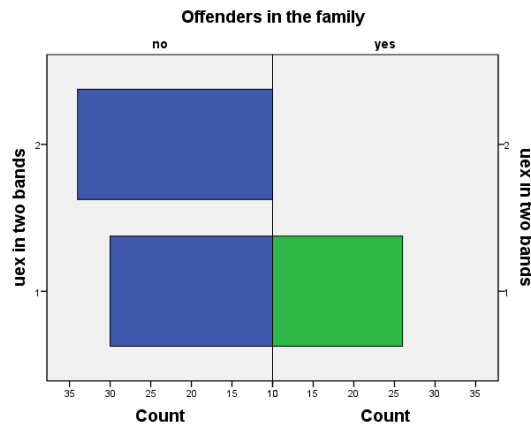
as having known offenders within their family were much more likely to have an ASUEIT score in the higher bands (with only a few scoring in the lowest band).

Figure 6.22: Total Emotional Intelligence (in three bands) and presence of offenders in the family



This correlation with having offenders in the family was also found with the Understanding branch (but not the other branches), where the significance was much higher ($\chi^2 = 6.01(1)$; $p = .01$ (1 sided), $\Phi = -.245$ (small to medium effect size)); as seen in Figure 6.23:

Figure 6.23: Understanding (in two bands) and presence of offenders in the family



Having low victim empathy (as assessed by workers) was found to correlate negatively with two branches of EI: Recognition and Expression ($\chi^2 = 4.38(1)$; $p = .03$ (1 sided), $\Phi = -.209$ (small effect size)) and Understanding ($\chi^2 = 4.47(1)$; $p = .03$ (1 sided), $\Phi = -.211$ (small effect size)), illustrated in Figures 6.24 and 6.25:

Figure 6.24: Recognition and Expression (in two bands) and victim empathy

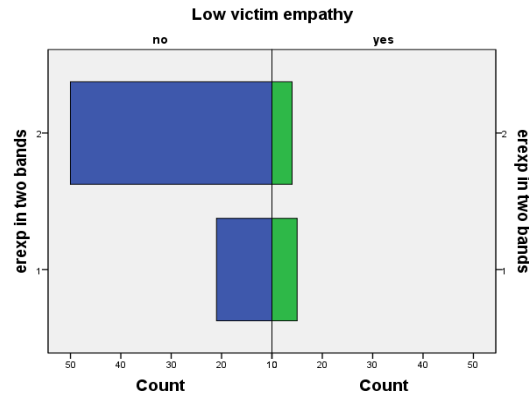
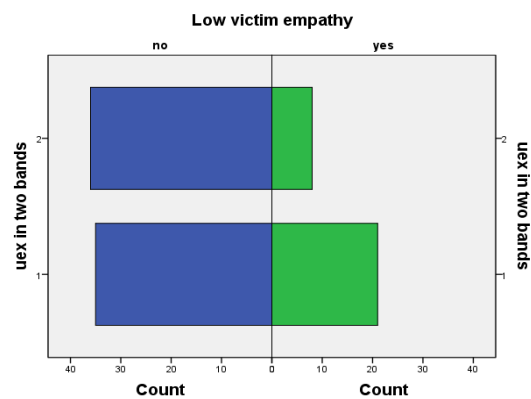
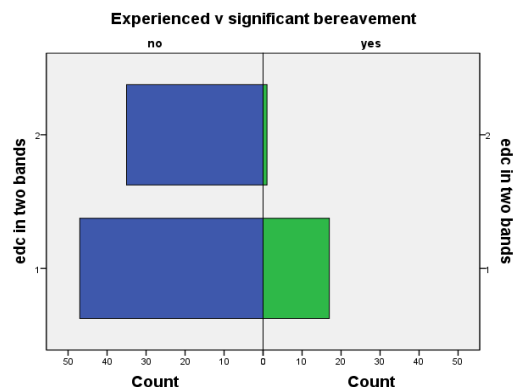


Figure 6.25: Understanding (in two bands) and victim empathy



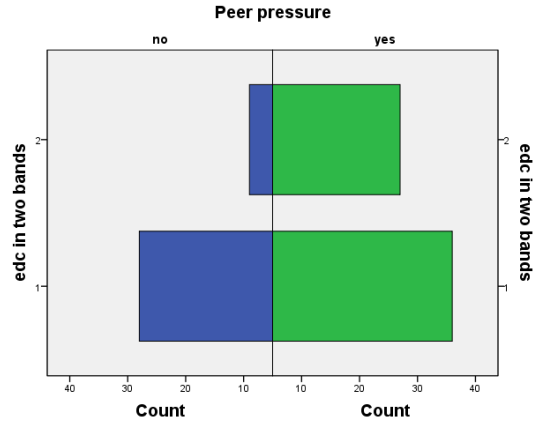
Having experienced a significant bereavement (like that of a parent or other very close family member) was found to correlate very significantly with Direct Cognition ($r = -0.83(1)$; $p = .002$ (1 sided), $\Phi = -.297$ (small to medium effect size)); see Figure 6.26. This shows that those who had experienced a significant bereavement were proportionately more likely to score in the lower band of Direct Cognition. However, the test with total EI did not meet the assumptions due to the low number of cases to which this applied (but showed an approaching significance), so this aspect is explored further in the *t*-tests section.

Figure 6.26: Direct Cognition (in two bands) and experience of significant bereavement



Young people who had been assessed as being susceptible to peer pressure showed a negative correlation with Direct Cognition ($r = -3.48(1)$; $p < .05$ (1 sided), $\Phi = .186$ (small effect size)), as evidenced in Figure 6.27:

Figure 6.27: Direct Cognition (in two bands) and peer pressure



Young people assessed by their worker as being impulsive were proportionately more likely to have a lower score in Direct Cognition ($r = -7.21(1)$; $p < .001$ (1 sided), $\Phi = .286$ (small to medium effect size)). This was a link made by Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990: 90; see Chapter 3: 83), so it is perhaps surprising that none of the other branches significantly correlated with this factor.

In terms of the young people's offences, Direct Cognition was found to be significantly linked with both the type of offence for which they were currently serving their order, in terms of whether it was against the person, or otherwise ($r = -5.32(1)$; $p < .02$ (1 sided), $\Phi = .231$ (small effect size)), and the seriousness of their index offence (the main offence for which they received their Supervision Order) ($r = -3.51(1)$; $p < .05$ (1 sided), $\Phi = .187$ (small effect size)), see Figures 6.28 and 6.29:

Figure 6.28: Direct Cognition (in two bands) and offence type

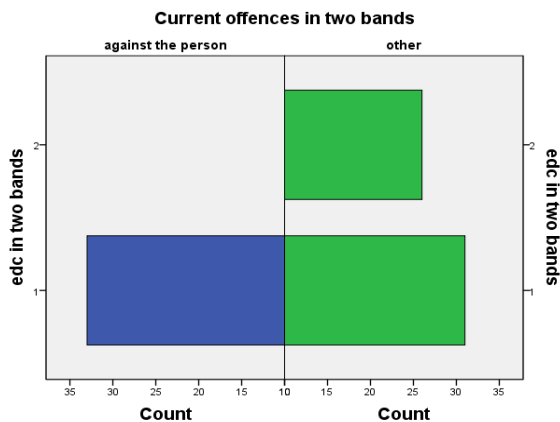
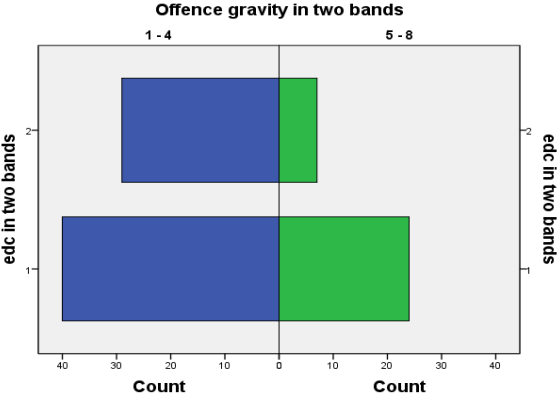


Figure 6.29: Direct Cognition (in two bands) and seriousness of index offence



Those with disrupted living arrangements, as detailed in the ASSET assessments, were positively related to levels of Recognition and Expression and Understanding. These are shown in Figures 6.30 and 6.31. Management and Control showed slightly lesser, but still positive, relationship with this factor.

Figure 6.30: Recognition and Expression (in two bands) and reporting of disrupted living arrangements

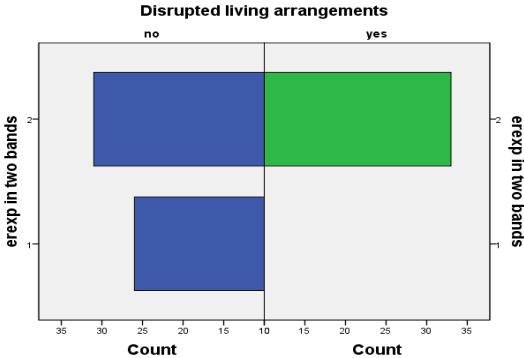
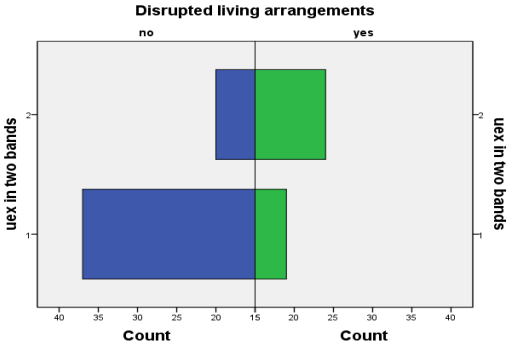


Figure 6.31: Understanding (in two bands) and reporting of disrupted living arrangements



It can be seen from Figures 6.30 and 6.31 that young people with disrupted living arrangements were more likely to score higher on both Recognition and Expression, and Understanding. This is the opposite of what might have been expected, and goes against other correlations detailed above, although it does seem to be in keeping with the Spearman's rho analyses, which found many positive relationships between EI and higher ASSET scores, especially the living arrangements section, which might have provided similar information as for the formulation of this factor.

Some other areas showed correlations which were approaching significance: Direct Cognition with having alternative education provision ($r = -3.49(1)$; $p < .06$ (1 sided), $\Phi = .086$ (very small effect size)), Management and Control with experiences of bullying ($r = -3.43(1)$; $p < .07$ (1 sided), $\Phi = .185$ (very small effect size)), and Direct Cognition with having contact issues with a parent (which means they had difficulty with contact, for a variety of reasons) ($r = -2.90(1)$; $p < .07$ (1 sided), $\Phi = .170$ (very small effect size)).

Summary of correlations with other YOIS data

Table 6.5 shows a number of areas with correlations between different aspects of EI and factors taken from YOIS. All the directions of association were negative, indicating that to have difficulties in that area correlated with having EI in the lower bands (apart from positive relationships with living arrangements, which was also positive in the ASSET analyses). Although the nature of these associations cannot be identified through this research design, there would seem to be enough evidence to support a longitudinal study to look more at causation. It should be pointed out, however, that some of the effect sizes are relatively low.

Table 6.5: Correlations of EI with ASSET information

Area of investigation	Chi ² () (df)	p value < 1 sided	Phi (Φ)
Total EI and offenders in the family	5.53 (2)	.03*	.240
Understanding and offenders in the family	6.01(1)	.01**	-.245
Recognition and Expression and low victim empathy	4.38(1)	.03*	-.209
Understanding and low victim empathy	4.47(1)	.03*	-.211
Direct Cognition and significant bereavement	8.83(1)	.002**	-.209
Direct Cognition and peer pressure	3.48(1)	.05*	.186
Direct Cognition and being impulsive	7.21(1)	.001**	.286
Direct Cognition and type of index offence	5.32(1)	.02*	.231
Direct Cognition and seriousness of index offence	3.51(1)	.05*	.187
Direct Cognition and alternative education provision	3.49(1)	.06	.086
Management and Control and experiences of bullying	3.43(1)	.07	.185
Direct Cognition and contact issues with a parent	2.90(1)	.07	.170

* significant at the 0.05 level

** significant at the 0.01 level

Some identified categories of criminogenic need showed no correlations whatsoever with any aspects of EI, as measured by the ASUEIT. These categories were: having anger management issues, ADHD, offending peers, being impulsive, experiencing abuse or domestic violence, school attendance, permanent exclusions from school, Special Educational Needs, problematic drug and alcohol, young people who have been on ISSP, PYOs, age of first conviction, number of offences for which the young people had been previously prosecuted, and assessed risk of causing serious harm to others.

T-tests on YOIS data

Some areas could not be analysed using the Chi² test because the sample size breached the assumptions of cell counts. These were looked at by using *t*-tests, which compare means to see if there are any significant differences in different populations. Some of the young people were parents themselves, but the mean total EI of those who were not parents ($M = 170.66$, $SE = 3.04$) and those who were ($M = 168.88$, $SE = 8.08$) was not significant $t(98) = .169$, $p \Rightarrow .05$. There was also no significance in the difference between

the mean Total EI score for those who had not self harmed ($M = 169.46$, $SE = 3.04$) and those who had ($M = 180.10$, $SE = 8.12$), $t(98)=-1.12$, $p=>.05$. However there was a difference in the Direct Cognition of those who had self harmed ($M = 32.20$, $SE = 2.40$) and those who had not ($M = 27.39$, $SE = .697$), $t(98)=-2.15$, $p=<.05$. As can be seen from the mean scores, those who had self harmed actually scored higher on Direct Cognition than those who had not. This might seem unexpected, but it could be a reflection of the fact that self harm is used by many as a coping strategy (Whitlock et al., 2006: 408), therefore fits quite well into the branch of Direct Cognition (see Chapter 2: 19). The difference between total EI scores for young people who had thought about suicide ($M = 163.75$, $SE = 4.41$) compared with those who had not ($M = 171.11$, $SE = 3.08$), was non-significant $t(98)=.70$, $p=>.05$. Those who had experienced abuse did not have a significantly different total EI score ($M = 171.29$, $SE = 5.51$) from those who had not ($M = 170.36$, $SE = 3.27$), $t(98)=-.122$, $p=>.05$. The same was true of those who had experienced domestic violence ($M = 177.50$, $SE = 7.62$), when compared with those who had not ($M = 169.38$, $SE = 3.08$), $t(98)=-.986$, $p=>.05$. Some of the young people had been bereaved of parents by death, although this was only a relatively small number ($n=10$), but these young people's total EI scores were significantly lower ($M = 151.40$, $SE = 12.39$), $t(98)=-.2.28$, $p=.025$), when the means were compared, than those who had not lost a parent through death ($M = 172.64$, $SE = 2.80$), $t(98)=-.2.28$, $p=.025$).

Those who had been in custody did not have a significantly different mean total EI score ($M = 170.10$, $SE = 2.93$) from those who had not ($M = 173.58$, $SE = 10.64$), $t(98)=-.394$, $p=>.05$. Those receiving their education in an alternative way from mainstream school did not have a significantly different mean total EI ($M = 169.85$, $SE = 4.00$) from those at mainstream school ($M = 171.61$, $SE = 3.79$), $t(98)=.296$, $p=>.05$), although there was significance in the Direct Cognition scores of those attending alternatives ($M = 26.89$, $SE = .970$), and those in mainstream ($M = 29.47$, $SE = .798$), $t(98)=2.60$, $p=<.05$. Finally, ethnicity was not found to be significant, as the mean total EI of those young people identifying as white ($M = 170.57$, $SE = 2.96$) was similar to those identifying as non-white ($M = 170.10$, $SE = 10.78$), $t(98)=.049$, $p=>.05$). Where not mentioned, the individual branches of EI also showed no significance in mean differences. It should be stated though that some of these t -tests used very small numbers, so use of the questionnaire with a larger sample group might bring out other significant differences, or absorb ones detailed above.

Desistance, persistence, and ASUEIT levels

In order to look at desistance from offending and persistence in committing crime, and whether this correlated in any way with ASUEIT scores, longitudinal data were needed. For this, re-convictions (or guilty pleas, if there had not yet been a conviction) of each young person completing a questionnaire were logged for a period of a year following the completion of the questionnaire stage, which resulted in data covering the whole of the year from January to the end of December 2010. One single follow up period was used, despite the questionnaires being conducted over a period of time, because unfortunately the majority of them had been returned undated, but it still reflected a year post-questionnaire for all the young people, without significantly increasing this data-gathering beyond the time available. The variables used for these analyses were number of new offences for which the young people had received a conviction or to which they had pleaded guilty, the offence gravity index (calculated by adding together the offence gravities (see Appendix 12) for each new offence committed to gain a single number representative of both seriousness and frequency), and whether the young people had experienced custody in 2010. These data were then inputted into the database to see whether the levels of reoffending correlated with the ASUEIT level, the hypothesis being that they would be negatively related (that is, a higher ASUEIT level would be correlated with a lower number of further offences, taken through the courts during that year).

Two areas showing negative correlations of approaching significance with the number of new offences in 2010, were total EI ($r = -8.33(4)$; $p = .078$, $\Phi = .295$), and Recognition and Expression ($r = -5.10(2)$; $p < .078$, $\Phi = .231$). However, Understanding was significantly negatively correlated with the number of new offences ($r = -6.21(2)$; $p < .05$, $\Phi = .254$), and the offence gravity index ($r = -8.40(2)$; $p < .02$, $\Phi = .296$); see Figures 6.32 and 6.33:

Figure 6.32: Mean Understanding and offences committed in 2010

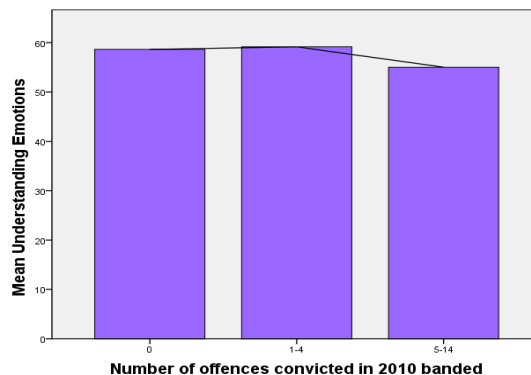
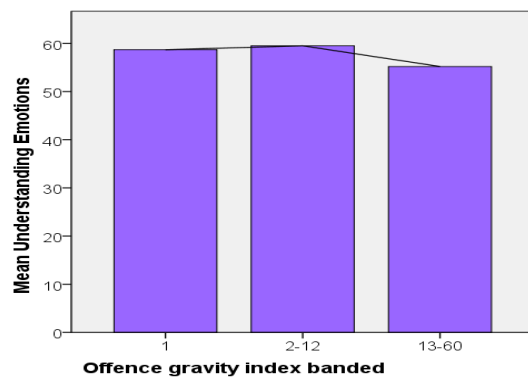


Figure 6.33: Mean Understanding and offence gravity index



When a *t*-test was performed to compare the means of offence gravity index during 2010 using those scoring a total EI above or below 170 (the cut off point for the top two groups of EI, with nearly half of respondents in each section, 50 greater than 170, 46 below, cases with some missing responses (presumably because they were simply missed during the session) being excluded), the result was somewhat more emphatic. The mean total 2010 offence gravity index for young people who scored above 170 on total EI ($M = 7.40$, $SE = 1.40$) was significantly lower than for those scoring at or below 170 ($M = 13.22$, $SE = 2.19$), $t(94) = -2.28$, $p = .025$ (2 tailed). This was also true of Recognition and Expression, which when split into two equal halves of those scoring 32 or more in this section, and those scoring less than 32 (48 cases in each half), the higher scoring young people had a significantly lower mean offence gravity index ($M = 7.60$, $SE = 1.48$) than those scoring below 32 ($M = 12.78$, $SE = 2.11$), $t(94) = -2.01$, $p < .05$ (2 tailed). This shows that although total EI with this population was not able to predict new offending, it was able to predict a combination of new offending and seriousness, as was the Recognition and Expression, and Understanding individual EI branches. This means that young people with a lower EI score generally had a higher offence gravity index. It would be interesting to replicate the study with a more robust administration protocol (or the same person administering each time) and a larger sample, to see whether these predictive qualities held.

However, it was interesting to note that there was also no significant correlation between further offending and ASSET score, as recorded when the questionnaire was completed, although there was a correlation with spending time in custody in 2010 ($r = .513(1)$; $p < .02$, $\Phi = .229$). This clearly does not reflect the same predictive ability of offending for ASSET as was found in other research (Baker et al., 2003; see Chapter 4: 114). In this study with this population, the EI score was a better predictor of further offending seriousness than was the ASSET score. Correlations were found when further offending (as defined above) was

compared with other categorical data. Further offending was highly significantly linked with having offenders in the family ($r = 9.55(2)$, $p < .008$, $\Phi = 315$), and with peer pressure ($r = 6.55(2)$, $p < .04$, $\Phi = 261$), which is consistent with the literature (see Chapter 3).

As with any statistical computations, it is possible that statistical significance was shown in some areas where in reality there was none (type I error). It is also possible for the converse to be true, that areas showing no statistical significance in their correlations were subject to a type II error, which erroneously attributes no correlations where in reality they exist. The chance of this occurring was increased with a small sample size of this nature, and so should be taken into consideration with any findings of statistical significance.

Does the ASUEIT fit with the model?

The original research carried out to test the ASUEIT for young people (adapted from a work-based adult questionnaire) found that the questionnaire fit either a four or five factor model, but decided that the number of factors making theoretical sense was four. These four factors explained 30.4 per cent of the variance, using the 57 factors in the questionnaire used in this study (Luebbers et al., 2006: 7). The factor loadings were checked after use with this sample to see whether they remained fitting the four factor model (or indeed the five factor original model) using principal components analysis. It should be pointed out at this stage that the dataset used was the non-reversed one, which showed better reliability, but some young people will have understood the reverse scoring, making the non-reversing fallible as a technique to overcome the confusion this caused.

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure (which indicates whether the sample is likely to show distinct and reliable factors, and must be $>.5$, and ideally $>.7$ for this to be the case) showed that the sampling adequacy was not acceptable (given the small sample size, and the fact that there were some missing values which were excluded, resulting in $N=81$), $KMO=.453$; many of the individual items were also below $.500$, so these were then excluded from the analysis. This left 35 items in the principal components analysis, $KMO=.706$, all individual $KMO >.500$. Bartlett's test of sphericity (which identifies whether the correlations between the factors are large enough for them to be considered related, and should be significantly different from zero, although with a small sample size like this, significance does not necessarily guarantee that correlations between factors are large enough for a meaningful analysis) of $(595)=1319.93$, $p < .001$, showed that inter-item correlations were large enough for principal components analysis. The principal components analysis used an oblique (oblimin, with Kaiser normalisation) rotation (a

method used to improve interpretability in factor analysis by maximizing factor loadings which are already large, and minimizing those which are small), as the factors were inter-related. Eleven components had eigenvalues over Kaiser's criterion of 1, explaining 72.59 per cent of the variance. However, having eleven factors seemed cumbersome, so the scree plot was considered, which indicated that either three or five factors would be justified in being retained for the model (see Appendix 14). When looking at the items within the components, the only model which made theoretical sense was a three factor one, with each factor having an eigenvalue over 2. This explained 40.659 per cent of the variance, considerably more than the four factors from the original research.

Items were considered as contributing to a factor if they had a factor loading of above 0.4 (Field, 2009: 645), as can be seen in the pattern and structure matrices (see Appendix 15 and 16). The pattern matrix shows which items loaded onto each factor, and the factor loading (factor loadings below 0.4 have been omitted). On an oblique rotation, the pattern matrix can sometimes suppress values because of relationships between factors, so the structure matrix completes the picture by combining factor correlation coefficients, thereby assigning a factor to each item. The structure matrix, however, shows that item 16 did not load onto any of the three factors, therefore this item has been excluded, producing a questionnaire of 34 items for this factor structure.

The three factors were categorised as follows: factor 1: 'Decision-making and emotional management', factor 2: 'Perceiving, communicating, and coping with own emotions', and factor 3: 'Understanding and influencing others' emotions'. 'Decision-making and emotional management' consisted of items 3, 17, 18, 21, 22, 23, 24, 28, 37, 43, and 57, and appeared to have merged the original categories of Direct Cognition and Management and Control. Most items in this factor pertained to using one's emotions in making decisions, and how well emotions are controlled. For example, item 3 is 'I use my 'gut feelings' when I try to solve problems, item 18 is 'When I try to solve problems I keep my feelings out of it, and item 43 is 'You should stop your feelings from having a big influence over any important decisions'. 'Perceiving, communicating, and coping with own emotions' consisted of items 7, 10, 14, 29, 30, 38, 42, 45, 48, 51, and 53. These items mainly centre around an individual's ability to know how they feel, communicate this with others, and cope with those emotions, and would appear to be similar to the original factor of Recognition and Expression. For example, item 7 is 'I find it hard to talk about my feelings to other people', item 29 is 'I find it hard to think clearly when I am worried about something', and item 53 is 'When things go wrong in my life, I find it hard to stay positive'.

'Understanding and influencing others' emotions' consisted of items 1, 8, 26, 32, 34, 39, 41, 44, 46, 47, and 54, which mainly concern empathy for others, similar to the original Understanding factor, but with some added elements concerning influence over others. For example item 1 is 'I can tell how others are feeling', item 32 is 'I can pick up on what the 'vibe' is when other people are talking about something, and item 44 is 'I easily notice the 'feel' or atmosphere of different situations and places' (see Appendix 5 for a full list of the ASUEIT items). However, it should be noted that not all items within the factor made a good fit with these categories, for example item 26 ('I can show people how I am feeling through my body language') statistically fell into factor three, 'Understanding and influencing others', but it may more comfortably fit with factor two, 'Perceiving, communicating, and coping with own emotions'. This shows that more work may be needed to make clearer categories. However, taking into consideration the reservations expressed earlier about whether some young people might have understood the reverse scoring, while the majority clearly did not, this might have skewed the results somewhat. It would be a useful next step to trial the abridged questionnaire, using the reliable items outlined earlier (which could mitigate against the problems found with questionnaire fatigue, since it is somewhat shorter) with a larger sample of young people who have offended to see whether the model is stable.

These factors were all tested for reliability, and found to have good reliability throughout, with a very high reliability for all the factors together, which has been called total EI. These eigenvalues, percentage of variance, and alpha values can be seen in Table 6.6:

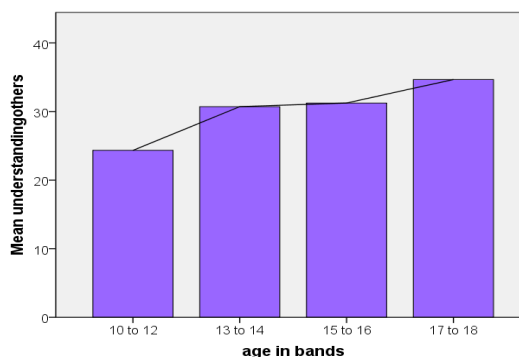
Table 6.6: Three Factor Model eigenvalues, percentage of variance and reliability scores

Factor	Label	Number of items	Eigenvalue	% explained variance	Cumulative variance %	Cronbach's alpha α
1	Decision-making and emotional management	12	8.964	25.610	25.610	.804
2	Perceiving, communicating, and coping with own emotions	11	3.124	8.927	34.537	.856
3	Understanding and influencing others' emotions	11	2.143	6.122	40.659	.817
	Total EI	34				.901

Methodologically, there are reservations about the new structure, which could be resolved with further research, as already suggested. Tentative analyses of the new branches with other variables shows that the branch of 'understanding and influencing others' emotions'

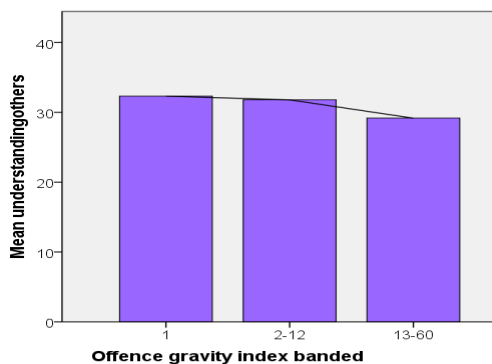
correlates very significantly with age, a correlation which was expected from previous research ($r_s = .260$; $p = .005$, one-tailed; significant at the .01 level). This is demonstrated in Figure 6.34, where it can clearly be seen that as the age of the young person increased, so their level of ‘understanding and influencing others’ emotions’ increased.

Figure 6.34: Understanding and influencing others’ emotions and age



There was also correlation between this branch of the new model and the offence gravity index of new offences committed during 2010 ($r_s = -.174$; $p < .05$, one-tailed), as demonstrated in Figure 6.35:

Figure 6.35: Understanding and influencing others’ emotions and offence gravity index of new offences in 2010



It can be seen that at the higher levels of offence gravity index (more serious crimes), the level of ‘understanding and influencing others’ emotions’ dips. This could be seen as logical, because this branch would encompass some aspects of empathy, and therefore victim empathy, as it is about appreciating the emotions of others. Unfortunately these correlations do not hold for the other branches, or for total EI in this model, and are just examples of how the new model could be tested against other variables. However, these correlations would need to be retested if the model was found to be stable after more rigorous use of this questionnaire with a larger sample.

Summary and conclusion

The relationships between the ASUEIT and ASSET sections were largely unexpected, because many of them were positive when they might have been expected to be negative, therefore proving the null hypothesis. This may be because of accuracy concerns in the writing of ASSETs by workers, and how appropriate it is to use these scores in a quantitative way, based as they are on subjective assessment. It could be that some difficult aspects of young people's lives make them *more* emotionally resilient, causing a positive relationship between ASSET and EI, but this seems unlikely, taking in the whole picture. There may also be inaccuracies which have emerged through the use of the ASUEIT without reversing answers which were designed to be reversed (even though this led to a questionnaire with a substantially higher reliability). If this questionnaire were used again with this type of sample, then a more rigorous administration protocol would be needed to ensure that all the young people understood the reverse scored questions, and could confidently choose their desired answer. If one person administered all the questionnaires, then this would be much easier to achieve, and would militate against the potential for socially desirable answering of a young person towards their own worker, with whom they already have a relationship.

The correlates from the wider YOIS information were mainly negatively linked, consistent with the hypothesis that EI would have links with offending data. It was perhaps not surprising that low victim empathy was significantly linked with two branches of EI: Recognition and Expression, and Understanding, the first two branches of the model. Other areas of correlation may reflect some of the ways in which EI develops in people (see Chapter 2: 28), through the family (offending family, and issues with parental contact), peers (peer pressure), and experiences of school (alternative provision and bullying), although it seems anomalous that living arrangements had a positive correlation with three separate branches of EI.

It is of great interest that total EI, Recognition and Expression, and the Understanding branches of EI seemed to predict further offending when combined with seriousness of those offences (as measured by adding up offence gravities for each new offence) in this sample to some degree, but this would need to be replicated in a larger sample, with a tighter administration protocol than this current study used, and with a longer follow-up period, to see whether this quality remained. Total ASSET score was expected to have been significantly linked with further offending, which in this case it was not, so ASUEIT

scores provided a better prediction of new offending than ASSET scores for this population in this study. This could have been as a result of errors, mentioned earlier, or a factor specific to this sample, which a larger one may not have shown. It could also be a reflection of the relatively short follow-up period.

It was found, through principal components analysis, that a three factor model was a better fit for this sample and this dataset, resulting in branches of 'decision-making and emotional management', 'perceiving, communicating, and coping with own emotions', and 'understanding and influencing others' emotions. This model was supported by a shorter questionnaire, which would mitigate the difficulties caused by the length of the current ASUEIT, possibly making it more usable with this type of young person. The new model was based on the non-reversed dataset, which could mean that it is not stable over a larger sample, with a tighter administration protocol (enabling the reverse scores to be used as designed) to ensure a universal understanding of the questions. However, there would be value in testing the new, edited questionnaire, with a larger sample, to check for model stability, and subsequential correlation analyses to look for correlations with other variables related to offending.

The analysis now turns to the qualitative semi-structured interviews which were conducted with a variety of young people in four main categories of Looked After Children, those who first offended at a young age, and those scoring the top and bottom deciles on the ASUEIT questionnaire. This was with a view to looking at their understanding of emotions and empathy as these related to their offences.

Chapter 7: Interview analyses – how the young people viewed their offending, criminal career, and victims,

This chapter discusses interviews conducted with a sample of young people from the questionnaire cohort. The selection of interviewees was initially based on four criteria (see Chapter 4 for details about these criteria, and notes concerning practical difficulties constraining selection). The interviews looked at the young people's own thoughts concerning their offence, how their victims were affected, and whether they intended to desist from offending. They also tested the reliability of the Adolescent Swinburne University Emotional Intelligence Test (ASUEIT) with this cohort, to see whether the questionnaire results were consistent with each young person's ability to see and understand their own and others' emotions in a practical exercise. Comparisons were therefore made between ASUEIT results and questionnaire responses. The last aim was to give some of the participants a voice within the research, as behind each ASUEIT was an individual, with a unique understanding of their world, and of the concepts under examination. It was likely during these discussions with the young people that other issues would arise, worthy of exploration.

In order to address the stated aims, the interviews had to enable the young people to talk about their own emotions, how they related to others, and their thoughts about their offending career. In order to do this, the young people's current offence (the one for which they had received their current order) was felt to be the best vehicle for discussions about all these issues. It comprised one definable set of actions, with specific known consequences, identifiable victims, and about which the young people were likely to have a range of feelings. It was also likely to be an event about which they had a clear memory, but failing this, an account was available (through ASSET) and brought to the interview to stimulate memory.

Those interviewed formed four categories: young people who were looked after by the Local Authority (Looked After), those having a low age of first criminal conviction, and those scoring the top and bottom decile in their ASUEIT results. These interview groups were selected before the quantitative analyses were conducted, as the interviews began before all the ASUEIT questionnaires were completed. As a result of this, the top and bottom deciles were selected before the dataset was altered to a non-reversed one. It is also useful to note here that the quantitative analyses (see Chapter 6) did not show

significance for relationships between being Looked After or having a low age of first conviction and EI. The interviews might shed more light on this.

The interviews were designed to assess whether the young people's offending patterns (onset, frequency, seriousness, and desistance) bore any relation to their assessed emotional intelligence (EI) level, through the ASUEIT and demonstrated understanding. To look at desistance, the young people's responses were compared with convicted offences committed in the 12 months post-interview to check for consistency (whether they were able to desist, having stated a desire to do so). To quantify the seriousness of further offences, the number committed within this period either dealt with, or pleaded guilty to, were added together using the offence gravity rating (see Appendix 12) to produce a figure (called the offence gravity index). This enabled comparisons to be made, reflecting both seriousness and prolificacy (for example, someone committing two offences with a gravity rating of six and one with a rating of three would score 15). However, this may not have reflected the true reoffending rate of these young people, since conviction rates of crimes is low (Anderson et al., 2010: 146). However, since there was a significant link for the ASUEIT sample group between their measured EI and offence gravity index in the 12 months post-questionnaire (see Chapter 6: 179), this would be the expected result here, and would point to predictive qualities for the ASUEIT of further offending.

These analyses briefly consider the distinct but related concepts of EI and empathy, enabled by the inclusion of an empathy scale, to see whether the concepts were found to be different (Lane, 2000: 173, see Chapter 2: 39). The sample was too small to check for significant correlations between these concepts and the young people's offending, but trends were sought, which could constitute material for further research. The empathy scores were broken down into five separate constituents: suffering, positive sharing, responsive crying, emotional attention, and feeling for others (see Chapter 4: 102, Appendix 9).

The interviews covered several defining issues: the young people's understanding of victims (see Chapter 3: 64), and empathy towards them (see Chapter 2: 39 for more about empathy); the motivations for their actions; their emotions around what they had done, and may do in the future; and the young people's perceptions of themselves (for more details about the interview structure, see Chapter 4: 100). These data are presented through a case study profile of each young person in order of ASUEIT score, beginning with the highest, and given an alphabetical pseudonym according to this order (the highest scorer interviewed was given the name Anna). Presenting these data in their categories was

considered, but was thought potentially confusing, as many of the interviewees fit more than one interview criterion (for example, some were Looked After, but also had a low age of first conviction). Themes discussed are detailed after presentation of the individual cases.

Concepts addressed through the interview analyses

The interviews were designed to draw out several themes from the young people, for example their empathy towards victims, and criminal careers. However, when talking to young people using a semi-structured interview technique, space is available for other themes or ideas, which the young people themselves see as important, to emerge. Many of these young people identified as victims themselves, and sought to minimise their actions when discussing their offence in a variety of ways. These themes are outlined to provide some theoretical background to the interview discussions.

Planned concepts explored in interview

The interviews were structured to explore a number of issues: how well the young people could identify and communicate their emotions regarding their actions, their empathy levels (and how these related to EI), and how this affected young people's views of their victims, their opinion on whether they wanted to desist or not (with the ability to look prospectively at further offending to see whether stated aims to desist were in fact realised), and how well their ASUEIT level was reflected in their actual ability to communicate aspects of the four branches of EI during interview.

The concept of empathy has been discussed in detail earlier (see Chapter 2: 39), and aspects of empathy are incorporated in the first branch of the Mayer and Salovey EI model (see Chapter 2: 18), so the two concepts should be related, but should not be indistinguishable. Use of the empathy scale in the interviews presented an opportunity to assess the young people's own view of how well they relate to other people's emotions, but the actual interview gave them the opportunity to demonstrate their empathy towards the feelings of their victim. The two types of empathy were assessed to see whether they could demonstrate cognitive empathy (being able to objectively identify what someone else might be feeling), and affective empathy (being able to actually feel what someone else might be feeling). Previous research (Way, 2004: 165; see Chapter 2: 39) has found that having cognitive empathy does not appear to reduce the propensity for offending (and may increase it in certain circumstances), but that affective empathy does impact on

offending levels. Both of these empathy branches were considered and addressed during the interviews to look at the impact on both offending and EI levels.

It was always part of this research design to look at criminal careers and whether there seemed to be any links to be made with this and EI. Work on criminal careers has usefully divided this into stages, like onset, maintenance (including seriousness, frequency, and specialisation), and desistance (a process often consisting of declining levels of those factors indicated in maintenance (Maruna et al., 2004a: 18)), as the significant factors for each may not be identical (Smith et al., 1991: 8; see Chapter 3: 78 for a longer discussion). It could be that if EI were found not to be associated with one aspect (for example, onset), this may not preclude its possible significance in others (for example desistance). Onset was examined through the interview group of young people convicted at the age of 12 or younger; frequency, seriousness, and other more offence-specific factors were assessed by looking more closely at the offences committed, and their gravity rating; desistance was analysed by the young people's attitudes to their offending, how they viewed their potential future activities, and a comparison of this with actual reconviction levels post-interview.

In terms of onset and maintenance, theories have been discussed earlier about the factors which put young people more at risk of committing crime (see Chapter 3: 58). However, beyond this actuarial system of assessing risk and protective factors, other motivations have been identified, which are looked at in the interview analyses. Strain theory (Agnew, 1992: 50; see Chapter 3: 82) has been partly theorised as dealing with the discrepancy between being treated as one would wish, and the reality. Agnew (1992) extended this to include being prevented from achieving generally accepted goals, and the solving of these problems by the committing of crime. The Good Lives Model (Ward & Langlands, 2009: 208) then takes this further. This acknowledges that people will try to solve their inability to reach goals, generally the desire of most people to achieve, by criminal means if they have no other. The solution then lies in the adoption of more pro-social methods for the achievement of these, possibly through the help of an intervention.

With regard to desistance, a range of findings from previous research were used to assess young people's attitudes. Factors associated with the desistance process have been identified (for a fuller discussion, see Chapter 3: 78), but it seems that desistance always begins with a decision to desist, whatever the reason for that might be, whether this is initially successful or not (Bottoms et al., 2004: 374). The reasons for this decision can be

summarised as falling into two basic categories, although these are by no means mutually exclusive: the structures around the offender, and their exercising of personal agency (or decision-making, although it can be argued that this is usually needed as a starting point for desistance, even if this has been forced by circumstances, for example, being evicted). Structural elements include the need to identify and overcome obstacles, and the occurrence of opportunities for 'turning points' (which might include gaining a partner, leaving school and gaining employment, leaving behind offending friendship groups). Factors based on personal agency include the decision to desist because the risk of punishment is no longer seen as worth it (seen as working alongside the techniques of neutralisation), wanting to change self perception to a non-criminal persona, the need to see the offending self as being different from the normal self (implying a non-acceptance of responsibility), that desistance is actually a rebellious act in itself (of beating the 'system' that would keep them down), and attainment of basic human goals by pro-social rather than criminal means (Farrall & Calverley, 2006; Maruna et al., 2004b; Sampson & Laub, 1993; Warr, 1998; Ward & Langlands, 2009). Interview analyses looked at these factors, beginning with whether the young people had made a decision to desist in the future or not, and what their consequential conviction rate was (insofar as this can reflect their reoffending). Reasons for the success or failure of this decision (and for the decision in the first place) were postulated, relating to the theories of desistance (see Chapter 3: 78).

Concepts arising from the interviews

Two emerging themes seemed dominant in many of the interviews. The first was that many of the young people found justifications for their actions making them appear more acceptable, in line with 'techniques of neutralisation', first identified by Sykes and Matza (1957). The second was the young people's views about victims: both the people they had victimised through their offence, and their view of themselves as being the victim.

Research has looked at techniques used by people who commit crime deflecting responsibility onto someone else, often the victim. The notion of 'Techniques of neutralization' was first introduced by Sykes and Matza (1957: 664-760) which identified a range of justifications for criminal acts, making them appear more acceptable. These include denying responsibility, denying injury, denying that the victim is a victim, making those condemning the act seem wrong thereby removing their moral high ground, and appealing to the influence of higher loyalties (like an older sibling who offends). They acknowledged that some people do not try to rationalise their actions in this way, and may

not be sufficiently concerned about being thought acceptable to society to adapt their actions accordingly. This work was used by Shiner and Newburn (1997) in their investigation into the apparent normalisation of drug use among young people. They concluded that young people who used drugs and those who did not held the same censorious views about drugs, the main difference being the employment by drug-users of neutralisation techniques allowing them to participate in an activity of which they essentially disapproved. This demonstrated the value of the Sykes and Matza thesis in a modern context, transferable to this study. It is common for those working with young people in the Youth Justice System (YJS) to encounter a variety of offence minimisations, making identification of the truth difficult. Many of the young people in interview did this according to the theory outlined above. However, this is in tension with some of the desistance theorists who, as indicated above, found that having 'positive illusions' about oneself as a non-offender can promote desistance. Therefore the interviews were also analysed to see whether any of these justifications were at work helping the young person to see their actions as acceptable, or whether they viewed themselves as a non-offender, and were able to desist in the light of this.

Young people viewing themselves as victims arose as a strong theme from some of the interviews. Young people who offend and young people who are victims are often one and the same (Rutter et al., 1998: 187; see Chapter 3: 64), and many of the young people interviewed saw themselves as the victim in the situation, sometimes as the most affected, sometimes offending because they had been the victim of a different situation. The ESYTC found a two-way relationship, as young people who were victims were more likely to experience crime, and young people who had committed crime were more likely to become victims (Smith & Ecob, 2007: 252). A young person aged 12 to 19 is twice as likely to become a victim of crime as someone over the age of 20 (Lauritsen et al., 1991: 266). There are some logical reasons why this might be so. The 'routine activities' and 'lifestyle' theories suggest that the demographics for victims are similar to that of offenders (for example, higher levels in areas of social deprivation), they are more likely to already be involved in delinquent lifestyles, putting them into contact with others who may victimise them, and in a closer proximity to crime generally (Smith & Ecob, 2007: 253). They may be living a riskier lifestyle, including drinking outside late at night, increasing their likelihood of becoming victims of gangs or of other types of violence. Young people already involved with offending are likely to have a lower level of potentially protective parental supervision (Finkelhor, 2007: 27; Lauritsen et al., 1991: 268). Young people might be more victimised than other groups because not only do they suffer from crime which also happens to

adults, but they also suffer from child-specific crime, like child abuse (Finkelhor, 2007: 10). This increases their 'proneness', which has been developed into a selection of characteristics, including the extent to which they encourage their own victimisation (in their relationships with peers, and choice of the same), how much they put themselves at risk, their personal vulnerabilities increasing their risk, the attractiveness they present as a victim (having desirable items, being a child to a paedophile), and how easy a target they would make (exacerbated by poor relations with the police which might decrease the chances of them reporting such incidences) (Goodey, 2005: 72).

Views on victims and offenders, and the relationship between the two, have been expounded in a variety of ways, but particularly by the Left Realists (Matthews & Young, 1992: 6) (who sought to bring the reality of crime to the political Left), with the Left Realist Square of Crime, incorporating the state (including the criminal justice system), criminal offenders, the general public (or society), and victims (whether they are aware that they are victims or not) (Matthews & Young, 1992:17). The interaction of these four aspects alters the way in which each is viewed. For example, an offender is not viewed so seriously (and a victim not so harmed) if the crime in question is one that, while categorised as a crime by the state, is a socially acceptable way of achieving a societal norm, for example two young people aged 15 who have consensual sexual intercourse. Victims can be viewed differently depending on the prevailing culture and accepted moral norms, for example an attack on someone who was working as a prostitute might be seen as less serious than an attack on someone perceived as being 'innocent'. These interactions alter the way both offenders and victims are seen and dealt with both by society and by the system (Lea, 1992: 86). In the case of young people, the view of society of 'hoodies' (which is a recently developed term encompassing young people (generally male) seen as anti-social and disorderly) might encourage harsher sentencing of offenders, and a less sympathetic reception of similar age victims, who might be part of a wider 'problem' group. This might indicate a potential reason for the eagerness of the young people interviewed to identify as victims. They may feel that their 'offender' status has reduced others' view of their vulnerability, or they may consider that if they can be seen as a victim, this reduces their criminal culpability.

These attitudes towards young people, with their higher likelihood of victimisation, and the stresses this could bring, might increase their chances of turning to crime in answer to their difficulties (which was specifically stated by one of the interviewees, Mike), and might increase their general perception of their own victimisation, whether this be through their

own childhood experiences, which might include abuse, at the hands of their peers, or their feelings of injustice at their treatment by the criminal justice system. The research interviews enquired about victims and the young people's abilities to empathise with them, but did not enquire directly about victimisation that the young people themselves might have been feeling. This came out of the interview material subsequently, discussed later.

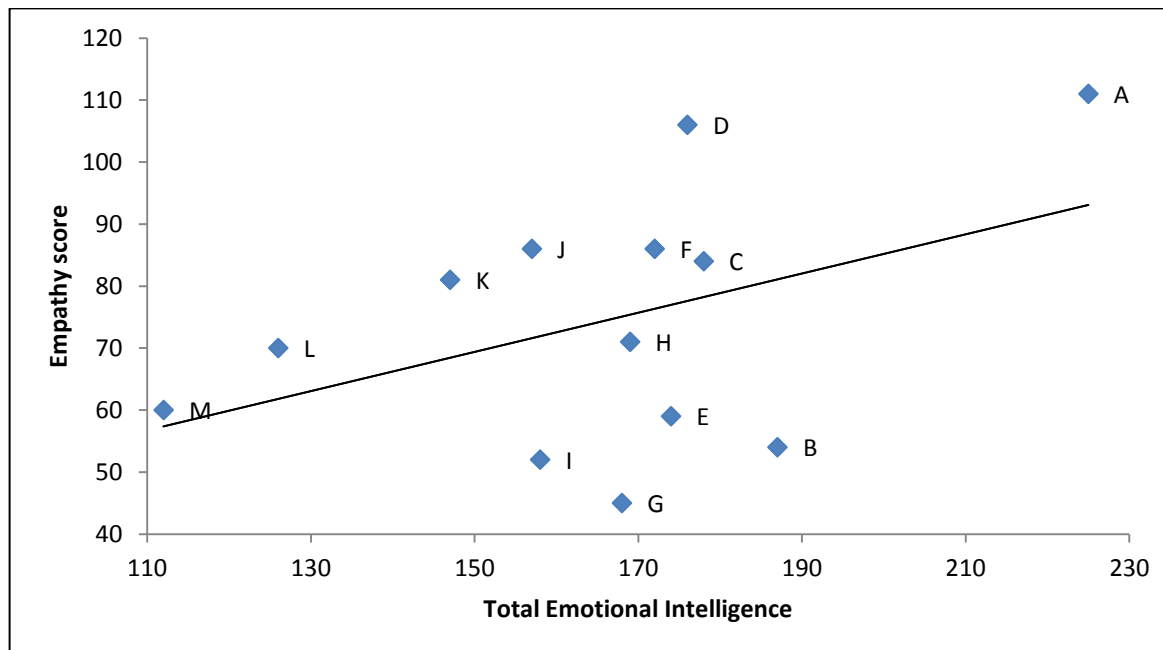
The interviews were analysed individually to see what they revealed about each young person's emotional understanding, but also with a view to the concepts and criteria outlined above. General observations are expounded first about the interview sample as a whole.

General observations from the interviews

It was discussed in Chapter 6 that the ASUEIT questionnaire was not reliable when used as directed, possibly because many of the young people had not understood the reverse scoring of some of the questions. However, when these question responses were *not* reversed (ie: used in their raw state), the questionnaire became reliable with high alpha scores for total EI and for all the individual branches (see Chapter 6: 155). Therefore, the decision was made, post-data gathering, to analyse the data using the raw scores rather than the reversed scores. However, this change was not made until after the interviews had been conducted, so the selections were based on their original scores (reversing the relevant questions). This meant that those young people originally scoring high or low EI scores did not necessarily remain in those categories. However, only one of the young people no longer fit any criteria.

Using the original scores, there was no discernible link between EI and the scores from the empathy questionnaire, but this was no longer the case with the new dataset. The empathy questionnaire scores were plotted graphically alongside the ASUEIT results, and showed a distinct correlation (see Figure 7.1), demonstrating that EI and empathy (in this case, affective empathy, see Chapter 2: 39) were conceptually related, using these measurements. Figure 7.1 shows the young people using their alphabetical order from the highest score for the ASUEIT (A) to the lowest (M). The interviews were analysed in this way, and given alphabetical pseudonyms in that order (A scored the highest ASUEIT level, and was called Anna). The line inclines, showing a positive relationship between ASUEIT scores and empathy (as ASUEIT scores increased, empathy also increased).

Figure 7.1: Total Emotional Intelligence (ASUEIT) scores compared with Empathy scores



Individual interviews – what the young people had to say

Each interview was analysed according to the issues and categories discussed earlier, and presented individually, with background information, discussion of the various scores, and the young person’s understanding of victims, emotions and their own motivations. The young people’s previous offending has been classified as ‘low’ for three or fewer offences, ‘low/medium’ for four to six offences, ‘medium’ for seven to ten offences, ‘medium/high’ for 11 to 14 offences, and ‘high’ for more than fifteen. ASSET also defines current risk of offending using these categories, which are assigned automatically depending on the ASSET score. The interviews are now presented individually, in order of descending ASUEIT scores, so Anna is discussed first, since she had the highest ASUEIT score within the interview sample.

Anna

Anna was the only female in the interview cohort. She was 15 years old, but first convicted at 14. At the time of the questionnaire completion, Anna had been previously convicted of two offences, but in ASSET had been assessed as being at a high risk of reoffending. Her most recent offence was her highest gravity rating of six. By the time she was interviewed, Anna had committed a further four offences, one of which was a breach of her order. Anna

was eventually voluntarily placed in residential care (parent sign an agreement for the young person to be Looked After, as opposed to a Care Order, which is directed by the court), after moving around a variety of family members. She had three siblings who were all adopted out of the family. She had a diagnosis of dyslexia, and had attended alternative provision to mainstream school because of behaviour and attendance issues. Her ASSET commented that she had attachment disorder, and problematic alcohol and cannabis use.

Anna's ASUEIT score was 225, making her third highest (N=100) in this cohort (giving her a percentile score of 90 within the original ASUEIT research sample, meaning that only ten per cent scored of the original research sample scored higher than she did, referred to from now on as 'percentile score'), and her empathy score was also the highest of the interview cohort at 111. As might be expected, she scored highly in all empathy factors, but was particularly high in emotional attention.

Anna defined what a victim was:

"Someone that's been hurt or upset by what's happened to them".

She took some time and prompting to identify who were the specific victims of her offence, but her eventual answer incorporated indirect as well as direct victims. Anna identified two potential victim emotions with no prompting: scared, worried; but then took the emotions card (see Appendix 17) and added: hurt, sad, afraid.

When Anna was asked about her own emotions regarding the offence, she chose from the emotions card, as she still had it in her hand, 'regretful'. However, when she was asked who was most affected by the offence, she was adamant that she was more affected than the victim because she had been punished. This showed some cognitive empathy, but not much affective empathy. However, looking at her empathy questionnaire, she said that she was affected by other people's emotions (for example, she scored herself at four for the questions 'I feel deeply for others', and 'I feel other people's pain'), but although she identified cognitively some quite difficult emotions that the victim may have felt, she herself did not seem affected by this. Anna was clear that she did not want to get involved in that type of offence again, but the sole reason was that she did not want to get into further trouble. She demonstrated that she used her own emotions to direct future behaviour (she was annoyed at being caught, and did not want to repeat that experience), but did not use empathetic feelings for others to the same effect.

Anna sidestepped questions about her offending somewhat by saying that she could not remember, as it was 'ages ago'. Therefore it was difficult to identify her motivations for committing her crime. However, she identified herself as being more of a victim than the direct victim of the crime. This appeared to have had the effect of making her determined not to offend again, to avoid further trouble, thereby enabling the possibility of desistance. Anna did not appear to use any neutralisation techniques to lessen her responsibility, except by being unwilling to discuss the specific event in question. She said that she would not get involved in this kind of thing again, whether anyone else did or not, implying that she felt she was wholly responsible for her own actions, an attitude which might imply a lower risk of reoffending than her ASSET score suggested.

Anna's recent offending history would appear to be consistent with what was said at interview, as she had not been charged with any new offences in the post-interview 12 month period, although she was given custody in March for repeatedly breaching her order, and released in June. She does not appear to have re-offended since her release. Anna was clear that she did not want to offend again, so she had made that important initial choice, and appeared to feel empowered to do so, but in saying that the offence was 'ages ago' appeared to have sufficiently distanced herself from it as to imply that she was different now, consistent with factors for desistance found through the Liverpool Desistance Study of the 'positive illusion' that her offending self was somehow different from her 'real' self (Maruna et al., 2004b: 226). She also indicated that she had been put off further offending through her past experiences of the YJS. She appeared to have no difficulty in imagining that she could keep out of trouble (Maruna et al., 2004b: 225):

Question: What, if anything, would you do differently in the future, should you find yourself in the same situation?

Answer: "Wouldn't do it; wouldn't get involved"

Question: Why?

Answer: "Cause I'll get into trouble".

Bob

Bob was 15 years old, but first convicted at age 11. At the time of the questionnaire completion, he had been convicted of nine offences, the most serious carrying a gravity rating of 6, and had been convicted of a further two by the time he was interviewed. His

conviction rate gave him a Persistent Young Offender status (PYO) (see Chapter 5: 136). Bob's ASSET score indicated him to be a medium risk of reoffending. He had been Looked After since the age of nine, eventually being accommodated in residential care. He had contact with his mother each week, who has learning difficulties; his father was unknown. Bob was assessed as having Special Educational Needs (SEN), but he attended a mainstream school. Bob's cannabis use was commented on as quite high.

Bob's score on the ASUEIT was 187, making him 24th highest in this cohort (and giving him a percentile score of 62). However, Bob's empathy score was very low at 54 out of a possible 160, putting him at third lowest within the interview cohort. He scored a wide range on the separate empathy factors, with relatively low scores for 'positive sharing', 'feel for others', but relatively high for 'responsive crying' and 'emotional attention'.

Bob defined what a victim was, but only in terms of his own experience and offences:

“someone that's been picked on...had things taken from them”.

He identified easily the direct victim of his offence, but no indirect victims. He also identified potential emotions that victim might have felt without any prompting: upset, mad, scared; although these words were fairly simplistic. In this way, Bob demonstrated a reasonable level of cognitive empathy, but what brought his empathy score down was his low affective empathy (even though 'responsive crying' could be viewed as highly linked to affective empathy, as it reflects how easily someone cries in response to situations involving others' pain). When he was asked how he felt about the incident, he said that he did not know and had not thought about it. After he was shown the card with emotions on, he still did not select any, despite looking for nearly 30 seconds. He then said that he “did not really feel much”.

After some more consideration, Bob decided that he felt annoyed that he had committed the offence, because he got caught for it. However, he did not think that this would affect whether he would do the same thing again, given the opportunity, which is commensurate with the argument that young people do not have unfettered choice with regard to decision-making in offending (Young, 1981: 257, see Chapter 3: 75). He said that it depended more on whether he wanted to do it or not, possibly connected to the need for money for cannabis, given his heavy use. The fact that Bob could identify some emotional language without use of the card showed some competence in emotional expression, but he actually seemed better at deciding what others might have felt than what he actually felt. He found it difficult to identify his own emotions, which was not for lack of language,

because the emotions card did not provide any help in this instance. He also seemed unable to use his annoyance at being caught to make different decisions in the future, all of which makes his ASUEIT score seem high compared to his actual abilities.

When Bob was asked who he thought was most affected by the offence, his initial reaction was to say he and his co-offender, rather than the victim. When the victim was suggested, he conceded that they would have been most affected, but his first reaction indicated an egocentric view, and difficulties in perspective taking (seeing situations from someone else's point of view). This was also reflected in some of his comments made during the completion of the empathy questionnaire. To the question 'It makes me feel happy when I see other people being nice to each other' he answered: "I don't really care". To the question 'the suffering of others deeply disturbs me' he commented: "Not really, no". Bob came across as having a very dispassionate view of other people and of what he had done, not allowing experiences from the past to influence his decisions of the future, with them depending more on whim and current situation than anything else. This supports persistence in offending, through being highly focused on the present and the positive rewards of committing crime (Burnett, 2004: 154). These attitudes were well reflected in the empathy questionnaire, but not the ASUEIT. Bob did not really use neutralisation techniques to cope with what he had done, and seemed to have the attitude that his decision to offend was always going to be down to whether he needed money or not, as he seemed to see crime as being an effective way of getting what he wants, showing he was not affected by the societal norms which usually pronounce theft as wrong. This would seem to suggest a higher risk of reoffending level than that implied by his ASSET score, and in line with his dispassionate attitude towards his own actions and the feelings of others, and his solving of achieving economic goals by criminal means (Agnew, 1992: 50).

Recent conviction history showed that, although Bob demonstrated a low motivation for desistance (his answer to the question whether he was put off doing the same thing again was: *Not really no, it just depends if I want to do it or not*), and a low level of affective empathy, this may not have resulted in much offending, since he had only been convicted of one offence in the 12 months post-interview. This represents at least a significant slowing of offending, often the precursor to primary desistance, should official records be a true reflection of Bob's criminal career. This is a marked difference, given Bob's previous status as a PYO. Bob could not really identify any reasons to desist, so the fact that his record is so clear is unexpected, although commensurate with his ASUEIT score. It could be that he has not desisted, but merely has not been caught, or it could be that the

questions asked at interview did not touch on Bob's reasons for desistance. This would not appear to be related to his low ability to empathise with others, or ability to feel any kind of regret himself, but may be related to his feelings of annoyance at being arrested.

Carl

Carl was 12 years old, but convicted first at the age of 10 (the lowest age of criminal responsibility). His most serious offence had a gravity rating of six, and his ASSET score assessed him as being at medium to high risk of reoffending. At the time of the questionnaire completion, he had three previous offences, which led to him being identified as a persistent young offender (PYO, see Chapter 5: 136), but he was not convicted of any further offences by the time of the interview. Carl's parents both had alcohol issues and there was previous domestic violence. Carl moved between them over the past couple of years. At the time of interview, Carl lived with his father, and had very little contact with his mother.

Carl scored 178 on his ASUEIT, which was 38th highest within this cohort, but giving him a percentile score of 46 (demonstrating that this sample had much lower scores in general than the original research cohort). His empathy questionnaire score was 84 out of a possible 160, putting him ninth highest out of the 13 interviewed. Carl scored reasonable levels in most of the empathy factors, with the exception of 'responsive crying', which was low.

Carl gave a reasonable description of what he thought a victim was, relating it to fighting and bullying. He identified the victim of his offence, and also the more indirect victims. He thought of three emotional words to describe how they might have felt without any further prompt: upset, angry, sad. Although these were simple words, they were perhaps commensurate with what someone of his age would understand. Carl explained, when asked, that he felt indirect victims would have been affected, demonstrating a rounded understanding of the situation:

"...the council, or the people who live next to him or his mum or dad or summat".

When Carl was asked about how he felt regarding the offence, he said:

"stupid for being there".

(There were peers more deeply involved with the offence than he). He translated this into future action by saying that if it happened again he would:

“walk off and leave them to it”.

When he was prompted with the emotions card for more emotional words concerning how he himself felt, he added:

“Guilty...for being part of it as well....Afraid...’cause you don’t know what could happen. The guy could...have a knife or summat then”.

Carl went on to add that he was shocked when the victim returned home (the offence was a burglary). However, he identified without further prompting that the most affected person was the direct victim – he thought the victim would be affected for “most of his life”. He articulated very succinctly the reasons for this:

“because he’s probably worked...he wasn’t from this country as well, so he’d been working, and he’s put his money in a laptop or summat, so then he has to work again to earn the money back. So he’ll be disappointed”.

Having begun with some fairly simplistic words to describe the emotions involved, Carl eventually incorporated much more complex words when talking more about the context. He seemed to have decided on his future behaviour based on how he had felt being in that situation previously, and not wanting to repeat it. Unlike some of the other interviewees, this was not entirely because of the consequences for himself (although he had clearly been frightened by the experience of being caught in the act of burglary by the victim). This decision seemed to have been made using both cognitive and affective empathy, processing these into future plans, implying a level of EI commensurate with that indicated by the ASUEIT score.

Carl expressed shock and dismay at the offence, and had distanced himself from taking a full part in it. He described what happened as follows:

“I were just stood there saying why are you doing it? ‘Cause I’ve been done for it before, and I didn’t wanna...so I were there and telling them to all get away, so they all ran in the house and started picking up laptops.... so they passed me a laptop, so I put it down at side o’ t’ door, and then I went: you can just get it yourself ‘cause I aren’t helping you ‘cause I don’t wanna get done for it.”

This showed that while Carl played an active part in the offence, he justified his involvement by saying that he was constantly castigating the others for continuing. This diminished his sense of responsibility for what happened (a neutralisation technique). Had

Carl felt very strongly about the burglary, he could have walked off earlier, or tried to stop his associates from continuing, but he did neither. However, Carl ended by asserting that he would walk off if presented with a similar situation again, but that this would depend on how justified he felt at the time in remaining.

Carl had no new convictions in the 12 months after his interview, demonstrating primary desistance, and possibly showing his determination to desist to be genuine. This was possibly more unexpected since he was previously a PYO. This was consistent with the explanation of desistance related to feeling shocked at the outcome of a previous offence, and concerned at the future risks related to continuance of criminal activity – he considered the possibility that the victim might have a knife. This shows an ability to use these emotions to direct future behaviour. Carl also seemed to distance himself from the offence itself, implying that his better self would not have stayed, and indeed would not stay in the future. This fits with the desistance thesis that the offender needs to have ‘positive illusions’ about himself in order to turn away from offending (Court, 2004: 239). This may be a cognitive distortion, but if it allows him to consider himself basically a good person, it may increase his likelihood of being successful in desistance (Maruna et al., 2004b: 225). Carl seemed to demonstrate a level of emotional awareness commensurate with his ASUEIT score. It could also be that his lack of further offending is related to this, much of his reasoning being related to affective empathy, and his ability to understand his own emotions. However, Carl received a further conviction after the end of the 12 month period, which cannot be used for comparison purposes, since it represents a longer period of examination than for the other young people, but indicates that Carl had not yet reached secondary desistance.

David

David was 16 years old, convicted first at the age of 13, most recently convicted of an offence with a gravity rating of 6. He had 17 previous offences when the questionnaire was completed, and a high ASSET score indicating a high risk of reoffending. By the time he was interviewed, David had been convicted of a further 11 offences, with an offence gravity index of 33. David was in residential care, and therefore fell into the Looked After category for interview. David has had many issues to deal with in his life: physical and sexual abuse, his own sexually inappropriate behaviour, self harm, and problematic alcohol and cannabis use. He had previously been through the Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programme (ISSP) and had spent time in custody.

David scored 176 on his ASUEIT, placing him 43rd within this cohort (giving him a percentile score of 44). He scored very highly within the interview cohort on the empathy questionnaire, with 106 out of 160 (making him second highest). He scored very highly for 'suffering', and 'positive sharing', but low for 'responsive crying' (the latter of which seeming to be more of a pattern for boys).

David gave a definition of a victim, but this was limited in its applicability:

"There's loads of types of victims, bullying, abusing someone".

He identified the subject of the offence as the victim, but did not initially think of any other victims. However, when this question was re-phrased to ask whether anyone else was affected, he identified indirect victims:

"Probably the family, or their girlfriend, or somebody like that. They're the people".

He quickly identified three emotions they might have felt: disturbed, angry, and 'really upset', demonstrating a fairly complex emotional vocabulary commensurate with, or possibly underestimated by, his ASUEIT score, since 'disturbed' is not an obvious choice, but possibly accurate.

David articulated how he felt about the offence, but not utilising emotional language; however his meaning was clear:

"Pissed with...myself, and not 'cause I got caught for it or you know what I'm saying. I feel bad about it. I tell you I did it before and I should have learned from that one. But this time I don't know. I don't know what made me do it, I don't know. I fucked up now".

He was given the opportunity to pass blame onto his peers, as he was asked about the fact that he was in a group of young people at the time of the offence, but did not make use of this neutralisation technique of blaming others, perhaps feeling that his loyalty to his friends was more important than the morality of his actions:

"Yeh I were with a group, but I can't blame that for my problem...I did it 'cause obviously because I wanted to do it".

He went on to add to the way he felt:

"I feel pissed off about it and I feel upset. I'm saying I feel like I never should have done it. If I could have turned back time I would have stopped it".

David identified definite emotional reasons why he did not want to offend again, not necessarily connected with the consequences for himself of being caught.

In his interview, David seemed to feel that he found it very difficult to tell people how he felt. It would appear that in reality David demonstrated a slightly higher ability to communicate emotionally than he thought he could. This could be linked to self esteem, as a self-report survey picks up what someone thinks about themselves, rather than whether they can actually do the actions enquired about. David presented as being able to choose emotional language, and to communicate his feelings. Although he himself did not necessarily use conventional emotional language, this did not seem to prevent him from being able to get his meaning across, although a wider lexicon of emotional language may make this easier for him. He also communicated how those emotions had affected his decision-making, by making him not want to offend in this way again, and wishing he could change the actions of the past. He was described in his ASSET as displaying very poor victim empathy, but this was not the experience in interview.

Even though David said he had made a decision to desist, in the 12 months since the interview he has offended several times, and was sent to custody in June. His post-interview offence gravity index was calculated as 24, so it would seem that although David said in interview that he did not want to continue to offend, this was not followed up in reality (although as has been stated earlier, this is not an unusual experience for people wanting to desist from crime, many of whom will have several 'false starts' in this process (Farrall & Bowling, 1999: 260)). It may be that he had good intentions that were thwarted by temptations, he may have been unaware of the constrictions that reality would place on his decision-making (Farrall & Bowling, 1999: 261), or that his obstacles to desistance were not adequately overcome (Farrall & Calverley, 2006: 16), but it could equally be that he overstated his wish to desist in the interview. From David's biography, it can be seen that he has had many risk factors in his life, which may have affected his ability to see desistance as realistic. This may also be indicative of lack of structural support for David, in which his offending was an indication that he had unmet needs (France et al., 2010: 1202), possibly exacerbated by being in residential care.

It is unclear how good a reflection of his actual abilities David's ASUEIT score was. David had 37 convicted offences at the end of September 2010 (many more than the 17 he had

at the questionnaire completion stage), which showed a prolific level of unabated offending, despite his protestations for desistance. David was a distinctive outlier on comparisons between number of previous offences and EI score. This appears to be because of his high frequency of offending, but without a commensurately low level of EI as identified through the ASUEIT (when comparing the rest of the interviewees' offending and ASUEIT scores). This still held true when looking at David's qualitative answers to the interview questions, in which he was able to demonstrate a reasonable ability to communicate emotionally. This would seem to indicate a lack of relationship between David's EI and his offending, particularly the frequency. His persistence may have had more to do with a lack of emotional management, not covered in interview, especially given his background, but this may need a different type of EI test for detection. David scored a high level in his empathy questionnaire, which also goes against research suggesting that higher levels of empathy will correlate with lower levels of offending.

Edward

Edward was 13 years old, but first convicted at the age of 12, which was the reason for his selection. At the time of the questionnaire, he only had one previous conviction, but by the time of the interview had committed a further two offences with an offence gravity index of 5. His ASSET score indicated a medium risk of reoffending. Edward's father was an ex-heroin user. Edward had a diagnosis of ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder), and attended a special school for Behavioural Emotional and Social Difficulties. He was described in his ASSET as having poor victim empathy and no remorse for his actions.

Edward scored 174 in the ASUEIT, 46th within the cohort, indicating a mid-level EI score. His empathy score was low at 59 out of a possible 160 (fourth lowest of the interview cohort). His scores for individual factors of empathy were fairly even, the highest being 'emotional attention', and the lowest 'positive sharing' and 'feel for others'.

Edward was very conversational in his interview, and described the events around his offence in great detail. When he was asked for a definition of a victim, he defined this well (*"a victim is like when you've done something to 'em"*), and also identified direct and indirect victims of his offence. The victims in this case were Edward's family. He felt that this fact may have affected them more severely:

"she would have been more upset because she had to press charges on her own son".

He then turned to a stock phrase for another emotion, which did not particularly fit with the circumstances of the offence, describing his mother as being 'scarred for life'. However, further on in the interview he said, when asked about his own feelings concerning the offence:

"What's done is done. It doesn't really matter now does it".

This also would not seem to fit with the 'scarred for life' comment. He went on to say:

"I aren't really bothered anymore, but I was for about a month after".

In terms of the circumstances of the offence, he did not seem to understand his mother's point of view, and still did not think it was fair that she had said 'no' to the request he made (which precipitated him losing his temper), commensurate with his low empathy score. He admitted that he found it very difficult to control his reactions, and breaks his own things routinely when thwarted. This demonstrated an inability to keep calm in the face of stress and pressure, reflected well in his answers to some of the ASUEIT questions (for example, he chose 'very seldom' for the question 'I find it easy to control my temper and calm down', and 'very often' for 'difficult situations brings out feelings in me that are hard to deal with'). This showed that Edward had an awareness of his difficulties in managing emotions and emotional situations.

After Edward said that he felt his mother would have been 'scarred for life', he then went on to identify the following:

"Upset, angry, annoyed, pissed off".

He explained that after this incident, he avoided speaking to his mother, not because he was angry with her for reporting the incident, but to avoid further confrontation, showing an awareness of both his own and her emotions which altered his behaviour. It would seem likely that although Edward demonstrated some degree of emotional maturity in this, his awareness of his own inability to control his explosive temper influenced his responses to the questions. However, his use of somewhat 'stock phrases' may have indicated that he used learned responses, or even from the media, rather than his own opinion. This may have come about through a variety of victim empathy sessions undergone during LYOS supervision, where he learned to answer as required, without giving it much genuine thought.

Edward allowed himself to diminish his own responsibility for his actions in three ways. Firstly he said that this incident had happened when he had 'smoked too much weed' (denial of responsibility), also saying that for this reason, he could not really remember what had happened (even though he described what actually happened in detail). Secondly, he blamed what had happened on his mum's preceding actions, as she had refused to give him money (denial of the victim). He justified his reactions, and felt he had acted reasonably by offering to go to the cash point for her. Thirdly, he said that the actual result of his anger outburst was an accident, as he did not actually intend anything to be broken, reducing his feelings of responsibility for the damage that ensued (denial of responsibility). He justified injuring his mum by saying that she hit him first. He also minimised this by saying that he had previously injured his dad in a similar way when they were playing football, implying that the injuries his mum had suffered could have been caused through normal interaction, and were therefore less serious (denial of injury). Edward allowed himself to view what happened as less serious than it was, but nonetheless took action to try to reduce the likelihood of it happening again, but in ways that were also not altogether appropriate, as he said he now only breaks his own things if he gets angry, rather than seeing the need to control his actual anger more effectively. This showed that Edward is still capable of reacting in this manner, and that his thinking allows him to blame others for his actions (although he did admit that he was more to blame than his mum), which could lead to him reacting similarly in other situations.

Edward was convicted of one further offence in the 12 month post-interview period, giving him a total of five convicted offences, so while his answers to questions were sometimes odd (possibly showing the effects of the interventions, and the worker's 'voice' rather than his), and his empathy scores also low, he did not have a prolific offending career. However, although Edward was implying in interview that he wanted to desist, it was difficult from the interview information to identify his reasons for this, although he was very optimistic in his view of both the present and the future, and seemed to see himself as a non-offender, one of the pre-cursors of desistance (Farrall & Calverley, 2006: 6). It would seem that Edward's offending is unconnected with his empathy levels, although he demonstrated a poor ability to control anger, possibly exacerbated by cannabis use. Use of drugs can make decisions to desist difficult to follow through, especially when there are unresolved negative feelings (Burnett, 2004: 154). Edward's offence was borne out of anger, and he identified specifically in his ASUEIT that he found it very difficult to control feelings like these, so further offending could occur because he had not found a way to deal with powerful emotions such as anger in an appropriate way, leaving his emotional

management and control inextricably linked with his offending. However, Edward scored very highly in the Recognition and Expression branch of EI, which was commensurate with the interview experience, as he was articulate in his responses, and used appropriate emotional language.

Fred

Fred was 16 years old, but first convicted at the age of 12. He had convictions for four previous offences at the time of the questionnaire, the most serious of which was rated at a gravity of three. He was assessed in his ASSET as presenting a low to medium risk of reoffending. By the time of the interview, Fred had committed a further 12 offences with an offence gravity index of 34, and received a period of custody for breaching community orders. At the time of the interview, Fred was living in a hostel after leaving his somewhat overcrowded home and assaulting one of his brothers. His father died before he was born, and he subsequently suffered physical abuse at the hands of his step-father.

Fred scored 172 on his ASUEIT, which placed him in the middle of the questionnaire cohort. Fred scored 86 out of a possible 160 on his empathy questionnaire, a score only exceeded by three of the interview cohort. He scored evenly over all the empathy factors. Therefore it would seem that his two questionnaires complemented each other well, and were completed with consistency.

Fred defined what a victim was, but only with reference to abuse:

“someone receiving verbal or physical or mental abuse”.

This not only related to his own experiences, but also to his conviction, which was for an assault. He identified who the victims were, but also included himself:

“Well the two guys obviously. Me, I’m a victim, their families, my family, general people int street that might have heard about it”.

When being asked to describe how the victims might have felt, Fred identified the following:

“Scared, upset, and frightened for their lives”.

Fred could not remember the actual incident because he had been drinking at the time, but he was shown the CCTV footage of what happened by the police, and said that this made him feel shocked at himself. He also identified that he felt angry with himself:

“for doing it and being put in that position”.

Even though he identified potentially distressing emotions for the victims, Fred still felt strongly that he was the person most affected by what had happened:

“because I got arrested for it, I got charged with it, I got sentenced for it, I got evicted for it, and there’s now a possibility I might not be able to get a house with Leeds City Council...whereas them yeah they might have been upset and shocked, but only for a short time. ‘Cause as far as I know they’ve still got their house down there and they’re still going about their daily their day to day things, whereas I’ve got to drop my time to come and do summat for something that I’ve done wrong. And so I’m the victim out of it all, ‘cause I’m the one that’s gotta pay for what I did”.

Fred said that he felt the key to not getting into trouble again was not drinking, especially in a place where he does not know people. He had just got out of a YOI for a different offence when he was interviewed, which had changed his view on his own future:

“Can’t go any further anymore, any further down. Can only go up”.

He seemed to have made a decision not to get into further trouble based largely on the negative consequences for himself of doing so rather than consideration for his victims, and put certain motivations in place to help him keep to this:

“I’m keeping myself more busy, whereas before I wasn’t. But now I’ve just started college and I’m getting my money, I’m getting an income. I’m going about my housing. I’m looking for a job as well as being at college. So I’m doing summat, I’m mean I’m starting driving lessons soon and get me own car and then just want to settle down”.

This decision-making reflected an ability to learn from past mistakes, and a wish by Fred not to put himself through the same emotionally difficult experiences he has had previously. It also reflected that he felt less socially excluded than he did previously, and had incorporated pro-social goals into his life. However Fred’s ASUEIT responses revealed that when he feels stressed or under pressure he finds it difficult to control himself, which could help identify potential pitfalls for the future. For example, would Fred be able to keep away from criminal activity if he was unable to sort out adequate housing or find a job? His ASUEIT responses indicated that this type of situation may be difficult (for example, to the question ‘I can still think clearly when I’m upset’ Fred chose ‘very

seldom'; 'When things go wrong in my life, I find it hard to stay 'positive'' was rated at 'often'). Fred's ability to keep to his decision of desistance may therefore be vulnerable to his circumstances, and whether he feels he can achieve his goals through non-criminal means (Agnew, 1992: 50), as he had already indicated that emotionally, he finds dealing with obstacles difficult.

Fred employed two of the neutralisation techniques, although he did not totally justify his own behaviour through this, still saying that he had done wrong, but rather using them to mitigate his actions. He confessed that he had drunk a lot of alcohol, and therefore could not control his own reactions to provocation (denial of responsibility). He also employed denial of the victim, as he said that he thought they were trying to get into his block of flats against the terms of the tenancy agreement (he was doing the 'right thing' by denying the victims' access). He then said that he thought they had first insulted him, so his reaction was to avenge this by attacking them. However, although he was trying to elicit some sympathy for his situation, Fred did not deny the possible effects on the victim (although he also saw himself as being more of a victim in the end), and did not at any point try to suggest that his reactions had been acceptable – just that there was reason for them. This thinking could be a barrier to desistance, should he feel an injustice was being done.

Fred's record showed that he had not been charged with any further offences since this interview took place, (although he now had a total of 16 convicted offences). However, Fred was 18 in June 2010, so any offences committed in the latter six months of the 12 month post-interview period would have gone to probation rather than the Leeds Youth Offending Service (LYOS), but his official record did not deny the desistance that Fred talked about, as far as can be judged by reconviction figures. He identified his own motivations, which were largely to do with how he had been affected and what he wanted for his future, rather than any feelings for others, so it could be that he had a greater level of self awareness (EI being a reasonable level, if not particularly high, as reflected by the ASUEIT) than he did victim empathy. Wanting a different future for himself, characterised by solving current obstacles, came through both Farrall and Maruna's investigations (Farrall & Calverley, 2006; Court, 2004), and may demonstrate why Fred has been apparently successful in his desistance. Fred's obstacles to desistance certainly included alcohol consumption, but may also have incorporated housing needs, and education or employment. However, alcohol can severely impair decision-making skills, especially for someone like Fred, who also indicated that he finds difficult situations and feelings hard to cope with, and may resort to self-medication through alcohol. Developing better skills in

managing emotions may further protect someone like Fred from negative consequences of obstacles in life.

Gary

Gary was 16 years of age, and convicted of an offence with a gravity rating of six. His ASSET score was low, and he had three previous offences when his questionnaire was conducted, rated as a low level of previous convictions. However, by the time he was interviewed, he had a further 12 offences on his record. He was described as having good victim empathy, but also anger management difficulties and low self esteem, possibly because he had previously experienced bullying. He spent time with offending peers, and sometimes used cannabis. He lived with his grandmother, but had good contact with his mother, who lived nearby, although very little contact with his father. He was first convicted at the age of 15.

Initially Gary had scored a high level in the ASUEIT, which was why he was selected for interview, but this changed when the dataset was altered due to the reverse scoring difficulties, leaving Gary not fitting into any of the set criteria. Gary scored a middling to low score in the ASUEIT, with 169, making him 57th within the sample of young people completing the questionnaires. He scored 71 out of a possible 160 for his empathy questionnaire, commensurate with his EI score, being seventh highest out of the 13 young people interviewed. He was particularly low scoring in the empathy sections of 'responsive crying' and 'feel for others'.

Gary defined a victim succinctly, and in a general sense, not necessarily just linked to his own offending:

"Someone that summat bad happens to...someone that is affected by something that I do...in a bad way."

He identified the direct victims of his offence, but did not identify any indirect victims (like family or neighbourhood). He immediately gave three emotions that he thought the direct victims might have felt:

"angry, upset, and like revengeful."

Although Gary did not independently identify any indirect victims, when asked how neighbours might have felt (the offence was a burglary), he said the following:

"I don't know. Yeah I think they'd be a bit like scared as well 'cause they'll think, shit that could've been me!"

Gary found it more difficult to identify how he himself felt about the offence:

"I don't know really. I feel stupid 'cause doing the graft int first place, but like, I don't know really....obviously it's not the only thing I've done...if I've done it I've done it. If I didn't want to do it in the first place I wouldn't have done it."

When presented with a card with emotions on (see Appendix 17), Gary chose the following:

"annoyed, and angry because I got caught...does that count? Mischievous, that's one of them."

When asked whether "mischievous" reflected a motivation for the offence, Gary said that it did. He went on to say that he regretted doing it because he got caught. He was definite that this was the reason, possibly showing low affective empathy. However, when asked whether he would be prepared to do this again, he was determined not to:

"Well, this were two and a half month ago this week, and I haven't been out burgling since. I haven't thought about doing owt either, so..."

When he was asked whether he thought this might wear off in the future he responded:

"I couldn't say really. I hope it doesn't, 'cause the day I got sentenced for this I asked this lass out, so like I've been with her. So I've thought about it and I might as well leave off it and get a life, and I think that with that encouragement from her, I'm not going to go out grafting or owt."

Gary identified fairly complex emotional words for his victims, but not for his own emotions, which was reflected in a lower than expected (compared with total EI score) level in Recognition and Expression. Gary had committed a high number of offences since his questionnaire, indicating a lack of will to desist at that time. However, by the time he was interviewed, Gary did articulate a motivation for desistance. It was clear from this that he felt he had a change of circumstances which might help him to keep out of trouble in the future, found in research to be a factor in the desistance of offending (Sampson & Laub, 1993), although this motivation was rather fragile, as it depended on someone else, rather than internal resources. He also implied that being caught made him regret his actions, another possible motivation for desistance, especially when seen within the context of

having enough of receiving negative consequences (Cusson & Pinsonneault, 1986: 73-78). One of the emotions Gary eventually identified for himself was not a particularly negative one (mischievous), which could erode his motivation not to offend, should he find himself bored in the future, or persuaded by peers.

Gary did not appear to offer any of the techniques of neutralisation detailed earlier which on first appearance could seem to be positive for his risk of reoffending, because he did not rationalise his actions into something acceptable. However, because Gary had no qualms about causing pain to the victims (his regret was about being caught, even though he identified some of the negative impact for the victims), he may have been in the category of people who did not feel the need to conform to the expectations of society to feel the need for justifications. This might indicate a higher risk of reoffending than previously seemed the case, in contrast to his low ASSET score. His ASUEIT score might have shown that he knew cognitively about emotions (which he demonstrated in interview), but not necessarily that he could use his own emotions in a positive way (possibly shown in the empathy scale, in which his score was fairly low, indicating a low level of affective empathy).

Since this interview, Gary, like many others who say they want to desist (Burnett 2004: 152) did not keep to his determination to stop offending, because he committed many more offences, including a burglary which led to serious injury for the older victim. Gary's calculated offence gravity index for the 12 months following his interview was 23, but this only represented the first six months, since he was then remanded for committing this offence, a specified offence under Schedule 15 of the Criminal Justice Act, 2003, requiring an assessment of dangerousness to be undertaken. This eventually resulted in an indeterminate prison sentence for the protection of the public. It would appear then that the circumstantial change, which he thought would help him to stop offending, either did not act in this way, or changed again (he may no longer have had a relationship with the girl he mentioned), or that he felt disempowered to achieve desistance, for some reason not known. This may be related to the structures around him, for example not being able to find employment, and therefore seeking out an easier way to achieve economic goals (Agnew, 1992: 50; Ward & Langlands, 2009: 208). The feeling of anger of being caught and the proceeding consequences did not appear to have been enough for his desistance (which had been already postulated by some researchers, Maruna et al., 2004b: 229). It could also have been that the low affective empathy he showed towards his victims (and

demonstrated in the empathy questionnaire) helped him to be able to commit this very serious offence, which put his victim's life in danger.

Gary was significantly less able to communicate his own emotions, and understand how he felt about what he had done, than he was to identify what his victims might have felt. So his strengths in cognitive empathy did not appear help him to desist from offending, but difficulties in affectively empathising with his victims, or identifying and communicating his own emotions (beyond feeling annoyed at being caught), may have enabled persistence in offending instead.

Harry

Harry was 14 years old and convicted of one offence with a gravity score of 3 at the time of the questionnaire. Harry had a low age of first conviction, at 12 years old. His ASSET score reflected a medium risk of reoffending. By the time of the interview, Harry had committed a further 14 offences, although it should be said that 10 of these were for breaches of order (either Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO) or criminal order). Harry's father died when he was seven years old, and his brother was a known offender. He attended a Pupil Referral Unit for his education, and was linked with anti-social behaviour in the area.

Harry scored a mid-level in the ASUEIT with 168, making him 59th in the whole questionnaire cohort. However, he scored an extremely low empathy total of 45 out of a possible 160. This made his the lowest score of the interview cohort, something of an anomaly on first consideration. Within the factors of empathy, his scores were particularly low in 'responsive crying' and 'feel for others', but relatively highly in 'emotional attention', given his low overall score. This could indicate a lower level of affective empathy (more linked with offending) than cognitive empathy.

Harry clearly defined a victim:

"A person who you've done summat to, or took summat off int past or something".

However, he did not identify any victims for his offence, apart from the most direct one. He identified himself as being affected by what happened, but he admitted that this did not make him a victim:

"I was affected when I got arrested for it, 'cause you get punished for it".

Harry struggled most with identifying specific emotions that the victim of his crime may have felt. He could only say that, after a long pause, the victim would probably have felt sad. He was shown the card of emotions, which prompted him, after a 26 second delay, to select “sick” from the available suggestions. The selected words showed a limited emotional vocabulary, as ‘sad’ is a very simple word, and ‘sick’ reflects a more physical (and therefore more easily understood) concept, which was how he could relate to his victim. This physical interpretation of emotions is consistent with alexithymia, which is an inability to communicate emotionally, but not particularly reflected in his ASUEIT score, which while not high, was certainly not very low (see Chapter 2: 40). He might have been expected to demonstrate a better ability than this with his ASUEIT score. However, these difficulties were consistent with the extremely low empathy score, especially since no indirect victims were identified at all.

When Harry was asked about his own emotions concerning the offence, he denied having any emotions about it:

“I don’t feel nowt, ‘cause I just seen money and thought I could get some money out from doing it. But now I feel like I shouldn’t have done it really”.

When Harry was shown the emotions card, he still found it challenging to identify how he felt, and took nearly a minute to decide the following:

“Feel sorry for him.”

Although Harry did not articulate his own emotions about this incident, he was clear that he did not want to continue committing this type of crime. This was partly due to the consequences for himself, but also because of how he knew it had affected the victim. It would seem that although actually articulating emotions was very difficult for Harry, he had drawn conclusions about future behaviour based on emotional reasoning, even though he could not explain this. Comparison of this with the individual questionnaire was interesting. For example, Harry chose ‘often’ for the question ‘I am good at knowing what my emotions are’, but he struggled when asked to put this into practice and explain his feelings in interview. This may have been because he did not really know his feelings (which was what he said at first), or possibly because he did not have the emotional vocabulary to express what he knew he was feeling. Harry chose ‘sometimes’ for the question ‘I find it hard to say how I feel’, indicating that he did not consider himself to be particularly lacking in this area, yet he did not demonstrate this in interview.

Harry's low empathy came across in his answering of the question about who was most affected by this incident:

"He's been most affected, but we've been affected as well by getting caught and getting punished for it. Summat happening to us as well, getting an order and stuff like that".

When he was asked who he thought would get over the offence quickest, he said that he thought the victim would, further demonstrating a low level of understanding of the potentially lasting effects of crime.

Harry did not appear to have employed any of the techniques of neutralisation discussed earlier, communicated that he felt sorry, and that he should not have committed the crime. However, he saw himself as something of a victim in all that happened, and felt that he would be affected for longer than the direct victim (although this might reflect a low ability to empathise, rather than a justification). This could be interpreted as implicitly blaming the victim for the consequences befalling Harry from the law. However, it would seem from Harry's attitude that, although he felt somewhat harshly dealt with in the consequences he suffered, this did not appear to detract from his general acceptance of responsibility. This would seem to imply that Harry is at a lower risk of reoffending than perhaps his ASSET score implied, because of these thinking processes he demonstrated, especially since he was adamant he no longer wanted to be in trouble.

Harry was sure in interview that he did not want to continue committing this type of crime, a precursor to the desistance process, along with feeling that desistance is possible (Maruna et al., 2004b: 224). Harry seemed sure from his responses that he would not offend again, so presumably felt somewhat empowered to see this through. Harry also articulated that he 'should not have done it', indicating a level of moral reasoning which is contrary to offending. Current research by Wikström suggests that morality is important in the exercising of self control, which may help Harry to resist further temptation (Wikström, 2011). Since this interview, Harry committed a further nine offences, but eight of these were further breaches of statutory order. As with all the young people, this could not include any undetected or uncharged offences, or possibly offences committed in other areas of the country. Harry now had 24 convicted offences to his name, a massive increase since the initial questionnaire was conducted, when he only had one previous offence, but only six of these were for offences other than breach, which could say more about the YJS than Harry himself. There is no doubt that Harry struggled to communicate

his own emotions, and viewing himself as a victim, clearly felt certain frustrations and anger towards the system for this. It would appear that, because of this, his ASUEIT score may not quite have reflected this. Harry did not justify his actions (therefore accepting responsibility), and clearly felt sorry for the people affected (giving more doubt to the veracity of his extremely low empathy score), and may therefore be in a better position to desist in the future. He also felt he wanted to be free of consequences from the YJS, which may reflect his difficulties in keeping to orders:

Question: So having been caught for it, do you think that's made you more or less likely to do something else like that in the future?

Answer: "No not now, I wouldn't do owt like that now"

Question: How come?

Answer: "I'm on an ASBO and that now, been punished for it and that, there's no point in doing it anymore"

Question: Right ok, so does that mean it's just not worth the consequences?

Answer: "Yeah it's not worth it".

Ivan

Ivan was 11 years old, but first convicted at the age of 10. He was convicted of an offence of gravity 6. Ivan therefore fit two interview criteria: low first age of conviction and low ASUEIT score. Ivan's ASSET score showed a medium to high risk of reoffending, and at the time of the questionnaire completion had four previous offences. By the time of the interview, Ivan had been convicted of a further 11 offences with an offence gravity index of 53. He was from a Traveller background, with a large family experiencing overcrowding. He had been suspected in connection with widespread anti-social behaviour, and designated a PYO. His whole family were known offenders in the area, highlighted to be significantly linked with young people's offending (Rutter, 1978: 99; see Chapter 3: 66).

Ivan scored a fairly low level in the ASUEIT of 158, which 79 per cent of young people in the cohort exceeded; he also scored a low empathy score of 52 out of a possible 160 (second lowest score of this cohort). He scored a very low level for responsive crying, but much higher in emotional attention.

Ivan's interview was problematic because he would not talk about his offence at all. After completing the empathy questionnaire fairly enthusiastically, he waned in his subsequent interview participation, possibly reflecting low concentration levels, or an unwillingness to talk to someone he did not know about sensitive subject matter. This resulted in early termination of the interview. He did not identify what a victim was; and after this term was explained, did not identify who might have been the victim of his offence. The only response he made was to the question about how he felt about the offence now:

"Mmmm feel alright".

It is difficult to identify whether Ivan was simply unwilling to talk about these matters (even though he had agreed to the interview, and was asked again at the start of the interview whether he wanted to continue his participation, to which he again agreed), or whether he was not able to answer the questions. His lack of communication may have reflected more general communication difficulties, which the LYOS Speech and Language Therapist highlighted in her work in ISSP (see Chapter 4: 120), or it may have reflected difficulties with talking about emotions specifically. This also made it difficult to see if Ivan employed any neutralisation techniques to enable to him cope morally with his behaviour, although the fact that his offences were always with his older sister may have reflected a view that what family said and did outweighed what society deemed acceptable (appealing to higher loyalties). Either way, these low scores seemed to show genuine difficulties for Ivan, possibly significant in the frequency of his offending.

Since the interview, Ivan has continued to offend at a prolific rate, now having 17 convicted offences. In the 12 months since the interview, he had been convicted of 8 further offences, with an offence gravity index of 33. Ivan's ASSET score was adjusted to reflect this, now at 28. Ivan's family background was extremely problematic in a variety of ways, leading to a possibility that he had too many obstacles to desistance that had not been resolved at that time (or the multiplicity of risk factors exacerbating the total effect of individual risk factors (Furlong & Carmel, 1997); see Chapter 3: 57). His situation could also be indicative of unmet needs, given the complexities of his circumstances (France et al., 2010: 1202). His empathy and ASUEIT scores were both very low, and nothing was gleaned from interview to investigate this further.

Jake

Jake was 14 years of age, but first convicted at 13. His ASSET put him at medium risk of reoffending, although he had only one previous conviction at the time of the questionnaire completion, which carried an offence gravity of four. However, by the time of the interview, Jake had committed a further 11 offences, the most serious of which carried a gravity rating of six. Jake was removed from his mother's care when young and placed in foster care. He recently ceased contact with his mother, but continued contact with his father and his older brother, who had previously been in custody. Having offending family members has been linked in research to a higher risk of reoffending (Rutter, 1978: 99), and in this research a significant link was found with a lower EI score on the ASUEIT (see Chapter 6: 170). However the effects of this may have been mitigated in Jake's case, because his care arrangements meant that the two brothers had not lived together for some years (his Looked-After Child status may therefore have been a protective factor in this). Jake had previously been permanently excluded from school twice (another risk factor for offending, see Chapter 3: 68), and was subsequently accessing alternative educational provision to mainstream school.

Jake's ASUEIT score was low at 157 (81st out of the whole cohort). Jake's empathy score was unexpectedly high at 86 out of a possible 160, making him fourth within the cohort. He scored highly in the empathy areas of suffering and positive sharing, but low in responsive crying.

Jake defined what a victim was as follows:

“who it is that the crime's happened to”.

He also identified that there would be indirect victims, by saying that the people around the direct victim would also be affected. However, when the interview moved to his own offence, Jake could not identify any further victims. Jake's responses to the questions about the victim's feelings were pragmatic and retrospective, meaning that as the victim eventually got their stolen items back, he decided they were 'not bothered' about being burgled in the first place. When it was pointed out that the victim would not have known at the time that they would get their items back, Jake then identified that they would have felt 'gutted' and 'sad'. When he was offered the emotions card, Jake added 'surprised', but could not explain why this might be the case.

When Jake was asked about his own feelings regarding the offence, he was again pragmatic in his answers. He distanced himself from the original offence, only admitting to taking items that were already stolen, which in his eyes reduced his responsibility. He also felt that he was only caught because he was wanted on a warrant. He thought that had this not been the case, he probably would not have been caught. He also received a court outcome which, rather anomalously, reduced the sentence he was serving at the time, so he saw the consequences of his actions as personally positive. Therefore he said he was 'not bothered' about his part in the offence, merely seeing his actions as a way to make some money. He also found it difficult to view the victim's feelings before he received his belongings back as relevant, because it worked out for them in the end. When discussing the victim, he dismissed him as a person to be concerned about, describing him as a 'piss head', thereby making him an acceptable target.

Making the situation somewhat hypothetical, Jake was asked how stealing a computer (one of the items in this offence) would affect a victim who had photographs and personal information on it which would then be lost to them. He said that they would be upset, but that this would not stop him from committing such an offence:

Question: '...not if you'd turned it on and everything, and there was loads of personal stuff on, what would you think then?'

Answer: "No, I'd think 'yes, it works! I'll make some money off it'".

In his empathy questionnaire responses, Jake thought that he was affected by other people's emotions (for example, to the question 'it hurts to see another person in pain', Jake scored himself four), but did not appear to show this within the interview context. Jake's future decisions and actions may have been influenced more by the fact that he did not perceive himself to have been adversely affected by the consequences of the offence, so he may have used this experience to justify to himself not changing his behaviour. His future actions may then depend on whether he suffers more severe consequences in the future, but do not appear linked to any thoughts for the victims. However, Jake's attitude about his offending based on anomalous court results may not have altered had he received a harsher sentence, so it should not necessarily be posited that he was influenced by the harshness or otherwise of sentencing. However, that situation may have enabled him to see more positives in committing crime than negative outcomes, as he stood to make money by the crime, about which he was unrepentant (Burnett, 2004: 154), especially if his chances of earning money in a non-criminal way seemed minimal.

Jake's risk of reoffending may have been increased by the fact that he employed three different techniques of neutralisation to justify his actions. In his description of the incident, Jake said that he got the items he took from a skip, not knowing that they were from a burglary (even though he knew the person who was burgled), which he felt made him not culpable for the harm done to the victim (who was only really harmed by the original burglars), denying his own responsibility. He then said that the victim was not 'bothered' by the burglary, because he got the stolen items back, denying the injury to the victim. Lastly, he employed denial of the victim by implying that because the victim was a 'piss head', he was somehow less of a victim (or one who could reasonably be offended against). These justifications showed that Jake would go a long way towards justifying his actions by making them seem reasonable, even though with a little probing, they were not. This thinking may have enabled Jake to continue to justify to himself (and others) the acceptability of his actions, and therefore keep committing 'acceptable' crime.

In the light of this, it is perhaps not surprising that Jake committed a further 10 offences in the 12 month post-interview, consistent with the low motivation to desist which came across in interview:

Question: What would you do if you were presented with the same situation again, or similar?

Answer: "If I found it, I'd take it still"

Question: You'd take it still, how come?

Answer: "I don't know. To make some money".

For desistance, one of the important factors has been found to be a decision to stop offending (Farrall et al., 2010: 549). Clearly that had not happened at the time of interview, indicating that Jake seemed not to have started the desistance process. Jake could only seem to see criminal ways of making money, which perhaps reflected lack of legal means, or lack of personal ability to make the most of presented opportunities, something which the Good Lives Model might well have addressed (Ward & Langlands, 2009: 208).

In reality Jake's victim empathy was demonstrated as being quite low, despite his high empathy scale score, and his desistance seemed to depend on whether he would make money from the activity. Jake's offence gravity index came to 39, higher than Gary's, because although the seriousness was lower, there were many more offences (possibly due to Gary being remanded after a relatively short amount of time), and he was then

remanded in custody shortly after this time. However, Jake's father died during this time, which might have reduced his capacity to cope, and facilitated his further offending. His ASSET score was subsequently increased to 19, reflecting his increasing risk of reoffending.

Jake demonstration of EL was commensurate with his ASUEIT score. He could not identify his own feelings concerning what he had done. If Jake empathised more with the victim, he may find it harder to use the justification techniques that he demonstrated through his answers, as he would have a clearer appreciation of how they would actually have felt. Tragically, Jake committed suicide while on remand, potentially due to bullying he was experiencing in custody, and his inability to communicate to people how he was feeling, another reminder that young people who offend are often putting themselves at much higher risk of victimisation through their actions (Smith & Ecob, 2007: 653), but which was possibly also related to the death of his father and estrangement from his mother.

Keith

Keith was 14 years old, and convicted of an offence with a gravity rating of five (see Appendix 12). His ASSET score was medium to high, although he had only had one previous conviction when the questionnaire was completed. By the time of the interview, Keith had committed a further four offences with an offence gravity index of 20, and served two short periods of custody. He was described in his ASSET as being impulsive, a cannabis user, and with a low level of empathy for his victims. He had offending peers, and his brother had also been in trouble with the police, and was in custody at the time the ASSET was completed. His grandfather had recently died. His father was described as being a heavy drinker, and Keith lived with his mother.

Keith's ASUEIT score was very low, at 147. In the cohort completing the questionnaire he came 88th. His score on the empathy scale was 81 (out of a possible 160), putting him eighth out of the 13 who were interviewed. This empathy score reflected a large proportion of middle value choices, similar to the way in which he answered the ASUEIT. He was fairly even in distribution of scores across the empathy factors, with a slightly higher score for 'suffering', and slightly lower for 'responsive crying'.

When talking about the offence he committed and its effects, Keith coherently identified what a victim was, and who the victims of his offence were, even including the more

indirect victims. Initially he related a definition of a victim only to the offence-type he had committed:

“the person that you’re doing the crime to, or stealing from”.

He identified without further prompting that the families of direct victims would also have been adversely affected:

“it’s just the people and the families”.

When he was asked why he thought the families would have been victims, he articulated this:

“Cause her mum would have probably been worried, ‘cause her daughter’s been burgled”.

Keith was also fairly articulate in describing what he felt might have been the victims’ feelings about the offence. Without any prompting, and without use of the card with emotions listed, he described, and explained the reason for, more than the three for which I had asked him:

“Probably gutted...probably lost...probably thought...they’ve lost all their privacy. They might be scared at night...probably angry as well and want to know who did it.”

In this way, Keith showed empathy with others and could identify what their emotions might have been, without any external prompt. This was despite his worker stating in his ASSET that he had a low ability to empathise with victims. However, when Keith was asked about his own feelings regarding the offences, he could not think of any:

“I feel... I don’t know what to say. I just feel a bit, it hasn’t changed my feelings or owt.”

This showed that while Keith might have a reasonably high level of cognitive empathy, he seemed to have a lower level of affective empathy (See Chapter 2: 39), which was at odds with his empathy score. This might explain the ASSET empathy comment, and his high ASSET score. Keith’s difficulties in understanding and relating to his own emotions, which came across in the interview, was reflected in his EI score from the ASUEIT.

Keith did not appear to use any of the techniques of neutralisation discussed previously, even though one was almost suggested to him. He was asked whose idea it was to break the window in the burglary, which he said was probably him – he could have denied responsibility at this point and deflected the blame onto someone else present. He certainly did not deny any of the effects on the victims, which he discussed in detail. It remained unanswered whether these events would act as an inhibitor to Keith committing further crime, as he did not directly answer that question. This left a question over whether Keith rejected neutralisation techniques because he was not bothered about societal norms and judgments, or because he simply did not try to justify his actions. A confusing factor in this was that the sentence he received for this offence was less than he had anticipated, although he has experienced custody before, so the potential consequences of the YJS were well known to him.

Keith has, since this interview was conducted, spent most of his time back in custody again, so had not had much time to show whether he was going to begin desisting from offending. However in the short periods in between incarceration, Keith proceeded to commit a further three offences with an offence gravity index of 13, but this may well have been much higher had he spent more time in the community. Keith did not indicate during the interview whether he had thought about desisting from crime in the future, so it was difficult to identify whether he had started the process of desistance yet. The lack of enthusiasm for this question could be an indicator that he was not ready yet to say he wanted to desist. Keith breached his licence twice since being released, giving an indication about his engagement with interventions. Keith implied that he was not put off further offending by previous consequences, because they had been less than he had thought, but since his return to custody, this may have changed, as further experience of this may have caused him to reconsider whether the consequences were worth the gain. Analyses of Keith's further offending were hampered because of the large amount of time he had spent in custody, so a longer time-period would be required before any indications of desistance or persistence could be seen.

Liam

Liam was 15 years old, but first convicted of a criminal offence at the age of 11. He had been convicted of seven previous offences when the questionnaire was completed, the most serious being rated at a gravity of four (breach). By the time he was interviewed, Liam had committed a further six offences with an offence gravity index of 21. He was

assessed as medium to high risk of reoffending in his ASSET, which also mentioned that he had poor victim empathy. His brothers, with whom he lived, were known offenders, but he tended to offend with older peers. He used cannabis, as did his father and brothers.

Liam scored 126 on the ASUEIT, ninth lowest of this whole cohort. Liam's empathy questionnaire score was higher than might have been expected from the ASUEIT score, at 70, placing him at sixth in the interview cohort. He scored highly for 'emotional attention', but low in 'feel for others' and 'responsive crying'.

Liam described a victim through the experience of his own offence:

"If I went and hit someone, he's the victim".

In this instance, the direct victim was a member of the police force, which made it more difficult for Liam to identify him as a victim:

"Well that copper, he's probably the victim, in a way, and I'm a victim as well 'cause he hit me. I don't know really 'cause it's his job to chase me and stuff, and so I wouldn't really call him a victim".

He seemed to acknowledge logically that the policeman was the victim, but did not want to emotionally admit this because of antipathy towards the police. He identified a witness and his dad also as victims, but then went on to explain reasons why they were not:

"There was a witness. I don't know if he'd have been affected. He heard me swearing and stuff like that and he had to go to court to give evidence and so in a way he could have been like a victim, but, I wouldn't really call him a victim to say he's only heard swearing".

When considering victim feelings, Liam found this challenging – possibly because he did not want to empathise with the police. He identified that the victim would have felt angry and annoyed, but after looking at the emotions card for nearly 30 seconds did not identify any more. After discussion about the circumstances, he decided that the victim would have felt hurt, because he cut his leg, and exhausted at having to chase. These were both physical interpretations of words that could also have had an emotional meaning, but in this context may not have done.

Liam displayed very limited insight into his victim's feelings (indicating that his real empathy level was not well reflected in the empathy questionnaire score), but found it difficult to get past his own negative feelings towards the victim as a police officer. He also

confused the physical with the emotional in his description about the possible effects on the victim. This would seem to be consistent with both of Liam's scores in his questionnaires, where some improvement in emotional understanding and conceptualisation could be made. He identified himself as a victim of the offence, reducing the sense of responsibility he might have felt for causing it in the first place. This fit with two of the techniques of neutralisation: one which condemned the victim, saying that he was police so he brought the situation on himself; secondly, he was adamant that the victim (the police in this instance) had attacked him first, justifying his actions in hitting back (denial of the victim by making them the wrong-doer). He ignored the fact that the police had tried to arrest him in the first place for breaching his 'tag' (electronic monitoring of a curfew), instead putting the responsibility for the events on the victim, even though he was evading arrest. The police using force to arrest him allowed Liam to feel justified. This could translate into further offending if confrontations with authority occurred again, as Liam clearly did not accept the police to be victims when involved in an incident. Liam also used denial of injury as the victims of the incident were being discussed, identifying that onlookers could be victims having witnessed what happened, but subsequently deciding that this would not have caused anyone real harm, thus negating their status as a victim.

Records showed that Liam did not have any further convictions in the 12 months post-interview. This was reflected in his reduced ASSET score, now eight. He had a total of 13 convicted offences, compared with the seven he had when the questionnaire was first completed. This represents a dramatic primary desistance (or at least reduction) since 2008. Liam's ASUEIT score seemed to be reasonably consistent with his interview, as his score was low, and his emotional language very limited, tending towards physical feelings rather than emotional ones. However, this does not appear to have inhibited Liam's desistance from offending (as far as can be deduced from official records). Liam did not say in interview whether he wanted to desist or not, nor did he offer any reasoning about either desistance or persistence.

Mike

Mike was in the category of low ASUEIT scores, but had also committed a sexual offence. As some research has indicated that sexual offenders have a very low EI and in particular low level of understanding of emotional language (Moriarty et al., 2001: 7; see Chapter 2: 40), this was useful to be able to explore some of those issues further. Mike was convicted of a sexual offence at the age of 14, but had no previous convictions. His ASSET score, as

completed by a specialist worker for sexual offences, reflected a medium risk of reoffending. His offence was rated at five on the one to eight scale. Mike had suffered physical abuse as a baby from his father, and consequently lived with his grandmother.

Mike scored 112 on the ASUEIT, making him 95th within this cohort, indicating that only five young people scored lower. His empathy score was 60 out of 160, which was not high, and put him fifth lowest in the interview cohort. His scores in the different sections showed a very wide range, with high score in 'emotional attention', but very low scores for 'responsive crying' and 'feel for others'.

When Mike was asked to define a victim, he defined the term entirely with reference to his own offence:

"I don't know. Like someone that they don't want to do something...they don't want to do...like when summat's done to them".

He identified direct and indirect victims of his offence, but struggled to decide what they might have been feeling:

"I can't, I can't tell other people's emotions. I'm not good at that".

He felt that he could not tell what his victims felt because they did not say anything:

"They didn't really say nowt, so I couldn't exactly work it out. I never can anyway".

After some encouragement, Mike decided the victims might have felt scared, but then could not think of anything else. When he was presented with the emotions card as a prompt, his choices were unexpected: puzzled, confused, surprised. When he was asked why he thought they might have felt confused, he responded:

"I don't know. It's like they probably didn't know what were going on and that".

The victims were somewhat younger than Mike. When Mike was asked to identify the emotions of the indirect victims, he was a little more confident, and chose worried, sad, and afraid. However, he could not see that his grandmother would have been significantly affected by the offence he committed.

When Mike was asked about his own feelings regarding the offence, his response was somewhat unexpected. After some prevaricating, he decided that he felt angry. His anger was towards his father for not being around during his childhood:

“cause he was like never there for me, like keeping an eye on me or nowt...and I think that’s probably what caused most of it”.

Mike’s own feelings were totally concerned with his own situation, and what he thought were the reasons for his actions (the responsibility for which he laid elsewhere). He appeared to have decided that as he was a victim of other circumstances, this made him behave in the way that he had (Hopkins Burke, 2009: 159, see Chapter 3: 64). This possibly fits with the general strain theory which posits that the more stress someone feels at the actions (or perceived actions) of another, the more likely they are to feel negative emotions like anger, and take action to resolve this in a criminal or anti-social way (Agnew, 1992: 49). He did not seem to relate his own emotions to those of the victims, or the offence he committed. However, Mike identified that the victims would have been affected most, and for a long time (*“quite a few years”*).

Mike had made a positive decision that he did not want to re-offend, and he thought this would be achieved best by not thinking about the offence anymore:

“I want to try to get over it as soon as possible so I don’t have to think about it, about what I did. So I don’t do it again basically”.

Mike seemed to have learned something which could affect his future behaviour through his experiences, but his difficulties in talking about his own and his victims’ feelings indicated that this was caused by something else, possibly the consequences of the offence, like going to court and being given a court order to work with the LYOS when sentenced. It is possible that this wish not to think about the offences, and thereby achieving desistance fits better with the theory that the offender has to see themselves in some way as being different from the person who committed the acts (being a different person now), and thereby being able to take on a non-criminal persona (Court, 2004:238).

Mike’s responses fit well with his ASUEIT score, as he could not identify his own feelings in any meaningful way, and stated that he finds this difficult to do. Mike employed one of the neutralisation techniques to justify his actions, which he never tried to assert as acceptable. He blamed his dad not being there, which equated to denial of responsibility as it was due to another person. This seemed to perform the function of mitigating what he did, giving him a ‘reason’ for behaving like that. He deflected the attention away from his actions towards the unacceptable actions of someone else, making himself a victim. Indeed, Mike had suffered physical abuse as a baby, which may have exacerbated his assessment of himself as a victim.

YOIS showed that Mike had not been charged with any offences since this interview, or since these offences occurred in 2008. Mike's order finished in 2009, so there had been no contact with him since that time. Mike did not demonstrate emotional awareness for either himself or others, verifying his ASUEIT score. It would seem logical that his limited ability to comprehend the emotions of others, and his projection of his own anger onto his victims, was intertwined with his offences. This means he may be vulnerable to offending in the future if he does not find another way of dealing with the anger (or strain) with which his younger childhood left him, implying that better EI skills could stand him in better stead to be a successful desister. Mike appears to have desisted since, as far as records show, which is consistent with his stated wish not to repeat his behaviour (Farrall et al., 2010: 549), although this obviously only relates to recorded and detected crime. This choice for desistance was backed up with an ability to believe that he would not offend in the future (Maruna et al., 2004b: 225):

"I want to try to get over it as soon as possible so I don't have to think about it, about what I did and that...so I don't do it again basically"

Question: Do you think you're being successful in doing that?

Answer: "Yeah".

Mike demonstrated limited understanding of emotions, and was clear himself that he did not understand emotions. This was commensurate with research into sexual offenders, who have been found unable to use emotional language to the extent that that they have been described as having alexithymia (Moriarty et al., 2001: 7 see Chapter 2: 40), an absence of emotional language. Mike's responses showed that he could not properly deal with his own unrelated feelings, and blamed the offences on this (anger towards his father). It could be that if Mike had a better understanding of his own feelings, and an ability to express them appropriately, combined with a better ability to understand what someone else might feel, he may not have committed these offences in the first place.

Discussion

The individual interviews provided insights into how the young people viewed themselves and their victims, levels of resilience, possible motivations for desistance, and into the effectiveness of the ASUEIT, which are all now discussed. The discussion begins by looking at the four categories chosen to make up the interview cohort. It then continues by

looking at the young people's views on victims, their capacity to empathise with them, and how victimised they themselves felt. This links to a short discussion around the empathy questionnaire, and whether any correlations with the ASUEIT were indicated. Following that is an analysis of the thoughts and feelings the young people expressed about desistance, and their consequential offending record.

Interview categories

The young people chosen for interview came from four categories: high and low ASUEIT scores, Looked After young people, and those with a low age of first conviction (although, as explained earlier, the changes made to the dataset left one young person, Gary, who had previously scored a high ASUEIT level, not fitting any criteria). One of the young people in the low ASUEIT scoring group committed a sexual offence, Mike, who was discussed within his individual interview (see page 225). These categories will be looked at next to see whether any conclusions can be drawn around links with EI.

High ASUEIT score

Those scoring high ASUEIT scores were Anna (225) and Bob (187). Bob was felt to have displayed a low level of affective empathy (reflected in his low empathy questionnaire score), but although Anna scored very highly in her empathy questionnaire, she only displayed cognitive, rather than affective, empathy. Anna's use of emotional language seemed commensurate with her ASUEIT score, although Bob's seemed to indicate that a level lower than his ASUEIT score. The disparity between the ASUEIT scores and the empathy scores seems to deny the apparent links found between these two concepts. However, no firm conclusions about this can be drawn from just two cases. Both of these young people identified themselves as being most affected by the offences they committed, consistent with their assessed levels of low affective empathy. Neither of them appeared to use any neutralisation techniques to minimise their offences. The re-offending rates of these two young people after the interview were extremely low, with Bob committing one more offence, and Anna breaching her order, but not re-offending in any other way (taking into consideration that re-offending in this context only includes recorded offences, assumed from this point onwards). Bob's apparent low motivation for desistance did not appear to affect future behaviour, although Anna was sure that she would not reoffend, and appeared to have been successful. This supports links found between further offending and ASUEIT scores.

Low ASUEIT score

Ivan (158), Jake (157), Keith (147), Liam (126), and Mike (112) obtained low ASUEIT scores, which seemed to generally reflect a more limited ability to comprehend and express emotions in particular. However there were mixed levels of ability to empathise with others and appreciate victims' feelings. Further offending was also fairly well reflected by the low scores, with three of the five young people having a high post-interview offence gravity index.

Ivan was the young person who decided not to answer the interview questions, but seemed unable to identify his own feelings, or relate to the victims of his offences in a meaningful way. His empathy score was the lowest of those interviewed, and he committed many more offences since the interview was conducted. Jake scored a high empathy questionnaire score, but did not demonstrate much victim empathy in his interview. Jake did not articulate how his offences had made him feel, using the phrase 'not bothered', also using this phrase for how the victim might have felt. He used several neutralisation techniques to justify his actions, and subsequently went on to commit many more offences after the interview. Keith was able to identify emotional vocabulary for the victims (and scored a mid-level on his empathy questionnaire), but was unable to say how he felt about what had happened. He used emotional language for others, indicating that he understood these terms, but did not apply them to himself. This implies that he was unable to identify how he was feeling. Keith did not use any neutralisation techniques, but committed more offences since the interview, spending most of the intervening time in custody. Liam did not seem to be able to use emotional language very effectively, often resorting to physical symptoms (for example, that the victim would have felt 'exhausted'). This was true both for the feelings of victims and his own. Liam employed several neutralisation techniques, but had no further convictions in the 12 months post-interview. Mike clearly stated that he did not understand other people's emotions, ultimately using somewhat unexpected choices, like 'surprise'. He also seemed confused about his own emotions, eventually applying anger he felt at the treatment he received from his father when he was younger, to this. This resulted in several neutralisations of his actions, but he has not reoffended since the interview took place, according to official records.

Looked-After Children (Looked After)

The young people who were Looked After did not bear much resemblance to each other, either in terms of their ASUEIT scores, or their demonstrated responses to questions

about emotions. The young people in this category were Anna (ASUEIT 225, empathy 111), Bob (ASUEIT 187, empathy 54), David (ASUEIT 176, empathy 106), and Jake (ASUEIT 157, empathy 86). Both of the young people in the top scoring criterion were therefore also in this, but there was also one from the lowest scoring. They had a variety of further offending outcomes, with Anna committing one more offence (a breach), Bob committing one more offence, David committing five more offences and being in custody, and Jake committing ten further offences (which would appear to accurately reflect their respective ASUEIT scores). Bob and Anna both identified themselves as victims (which fits with the victimised actor model of offending (Hopkins Burke, 2008: 150) see Chapter 3, possibly because of their Looked After status) , but this was not the case with David and Jake. Their reasons for desistance were varied, with Jake feeling that it depended on whether the gains from the crime outweighed the costs, David voicing that he wished he had not done the offence for which he had been convicted, and not wanting to repeat it, and Anna wanting to desist because a desire to stay out of trouble. Bob, however, did not voice any reasons for desistance. David and Jake subsequently committed many new offences, so did not entirely desist at that time. However, it is unclear whether this might have been related more to being Looked After or a lower EI level. As has previously been discussed, causality is difficult to identify, so it remains unclear whether Jake's low EI was related to being Looked After, and that these factors together increased his risk of reoffending, or whether the factors were not linked. However, that the two higher scoring young people were also Looked After puts further doubt into whether this status and EI are related.

A logical conclusion to take from this is that there was no connection between the Looked After status of young people and their ability to relate emotionally, whether through the ASUEIT questionnaire score, or by demonstration in interview. However, there seems to be a link within this group between EI levels and further offending. However, due to the small sample size caution should be used when interpreting these results.

Low age of first conviction

A large number of young people interviewed were first convicted at 12 years or below, partly because they were also in other categories. These young people were: Carl (first convicted at 10), Ivan (10), Bob (11), Liam (11), Fred (12), Harry (12), and Edward (12). These young people seemed to range widely in their ASUEIT scores, from nearly the lowest to nearly the highest, so in terms of questionnaire scoring, there was little

homogeneity. There was also little similarity between these young people in terms of desistance, as they ranged from not wanting to desist at all, to wanting to desist because of their perception of the harm it was doing to others (with a wide range of further conviction rates, not necessarily commensurate with their expressed desire to desist).

All the young people convicted at a young age seemed to demonstrate in interview a level of EI commensurate with their ASUEIT score, and there was a wide range of empathy levels (as assessed through the questionnaire) within the group. Their offence types did not appear to be significant, and an expressed wish to desist did not seem linked with EI levels. This was used as an interview criterion because research suggesting a low age of first conviction is linked with more persistent offending (Sutton et al., 2004: 12-13). This was upheld for this sample (all young people completing the ASUEIT), because when age of first conviction was compared with offending during 2010, there was a highly significant correlation ($r_s = -.249$; $p < .01$, one-tailed), showing that having a lower age of first conviction predicted further offending. This also held true with the offence gravity index of offending during 2010, which combined frequency with seriousness ($r_s = -.280$; $p < .01$, one-tailed). However no link was found between EI levels, as measured by the ASUEIT, and age of first conviction (or between age of first conviction and desistance) in this sample, although the small sample size may have impacted on this. However, this is consistent with the whole ASUEIT cohort, where no links were found between age of first conviction and ASUEIT levels (see Chapter 6: 170).

Perceptions of victims

These interviews looked specifically at the views young people had of their victims, and their understanding of victim issues. However, it should be noted that there is a high level of victimisation among young people, and many of these young people will have been victims themselves, some recorded as having experienced abuse, others putting themselves in danger of being victimised through their associations and activity choices (Lauritsen et al., 1991: 266). For example, young people spending time with other young people who are aggressive may be likely to be victims of assaults (from peers) as a result; young people taking risks with their health by excessive alcohol consumption may be more vulnerable whilst drunk. This may partly explain why five of the twelve interviewees (excluding Ivan from this discussion) considered themselves to be victims of their own actions, and further why they considered themselves to be the most affected (more than any other victims identified). This is possibly a reflection of the view that the 'system' had

victimised them through the actions of the YJS (see in particular the comments of Fred, who felt he was more impacted than the direct victims), and possibly of other agencies. Only one of these five had been convicted of further offences, apart from breach, in the 12 months post-interview, however it was not clear whether their view of themselves as victims directly affected their desistance.

Despite high levels of victimisation experienced generally by young people, only one specifically identified his own victimisation as a factor in his offending (Mike explicitly blamed his father for abusing him, and his own subsequent anger as his reason for offending). Mike scored lowest in his ASUEIT of the interview cohort, so it is unclear whether this conclusion he reached showed real insight into his own situation, or whether it was more of a scapegoat excuse for his behaviour. Other young people from the interview sample had also suffered abuse of some kind: Gary had previously experienced bullying, Fred had suffered physical abuse from his stepfather, Carl had witnessed domestic violence at home, and David had experienced physical and sexual abuse from his father. However none of these either connected their own actions to their previous victimisation, or cited themselves to be a victim of their own offence (or the consequences thereof). Their ASUEIT scores also seemed unrelated to their victimisation, which was consistent with the quantitative analysis which found no significant link between experiences of abuse (such as had been disclosed) and ASUEIT score. It would be interesting to see whether young people who have been victimised make a link themselves between this and their propensity to offend as described in strain theory (Agnew, 1992:49), which attributes much offending to feelings of anger, leading on to criminal activity. This is beyond the scope of the current study, but merits further exploration in future research.

Victims can be direct or indirect (see Chapter 3: 64). Most of the young people seemed to have a good understanding of this, with nine able to identify both direct and indirect victims of their offences (although how much previous interventions had impacted on this is difficult to say). Two identified only direct victims, with one not identifying any, even though the offence would not have been considered 'victimless'. The young people all defined victims appropriately, although eight of them used their own offence-type within that definition (for example, if they had been guilty of a burglary they might have described a victim as someone who has been burgled). Most of the young people identified a number of appropriate emotions, although three chose unexpected ones, not really justifiable in discussion (for example Mike, who thought his victims might be puzzled or surprised). None of these areas discussed seemed to show links with ASUEIT scores. However,

linked with desistance (as well as ASUEIT score) appeared to be those considering themselves most affected.

ASUEIT and empathy

There was a positive correlation between the ASUEIT and the empathy questionnaire scores (see Figure 7.1, see page 194), although the numbers completing the latter were too low for this to be a reliable conclusion. However, this demonstrated that the two questionnaires were not tapping into the same concept, which were related, but not inter-dependant (see Chapter 2: 39). Those who demonstrated affective empathy in interview seemed to be more likely to want to stop offending (consistent with research indicating affective empathy to be negatively linked with anti-social and offending behaviour, (Jolliffe and Farrington, 2006b: 548)), and for reasons other than their personal convenience. However, the ASUEIT did not contain items assessing affective empathy, so for further use, empathy may have to be measured separately, as in this study. Young people demonstrating reasonable cognitive empathy did not show any more inclination to stop offending than those who did not. The empathy scores themselves did not seem to be related to a wish to desist from offending, but this could have been a false negative due to the small sample size. No measures of reliability could be used with such a small sample size (N=13).

Desistance

The most powerful reasons for desistance, which appeared to have had a more lasting effect (the young people had not been re-convicted in the twelve months subsequent to their interview) seemed to be having affective empathy for victims (but not necessarily cognitive), and the decision that the cost of being caught was not worth the crime. Making a positive decision to desist and feeling able to do so was found here, as elsewhere, to be an important precursor (Farrall & Calverley, 2006: 6). Both of these require some level of emotional maturity, as affective empathy means that they actually feel what the victims might be feeling, resulting in feelings of regret (but although Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) postulate that desistance is a natural occurrence out of maturity, that is not the thesis here). Weighing the cost of reoffending is also an emotionally-connected one, requiring them to be able to remember how it felt to be caught last time and apply that to their future behaviour. Many psychologists would say that any decision-making uses emotions, since those without the ability to feel emotions - having damage to that part of the brain, in

particular the amygdala – can be impaired in making even simple decisions (Goleman, 1995: 27/8; see Chapter 2: 40).

For someone to develop affective empathy, they need to be able to recognise their own emotions, or they will not know how to attribute other emotions felt by seeing or imagining someone else's distress, which would not then affect decision-making. Those who demonstrated that they could appreciate the negative effects caused to others by their actions, but who did not care about this, did not see this as a reason to desist from offending (consistent with research showing some offenders utilise high cognitive empathy in offending, see Chapter 2: 39; Way, 2004: 165). So more seems to be needed within an intervention than simply enabling young people to identify emotions in others – they need to be able to apply these to themselves for it to effect desistance.

Effective anger management could help some of these young people to desist. However this requires a reasonable level of emotional control. Young people in trouble for anger-related offences have been theorised as suffering from some sort of strain, commonly responding with anger (see Chapter 3: 82). If the reason for the strain cannot be addressed, then the individual's ability to cope could be improved. Whether anger management can be taught effectively to young people without a more holistic emotional development intervention is an important issue for investigation. For some, a cognitive distortion enabled them to achieve desistance. However, this demonstrates the potential harm of interventions which refer back to offences committed and deficits in that young person's life (a view expressed by Mike, see page 227). This, along with other investigations into the efficacy of interventions concentrating on building strengths rather than addressing risk of reoffending (a newer direction, but currently not enmeshed within the YJS, which is still dominated by risk-based theory), could change the face of the YJS, allowing practitioners to help young people develop, identify their potential in society, and answer their practical obstacles, which so often keep them in an offending lifestyle. This is also at the heart of the Good Lives Model (Ward & Langlands, 2009).

Techniques of neutralisation

It is worth noting that within the interview cohort, of the young people with the top four ASUEIT scores, only two (Bob and Carl) used any techniques of neutralisation, and they only appeared to use one. However, the links between use of these, ASUEIT scores, and desistance is somewhat unclear further down the scoring levels, as demonstrated in Table

7.1. It would not seem from these results that there is any link between ASUEIT, and techniques of neutralisation employed by the young people, resulting in desistance.

Table 7.1: Techniques of neutralisation comparisons

Interviewee	ASUEIT score	Number of techniques of neutralisation utilised	Offence gravity index (in the 12 months post-interview)
Anna	225	0	8 (2 breaches of order)
Bob	187	1	3
Carl	178	1	0
David	176	0	24
Edward	174	3	4
Fred	172	2	0
Gary	169	0	23
Harry	168	0	38 (multiple order breaches)
Ivan	158	n/a (interview terminated early)	33
Jake	157	3	39
Keith	147	0	27
Liam	126	2	0
Mike	112	0	0

Effectiveness and validity of the ASUEIT

Concerns were felt both by practitioners administering the ASUEIT questionnaire and by me, when considering such issues as the level of speech and language deficit within the LYOS. Reliability testing showed that the ASUEIT did not produce results of a high enough reliability co-efficient to be acceptable (see Chapter 6: 155). However, it was thought that much of this inconsistency in answering was due to difficulties in comprehension of the reverse scored items within the questionnaire. When the reverse scoring was removed (so the raw data were used instead), the reliability became higher in all branches, and particularly in the total EI score. Therefore, this non-reversed dataset was used in all the analyses, which resulted in very different levels of EI for a large proportion of the sample. This affected the interview cohort, leaving one young person who had previously scored a very high level, scoring a middle level, and therefore not fitting any of the interview criteria.

The differences in ASUEIT scores between the reversed and non-reversed datasets within the interview cohort can be seen in Table 7.2:

Table 7.2: Comparison of Total EI scores between the reversed and non-reversed datasets

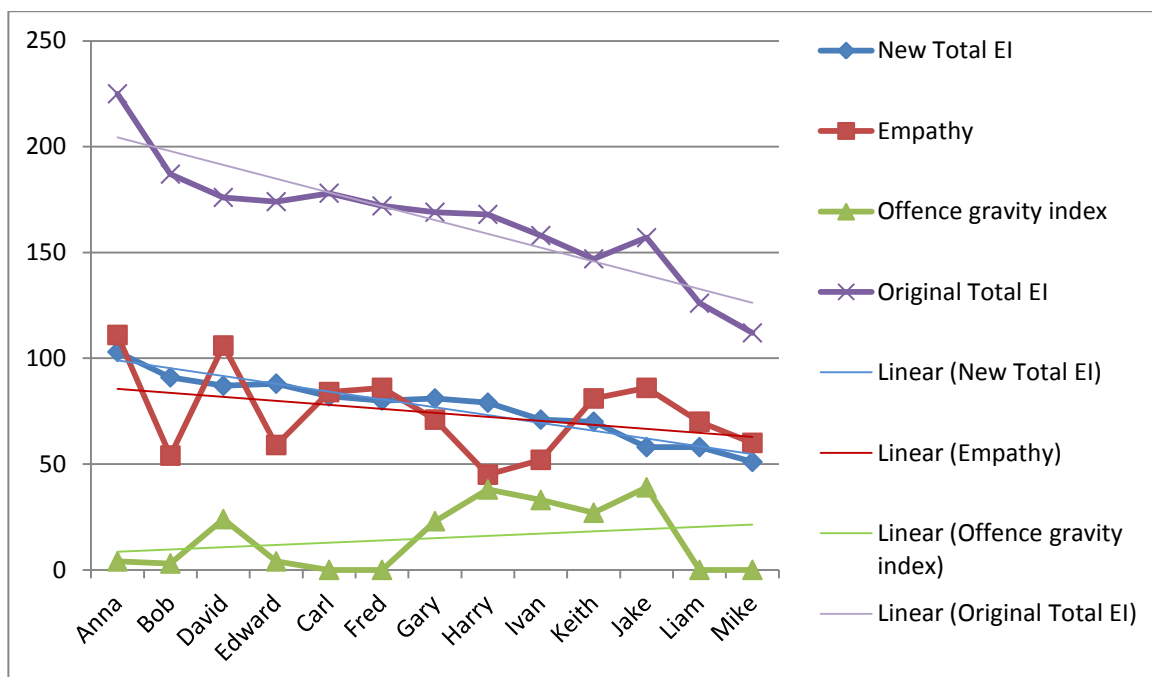
Interviewee	Total EI reverse scoring (non-reliable)	Total EI no reverse scoring (reliable)	Empathy score
Anna	169	225	111
Bob	165	187	54
Carl	162	178	84
David	158	176	106
Edward	150	174	59
Fred	170	172	86
Gary	191	169	71
Harry	184	168	45
Ivan	156	158	52
Jake	189	157	86
Keith	179	147	81
Liam	168	126	70
Mike	112	168	60

When the original Total EI scores were taken into consideration, the young people who were interviewed did not appear to be demonstrating the expected level of EI. However, as shown in the discussions of the individual interviews, the non-reversed scores were a much better reflection of the young people's responses. This demonstrates further that there needs to be a much tighter explanation of the administration protocol for workers using the ASUEIT with young people. This would help minimise the confusion which reversed scored questions gave to this sample. Ideally, the same person should administer the questionnaire to all participants, to minimise the inconsistencies of using different workers. This questionnaire could not have been reliably completed independently by the young people in this sample.

The principal components analysis conducted on the ASUEIT, according to responses obtained from the present study, showed a slightly different underlying model for EI, discussed in detail in Chapter 6. It also pointed to a slightly briefer questionnaire, which would need to be tested in further research on a larger sample. However, using the results from the interviewees' ASUEIT, according to this reduced questionnaire, the results are similar to the ASUEIT (using the non-reversed dataset), but not entirely the same. Figure 7.4 shows these new Total EI scores mapped against both empathy scores and offence

gravity index (of offences committed in the 12 months post-interview), and also the previous Total EI scores. Positive relationships can be seen between the new EI and both empathy and offence gravity index. The new EI scores are very similar to the old (though lower numbers because of the item reduction within the questionnaire). Jake has a higher original Total EI score (and empathy, compared with EI) and a higher offence gravity index, but that this coincides with a dip in the new Total EI score, which might indicate that the new measure is a better predictor of future offending than the old (although this should be tested on a larger sample, as previously stated).

Figure 7.4: Comparisons with new Total EI scores



Conclusion

The young people who were interviewed for this thesis fell into four main groups: those obtaining high and low ASUEIT scores, those first convicted at a young age, and those who were Looked After. The ASUEIT, when used in its more reliable, non-reverse scored state, showed correlations with the young people's interview responses. However none of the interview categories showed specific links with the ASUEIT scores, although small numbers denied the possibility of multivariate analyses, which might have been able to isolate the effects of EI, as opposed to the plethora of other risk factors experienced. Mike, who had committed a sexual offence, obtained the lowest ASUEIT score of the interview cohort, and was explicit that he did not understand emotions. This supports other research

which indicating that sex offenders have low levels of EI (and high levels of alexithymia) (see Chapter 2: 40).

Several of the young people identified themselves as victims of their offences, or their life circumstances, although this did not appear to be linked to ASUEIT levels (however, the two highest scoring young people saw themselves as the victims of their own offences). Some of the young people in the cohort were victims of other events, but did not generally cite this as a reason for their offending. However, it is possible that those with a higher level of EI may make that link (for example, anger leading to fights for a young person who has been abused), with those less emotionally aware not doing so. This would be an interesting area for further research. There was a suggestion of a link between affective empathy (as communicated through interview) and the wish to desist, but this did not seem to be strongly linked to the ASUEIT scores. There was a positive correlation between the empathy questionnaire scores and the ASUEIT scores (see Figures 7.1 and 7.2). There did not appear to be any link between the use of neutralisations and either ASUEIT scores, or desistance as a result of use (or otherwise) of these thought processes.

The strongest indications from the interview data, apart from the positive correlation between ASUEIT and empathy, were the links between young people's ASUEIT scores, and their subsequent offending, when combined with the seriousness of that offending (but not necessarily linked to their stated wish to desist). This link seemed more definite when the new measure of EI was used, all of which indicates that, as was found with the whole cohort, there seems to be a predictive quality for the ASUEIT of further offending.

The next chapter draws together all the findings, both quantitative and qualitative, to see what could be extrapolated. Discussions throughout Chapters 5, 6 and 7 about the reliability of the ASUEIT are brought together to identify specifically how it can be used for maximum reliability with a sample of young people who offend, and the nature of future research for which it might be used.

Chapter 8: Conclusions

In this concluding chapter, the findings drawn from the analysis of quantitative and qualitative data are brought together to enable a more holistic analysis of the results, also looking at the similarities and differences between the two datasets. These analyses are summarised and discussed in terms of possible implications for measuring emotional intelligence (EI) and future research to further investigate links found in this study between EI and offending factors. Earlier chapters raised a number of serious questions about the reliability of the Adolescent Swinburne University Emotional Intelligence Test (ASUEIT) as a tool for accurately assessing EI among young people who offend, as used in this study. This chapter will bring together a discussion around factors which were identified to increase the reliability of the questionnaire for this sample type, and the discovery, through principal components analysis, showing a different model-base for the ASUEIT results from this study. The possibilities for further research to begin are discussed, beginning with verification of the stability of the results from this study with a larger dataset, and with a tighter administration protocol. Other areas for further research include conducting a longitudinal study with a larger sample group to check the nature of any correlations found, and whether there are any causal elements, and then to look at how EI might be developed in young people, in order to foster and encourage desistance, should these factors have been found to have a causal relationship. Furthermore, the links that have been found with other constructs, such as empathy, should they be found causal through further research, might inform different youth justice interventions for the future.

Key themes from the study

This study provided an opportunity to address two areas: firstly effective assessment of EI within a population of young people who offend, and secondly whether their offending and EI showed any links, which might be explored further through interview, and more thoroughly through future research, which could utilise these findings around assessment. For EI to be either a useful concept in the youth justice arena, or something which can be investigated further, reliable and valid measurement with this type of young person is vital.

Assessment of EI using the ASUEIT

For an assessment tool to be useful it needs to be both valid, loading onto the model on which the concept is based, and reliable, showing consistencies in the responses gained. The ASUEIT had been chosen for this study as the only measure based on the Mayer and

Salovey model validated for use with young people. The existence of the ASUEIT presented an opportunity to test it further to see whether it would be useful to other researchers and practitioners working with young people who offend.

The validity of the ASUEIT

Concerns around validity were raised initially because other researchers had questioned whether an abilities model can be measured using a self-report questionnaire. The original research sample was not an offender group, and had some key differences to the sample used for this study (see Chapter 4: 92). Therefore it was reasonable to wonder whether the ASUEIT was still a good reflection of the model on which it was based.

To investigate this, principal components analysis was conducted on the dataset. This process identified a slightly different three factor model (although the scree plot also suggested a five factor model (see Appendix 14), which is what the original researchers started with, but this was not really supported by the negligible percentage of variance explained by the fourth and fifth factors, see Chapter 6: 181), and a questionnaire consisting of 34 items – having the potential benefit of reducing questionnaire fatigue. The three factors appeared to be: ‘perceiving, communicating, and coping with own emotions’, ‘understanding and influencing others’ emotions’, and ‘decision-making and emotional management’. This presents as being a somewhat simpler breakdown pertaining to self, others, and management. As such, it might be a more useful model for use with young people. The new model did not show much greater capacity for distinguishing between males and females (although girls scored a slightly higher mean than boys), but there was some link with age, with a significant link between that and ‘understanding and influencing others’ emotions’. There was also a link between that branch and further offending in terms of the gravity index, so the facility for predicting further offending and seriousness with the new model remains. However, the numbers used for these exploratory analyses were very small, so it would be beneficial to test this with a larger sample of young people who have offended. This might help to clarify whether this type of assessment method is best for use with these types of young people.

The reliability of the ASUEIT

The ASUEIT had been validated using a group of 11 to 18 year olds attending school in Australia, so there were good reasons to suppose it might work for this cohort, if help was offered to those with poorer levels of literacy. However, there were concerns that the

young people may not be able to complete the questionnaire effectively, but with little ability to check up on this, because with a Likert Scale, an answer can always be given. Concerns were also raised by the Speech and Language Therapist at the Leeds Youth Offending Service (LYOS) regarding the accessibility of some of the language, and whether the young people in the cohort, likely to have lower cognitive and literacy skills than other young people their age, would be able to understand the reverse scoring of some questions clearly enough to give the desired answer. This needed to be checked when the ASUEIT was used with these young people.

The concerns expressed in this research, taking into account the reliability findings in the original research project, made it important to attempt to check the reliability of using this test with this sample of young people who had offended. To check whether the young people answered the questionnaire with internal reliability, that is, that the answers to the questions were consistent for the whole of its length, Cronbach's alpha analyses were conducted, which found the questionnaire responses not reliable enough. Difficulties in this area could be because the young people were confused by reverse scoring and could not work out which end of the scale they required, or because they did not put sufficient thought into their answers to be truthful. To test whether the reverse scoring had caused a reduction in reliability, the dataset was altered so that questions which were meant to be reversed were not, producing a non-reversed dataset. The alpha scores increased dramatically (see Chapter 6: 155), and so all subsequent statistical analyses were conducted on the non-reversed dataset. This was done after the interviews had taken place, which mean that the selections had been made using the non-reliable dataset. Many of the young people seemed to respond in interview inconsistently with their EI score, but this changed when the non-reversed scores were used. This is illustrated by one young person (Mike, see Chapter 7: 226) who was clear that he did not understand emotions, and who scored an extremely low EI score within this cohort when the non-reversed dataset was used. However, before this was done, he achieved a mid-level, not commensurate with his self-confessed uncertainties.

Visual checks were carried out to ensure that the young people had not opted out of the test by, for example, merely responding 'sometimes' (i.e. 3) repeatedly, or alternating 'very seldom' (i.e.1) and 'very often' (i.e. 5). It was apparent that in many cases there were many more responses of 'sometimes' (i.e. 3) on the second page than on the first, especially towards the end. This was also checked using the mean number of times 'sometimes' (i.e. 3) was selected, which generally increased as the questionnaire

progressed. This was possibly because questionnaire fatigue set in, especially on the second page, which might have been mitigated by taking two sessions to complete the whole ASUEIT, or by taking a break in the middle. It was not possible to assess how likely the young people were to give socially desirable answers, given that they already had a relationship with the person administering the questionnaire. Some of these concerns could not be addressed in retrospect, but could usefully form the basis of a tighter administration protocol for future use of the ASUEIT. In any case, it demonstrates that the young people from this sample could not have completed the questionnaire independently with any reliability.

It may be that the optimum way for this to be delivered would be by one administrator, ensuring that reverse scored questions were explained in an understandable, and consistent, way (perhaps giving an example of what each end of the scale actually means for a given question), and that they were someone with whom the respondent did not have a previous relationship which might increase the temptation for socially desirable answering, and who could deliver it over two sessions, to reduce questionnaire fatigue. This may be impractical in practice, so set explanations of the reverse scored questions could be scripted, and a test of the subject's propensity for socially desirable answering could be used in conjunction with the ASUEIT, which could be completed in no fewer than two sessions. However should further testing of the three factor model outlined earlier show promise, then the questionnaire could be used in a shorter form, which might also address some of these difficulties.

Alternative assessment methods

It has already been discussed (see Chapter 2: 17) that although the ASUEIT purports to measure ability EI, this might in fact be an impossibility, as some would say that intrinsically only trait EI can be assessed by a self-report questionnaire. This implies that this study has necessarily used trait EI, despite being based on an ability model. The ability model was felt most appropriate because it excluded personality factors (which might still have been the case with the ASUEIT), and was built on a number of quantifiable skills, which are potentially malleable. Since self-report questionnaires necessarily filter responses through such factors as self esteem and self awareness, what else could be used for this assessment process?

An abilities model of EI may require an assessment to practically test, which would also help kinaesthetic learners, and those less literate. The adolescent version of the ability model's own test, the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test –Youth Version (MSCEIT-YV), which uses a range of competency-based techniques, has not yet become available, despite being in validity testing for several years. If there are technical difficulties with the test, it would be good to pool knowledge on this in pursuit of a better test, but one which would be based on practical application of emotional knowledge and skills.

The principle of this kind of test for assessing EI seems to address difficulties found with the ASUEIT, since testing actual abilities with answers that are not multiple-choice would possibly produce a better reflection of someone's abilities, rather than merely their own perceptions. It could also mitigate the problem of choosing the middle value when a question has not been understood, or when the respondent has become bored with the process, possibly more relevant in such a sample as this, with high levels of ADHD. It can be seen how identifying emotions correctly from a range of faces, scenarios, and other media like music, may produce more meaningful results. Scenario work could also help assess abilities to use emotions in decision-making, giving an idea of how the young person feels they would react in certain situations. Such a testing technique would necessarily be expensive and time-consuming to deliver, with a great deal of training needed for assessors, which is possibly what has stalled the process thus far (although the company running the validity testing for the MSCEIT-YV claims that it only takes 25 minutes to complete (Multi-health Systems, 2004-2011)). However, such techniques are available for IQ testing, so the principle is not unique (for example, the WAIS-IV, Pearson Education, 2008).

Another self-report test, the EQ-i-YV (Bar-On, 2004: 119; see Chapter 2: 25) not appropriate for this thesis due to the reliance on personality traits in the underlying model, was also developed into a semi-structured interview, assessing the five strands of the model in a manner not unlike the interviews conducted here for this thesis (Bar-On, 2007: 3). The fact that an interview format has been validated for use as an assessment tool opens up the possibility of using this method to assess more effectively the type of young people in this research sample. A new interview schedule could be devised specifically to assess the four branches of the Mayer and Salovey model (or the three branches of the new model, see Chapter 6: 182), asking questions which would prompt a response according to the EI of the individual. This could mitigate the complexities of the MSCEIT-YV which have possibly contributed to the delays in its validation. Youth Offending Teams

(YOTs) are used to a semi-structured interview format, as this is the methodology for ASSET assessments, which have been in use now for a decade, so would potentially find this method of assessment an easier one to execute. There could also potentially be difficulties with this, as it would inevitably be a more subjective process. This is something about which ASSET has been criticised, so similar arguments might follow (Baker et al., 2005: 54; see Chapter 4: 116). It would also be time consuming, to gain all the information needed to make judgments about all branches of the model. However, this could be the subject for further research in the search for an effective tool for assessing the EI of young people who offend.

Links between EI and offending

The literature review into EI suggested that links should be found between EI and gender, and between EI and age. In the case of gender, there were not enough young women in this research sample to run valid Chi² tests, but *t*-tests revealed no such links in this dataset. However, EI was not found to be significantly linked to the age of the young people completing the ASUEIT. The literature also implied that links would be found between EI and anger management, domestic violence, substance use, and having offending peers; however this was not the case in this cohort, with this assessment tool. These latter areas, as assessed through evidence in ASSET, retain a measure of subjectivity, which could have reduced or otherwise nullified correlations that might have been present with more objective measures. However, there was a positive correlation between the (non-reversed) ASUEIT scores of the young people who were interviewed and their empathy questionnaire scores, a link well established through the literature.

Other expected correlations between aspects of ASSET and EI were not found, with no correlation between total ASSET score and total EI. Breakdowns of the relationships between ASSET and the branches of EI showed some associations, but these were mainly positive, which was unexpected and against the hypothesis (as the ASSET score increased, so did the relevant EI score), and therefore non-significant, as they proved the null hypothesis. However, ASSET scores *should* be predictive of future offending, an outcome verified by Youth Justice Board (YJB) research (see Chapter 5: 114), but this was not the case in this cohort. Further offending (offences through the court with either a conviction or a guilty plea) was not correlated with ASSET, so the ASSETs written for the young people in the cohort were *not* predictive of their further offending (according to official records). This raises concerns about the ASSETs written, which did not have the

same predictive quality as those assessed for the YJB. This discrepancy was also identified through the interviews, because some young people had been identified as, for example, having very poor victim empathy (a factor found to be significantly linked with Recognition and Expression, and Understanding), but who could actually demonstrate a reasonable degree of empathy (for example Keith, see Chapter 7: 222). The ASSET reports, reviewed every three months, did not seem to assess concepts like this. However, it could be that a larger and more diverse sample size with a longer follow up period is needed for correlations to emerge.

Links found within the interview categories

Four categories of young people were interviewed from the whole sample: young people scoring high or low EI (according to the ASUEIT), young people with a young age of first conviction (12 and under), and those who were looked after by the local authority (Looked After). In terms of criminal onset, age of first conviction showed no correlations with EI, according to the ASUEIT. The interviews echoed this, as the young people who had been convicted at a young age (12 or below) ranged widely in their ASUEIT scores, from nearly the lowest to nearly the highest. This was mirrored in the wide range of empathy scores. These results went against the hypothesis, as having a low age of first conviction has been linked in other research with long criminal careers (Sutton et al., 2004: 12-13), implying that having a long criminal career is not linked with EI. However, age of first conviction of the young people in the whole sample was significantly correlated with further offending during 2010, and also with the offence gravity index (see Chapter 6: 179).

As well as young people convicted at a young age, the interview categories also included Looked After young people. Looked After young people could not be analysed in a quantitative way, because the numbers were too small. From their interviews, it was clear that the interviewee sample represented a very heterogeneous group, with few other linking attributes, and a wide range of EI and empathy scores. However their outcomes, in terms of subsequent offending, bore more of a pattern, with the Looked After young people who scored lower EI levels offending more than those with higher EI levels. Two out of the four young people interviewed felt that they were victims of what had happened, which may indicate more of a tendency to identify themselves as victims than other young people, but as the sample sizes were so small, these were not robust conclusions to reach on the basis of these data. In view of this, further research could be useful, looking at this group in particular.

ASUEIT scores decided the last two interview categories, with the top and bottom deciles being interviewed, where possible. However, as mentioned earlier, the interviews were conducted before the non-reversed dataset was used, so these two interview categories were based on the reverse scored dataset. The young people in these groups seemed to demonstrate a level of EI commensurate with their non-reversed scores (but not their reverse scores), with the bottom decile appearing much more limited in their emotional understanding. The young people in the top decile had not offended as much as many of those in the bottom decile (although the top decile only included two young people in the end, so this limits the usefulness of conclusions drawn). The bottom decile seemed to reflect more persistent offending, with three of them scoring high offence gravity indexes for their post interview offending. However, it should be noted that those with the lowest two scores in this group did not re-offend during this time. As with the Looked After young people, it might be useful to research high and low scoring young people with a bigger sample size, especially incorporating the suggestions for improvement in administration outlined earlier.

Offence seriousness, desistance, and EI

Offence seriousness was significantly linked with Direct Cognition, with young people achieving lower scores on this branch more likely to have committed graver offences. They were also more likely to have committed offences against the person (for example assault) than young people scoring higher Direct Cognition levels. This links this branch with both seriousness and offence type, with offences of violence being committed by those with lower Direct Cognition levels.

T-tests revealed that those scoring below 170 in their ASUEIT had significantly higher offence gravity index scores than those scoring above 170, which shows a predictive element for EI level with further offending seriousness. As already discussed, the interviews also showed that subsequent offending in the following 12 months was related to EI score. However, although offence gravity index (which combines seriousness with frequency) was significantly linked with EI, frequency of offending alone was not. It can be seen then that there is a predictive quality for EI scores with further offending which is more serious, than merely with further offending alone. This is possibly useful in terms of identifying those who might be more at risk of causing serious harm in the future, not just those who might commit several somewhat more trivial offences (although there was no

link between EI and Risk of Serious Harm Assessments). This predictive quality also held true with the Recognition and Expression, and Understanding branches of EI.

Offending history was not significantly linked with EI, although this, as measured by previous offences resulting in a conviction, was very highly correlated with ASSET. However, this would be expected, as previous convictions contribute towards ASSET scores. In terms of desistance, the interviews revealed that the young people who indicated they wanted to desist, and were apparently successful (as far as official records showed for the 12 months after their interview) had a higher level of cognitive empathy (as demonstrated during the interview). However, there were no questions looking at how young people's emotions were affected by others (in an affective rather than a cognitive way), which could therefore be part of a more holistic empathy assessment tool (although affective empathy was assessed in the empathy questionnaire, which also had a positive correlation with ASUEIT scores). These young people seemed to have made a decision to desist, also stating that the costs to them of continuing were not worth the risk. These reasons have all been put forward as motivations for desistance by researchers (see Chapters 2 and 3), all of which are in some way driven by emotional management.

EI and other offending risk factors

The data were compared with a variety of risk factors identified from previous research, some of which showed correlations with some aspects of EI. Having offending family members, which has long been thought a significant risk factor for offending, correlated with total EI, and Understanding. Having offending family also correlated very significantly with further offending of the whole sample during 2010. Previous research has also connected academic success with both high EI and low offending. This was found to a small degree within this study, by comparing the mean EI scores of young people who were in mainstream school with those in alternative provision. There was a positive correlation between those attending a mainstream school and Direct Cognition, but there were no other correlations with other branches or with EI as a whole. Alexithymia has been identified in research as being correlated with sex offending (see Chapter 2: 40), but three of the four young people in the whole sample who had committed sexual crimes scored mid-range, with only one scoring extremely poorly. However, the young person in this category who was interviewed made it clear that he did not think he could understand emotions, which was consistent with his extremely low EI score (see Mike in Chapter 7: 226).

Having experienced a significant bereavement was highly significantly linked with Direct Cognition, but *t*-tests revealed that young people who had specifically lost a parent to death had a much lower mean total EI score than those who had not. Direct Cognition was also significantly linked with experiencing contact difficulties with a parent, which includes death, but also takes into account other types of factors, like parental imprisonment, or other types of parental absence. Direct cognition also showed significant links with both peer pressure, and being impulsive, which may indicate that making decisions for young people who have difficulties using their emotions effectively in that process are more easily influenced by others, and less likely to think decisions through with care. Management and control was the only area to show significant links with experiences of being bullied. However this type of information depended on workers asking the right questions in interview, and also the young people's willingness to be open about such experiences.

The young people's perceptions of themselves

The interviews were a good way to explore with young people their views of their offences and victims, as well as their perceptions of themselves. A strong emerging theme was their perception of themselves as victims of their situation. This was a common interpretation, and although some changed their minds when questioned further about the validity of being victimised by one's own actions; some did not change this view, and others who did clearly still felt 'hard done by' in the 'system'. Some of the young people decided that they had been the most affected and would take longest to get over what had happened, which formed the basis for a desistance decision, not always borne out in reality (as researchers into desistance have commonly found, see Chapter 3: 78). As mentioned earlier, two out of the four Looked After young people felt that they were victims, so it could be speculated that they were more pre-disposed to read negativity for themselves into their circumstances than young people who had not been Looked After.

Looking at being victimised from another position, one young person attributed his criminal actions directly to his treatment as a child by his father, even though this was ostensibly unconnected (see Mike, in Chapter 7: 227). None of the other young people voiced similar experiences as a direct reason for their offences, but it could be that feelings of victimisation are buried, lying dormant until circumstances provoke an emotional response. Research has shown young people to be one of the most victimised groups in our society, and other research has associated being a victim with offending (Armstrong et al., 2005: 45, see Chapter 3: 65). Undoubtedly within this cohort there were many who had been

victims of crime, some through abuse, some through bullying, some through their families, and some through peers (see Chapter 5 for further detail). It may be that young people who suffer these types of experiences do not appreciate the effect these have had, and the possible contribution they might have made to anger management problems, and with managing strong emotions more generally, where the source is somewhat buried. These feelings may have been voiced when the young people were talking about the effects on themselves of their offending, being expressed as anger towards the youth justice system.

Further research and implications for youth justice practice

There is a need for further research in this under-developed area, especially initially concerning assessment tools for use with young people, and models on which these tools are based. Future research, once a validated competency test for young people is available, could usefully look at what type of testing is more relevant for this type of sample, in terms of accuracy of testing EI levels, and the relationships which could then be drawn out between that and offending.

The value of being able to assess EI was suggested through the results of this study, which presented the possibility that important links might exist. An example of this is illustrated in the interview with Mike (see Chapter 7: 227), who communicated that he felt angry towards his father, but in ascribing his offence to this, demonstrated a poor ability to cope appropriately with strong emotions. This falls into the Mayer and Salovey model of EI under Management and Control (see Chapter 2: 19). This is also seen by youth justice practitioners with young people prosecuted for criminal damage or assault, often a result of a poor ability to cope with the way they were feeling. An ability to assess these skills in young people might provide a better understanding of where work with them on interventions might be most effective, and where their risk of reoffending might lie. For example, if a young person could recognise sad feelings, which could otherwise turn into anger, rather than that they were feeling frustrated, which can have the same result, a different approach may be more successful in solving their negative feelings. Success in identifying these differences in emotion, and therefore in their management, may help young people to respond more appropriately in the future, and thereby reduce their risk of offending.

Many researchers have linked low EI, or the presence of alexithymia, with anti-social behaviour (Graczyk et al., 2000: 391; Mayer & Cobb, 2000: 274; Parker, 2000: 495; Brackett & Mayer, 2003: 199; see Chapter 2: 34). However, methodological difficulties

made it unsafe for categorical statements to be made about the extent to which EI is linked with the onset, persistence, and desistance of crime. A logical next step for research would be further testing of the EI assessment process. Apart from work which is ongoing into other types of tests, the ASUEIT could be used with a larger cohort incorporating a tighter administration protocol, as described earlier, to see whether the reliability increased as a result, and whether expected correlations emerged as a result of a larger sample size. Also, the newly emerged three factor model, as identified through the principal components analysis, could be tested further with the 34 item questionnaire on a larger sample of young people, to see whether the higher reliability levels were stable, and whether expected correlations emerged, for example showing girls and tending to score higher EI levels than boys. If this continued to show a predictive quality for seriousness of further offending, this could be of particular use within the youth justice system. Should the 3 branch model prove stable with a larger sample group, it could then be broken down into a range of abilities (which would be self-perceived due to the nature of the assessment method), which might be of more relevance to young people from this type of population.

Further research, once better assessment is available and with a larger sample size, could check again for similar factors as this study, seeking correlations between levels of EI and different facets of offending, like seriousness, frequency, onset, persistence or desistance. More work could also be done on whether certain groups of young people are likely to have a lower level of EI than others, for example Looked After young people, those who have lost parents to death, or those who have suffered abuse. Also useful would be to reexamine those obtaining high or low EI scores. Should firmer links be subsequently found, then longitudinal studies could be undertaken, to test the nature of any correlations found, and ascertain whether any of them could be causal, or whether EI is more of a marker for those factors.

The presence of causal links could then see EI's inclusion into the Risk Factor Prevention Paradigm (RFPP) as a logical next step, given the stance of the youth justice system on this theoretical base. Assessment of EI could be included in initial testing now completed for all young people entering this system to accurately identify their unique needs. It could fit into an expanded 'emotional and mental health' section of ASSET, and from there help to shape interventions which might go some way to removing young people's barriers to desistance. EI could feature on plans with interventions specifically aimed at improving this area, thereby helping young people who often do not understand where their strong emotions are coming from, to understand and gain some control.

However, the Youth Justice Board's assessment procedures are undergoing a major review, with a different assessment tool currently being piloted in various areas of the UK, after consultation with professionals about its content. However not much is known about the structure and content of this outside the pilot areas, and the funding for this has currently stalled (Bateman, 2012: 13). However, hints were made on the YJB website that the actuarial basis of ASSET was one of its flaws, needing to be addressed with reference to later research around desistance, some of which was reviewed in Chapter 3 (YJB, 2010a). Much of the newer desistance research has placed an emphasis on strength-based approaches, significantly different to the deficit actuarial model of the RFPP (Farrall, 2004: 74; Smith, 2007: 674, see Chapter 3: 78).

Reference has been made to the 'teachability' of EI (Salovey et al., 2002: 68, see Chapter 2: 37), which has been asserted as possible by some, but about which there has not been much research. Most EI research so far has concentrated on models of construct and assessment tools, all of which has mainly been conducted with adults. Therefore there is also opportunity here to identify not only whether EI can be improved in young people, whose normal development of it may have stalled for some reason, but also to find out how this might be effectively developed. The Mayer and Salovey model has laid down a list of competencies for EI which might provide insight into methodology for this. For example, the first ability in the first branch of 'emotional perception and expression' is the 'ability to identify emotion in one's physical and psychological states' (see Chapter 2: 19). This could potentially be improved by increasing a young person's emotional vocabulary, and use of pictures, videos, music, and their own personal experiences, to help them ascribe emotions to each state. In this way, methods could be devised to develop the different strands in a learning style appropriate to the individual, which makes the Mayer and Salovey model potentially useful for intervention design. This is an area for further research, to identify whether interventions can have any material effect on the EI of young people.

Some work has already been done on this, as state primary schools in the UK have been encouraged to help children develop what have been termed 'social, emotional and behavioural skills' by use of the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) programme. This is broken down into the different aspects of self-awareness, managing feelings, motivation, empathy, and social skills (DfES, 2005: 6). There is clearly much cross-over between this and EI, although SEAL would appear, like the Bar-On model, to be wider in its remit than just EI. This move by the government made an assumption that

to improve the EI (among other social-type skills) of children was both possible and desirable. The logical conclusion from the instigation of this programme would be that young people should receive a better emotional education through their primary school than they did previously. However, while an evaluation of the programme found that it was effective in some ways, it also stated that the programme:

“tended to consolidate the negative identity of a minority of disaffected pupils”

(Hallam, 2009: 329)

This implies that the young people who might be most at risk of offending may, at worst, be negatively impacted by the introduction of such a programme. A recent evaluation of SEAL in secondary schools found that very little impact had been made by its introduction (Humphrey et al., 2010: 91). The lack of positive outcomes from this programme were felt by the researchers to have occurred largely because of the attitude and skills of the teachers delivering it, which was patchy (Humphrey et al., 2010: 94), so it may be that the actual materials were not necessarily flawed in their ability to develop EI. Young people receiving orders from the court are compelled to receive interventions mainly individually delivered by YOTs. Therefore there is opportunity for delivery of this type of material to young people on an individual level, following their own learning needs and limitations, likely to increase effectiveness. However, being compelled to receive such interventions can create its own barriers.

Working with young people on improving their EI is essentially a very positive activity, which does not dwell on their past mistakes and inabilities, which fits with the recent work on strengths-based approaches to desistance (see Chapter 3: 78). Although attempts have been made to fit working with EI into the RFPP, since this has been the basis for the YJS since the change of government in 1997, it fits much more smoothly into the strengths-based model. The YJB adopting such a model, enabling young people to have a better understanding of their own emotions, of others, and an ability to use those emotions to help them solve obstacles, would fit very well. Strengths-based models have come from positive psychology, where the emphasis is not on repairing what is wrong, but making the most of their strengths (Seligman, 2002: 5). The Good Lives Model in particular recognises that offenders are human beings, with the desires, goals, and needs common to everyone, and that effective interventions will be ones that enable offenders to live more fulfilled lives by the accomplishment of more of these goals (Ward & Brown, 2004: 244). These have been classified into nine different areas: life, knowledge, excellence in play and work, excellence in agency (decision-making), inner peace, relatedness, spirituality, happiness,

creativity (Ward & Brown, 2004: 247). Someone with a deficit in EI would find this mitigating against their ability to achieve good decisions, peacefulness, good relationships, and happiness. Could the solution to this be not the eradication of negative behaviour, but the positive development of EI in all its facets? This would take youth justice away from the arena of risk management and risk factor reduction, switching the emphasis to strength-building.

A key association found through the interviews and the ASUEIT, discussed earlier, was that between (affective) empathy, EI, and desistance. These all seemed to be related, and could provide new direction for some youth justice interventions. The growing importance of restorative justice, and the consequential greater contact between young offenders and their victims, provides both an opportunity for greater victim empathy, and the possibility of further victimisation of those victims by young people not being sufficiently empathetic towards them. Victim mediation may be more effective if young people have had an opportunity to develop their EI and affective empathy first (the Mayer and Salovey model implied that for young people to be able to appreciate the emotions of others they had to first understand their own, which means the development of affective empathy depends on having a reasonable level of EI initially). This may make reparation activities more poignant in their impact on young people, who often see tidying up a cemetery a chore, rather than service to others. Better development of victim empathy may also increase the possibilities for direct reparation with victims, rather than the more common indirect activities, which are not offence-specific. Fear of young people further victimising their victims may dissuade practitioners from facilitating this, but improved EI and affective empathy could give them confidence that direct reparation might be a very effective aspect of the young person's intervention.

In conclusion

This thesis has identified the potential importance of EI, by discovering links with aspects of offending and its risk factors. This is consistent with other research which has linked poor EI with anti-social or offending behaviour. Importantly, EI also showed a predictive quality, as it seemed to predict future offending and its seriousness in young people, making it particularly valuable to the youth justice arena. Also important for youth justice are the links which emerged between the triune of EI, empathy, and desistance from offending. The thesis has also identified some of the pitfalls and challenges associated with measuring and applying EI in practice with this type of sample group, finding that a simple self-report questionnaire encountered difficulties in assessing this concept with

young people. This is an important finding, which can directly inform further research about the effectiveness of this particular questionnaire, and the necessity for careful administration when using it with young people who offend. However, it may be that the existent models of EI are not a good fit for young people who offend, requiring instead the simpler three factor model identified here, with the advantage of a shorter questionnaire, incorporating appreciation of self, others, and emotional management.

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Appendix 1 – Core and serious offence categories from the 2005 Offending, Crime and Justice Survey

<p>Vehicle-related thefts</p> <p>Theft of a vehicle*</p> <p>Attempted theft of a vehicle</p> <p>Theft of parts off outside of vehicle</p> <p>Theft of items inside a vehicle</p> <p>Attempted theft from vehicle</p>
<p>Other thefts</p> <p>Theft from the person*</p> <p>Theft from place of work</p> <p>Theft from school</p> <p>Theft from shop</p> <p>Other theft</p>
<p>Criminal damage</p> <p>Criminal damage to a vehicle</p> <p>Other criminal damage</p>
<p>Assaults</p> <p>Assaults resulting in injury*</p> <p>Assaults not resulting in injury</p>
<p>Burglary</p> <p>Burglary of a dwelling*</p> <p>Burglary of commercial premises*</p>
<p>Selling drugs</p> <p>Selling Class A drugs*</p> <p>Selling other drugs</p>
<p>Robbery</p> <p>Personal robbery*</p> <p>Commercial robbery*</p>

*Items marked with * were designated 'serious offences'*

(Wilson et al., 2006:14-15)

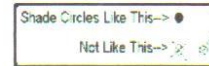
Appendix 2: ASUEIT



Adolescent Self-Report Version

Below are the series of statements, please fill in the circle containing the number that is most common of the way you **typically** think, feel and act.

If you make a mistake simply cross it out and fill in the correct response!



Very Seldom
 Seldom
 Sometimes
 Often
 Very Often
 1 2 3 4 5

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| 1. I can tell how others are feeling. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 2. I try to make myself feel happy to get over being stressed or frustrated. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 3. I use my 'gut feelings' when I try to solve problems. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 4. I can still stay focussed when I get worried. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 5. I can tell if others like each other or not. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 6. When I'm stressed, I get annoyed by people around me. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 7. I find it hard to talk about my feelings to other people. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 8. I find it hard to tell how others are feeling just from their 'body language'. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 9. Difficult situations bring out feelings in me that are hard to deal with. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 10. Others find it easy to tell how I am feeling. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 11. I get stressed-out when I am under a lot of pressure. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 12. I use my feelings to help me find new ideas. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 13. I can tell how others feel by the tone of their voice. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 14. When I get worried, I find it hard to tell other people. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 15. I find it easy to change other people's feelings. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 16. I don't easily pick-up on the 'vibe' of the place I'm in. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 17. I can tell when other people are trying to hide their true feelings. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 18. When I try to solve problems I keep my feelings out of it. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 19. I find it easy to control my anger and calm down. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 20. I can tell others how I feel about things. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 21. I don't think it's a good idea to listen to my feelings when I make a decision. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 22. I find it hard to tell if somebody is upset if they don't say it to me. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 23. I find it hard to get people to 'get along' with each other. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 24. I come-up with new ideas by logic and clear thinking instead of using my moods or feelings. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 25. I find it hard to stay focussed if I'm really excited about something. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 26. I can show people how I am feeling through my 'body language'. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 27. I find it hard to tell how people feel about each other. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 28. I solve my problems using logic and clear thinking instead of feelings. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 29. I find it hard to think clearly when I am worried about something. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 30. I find it hard to say how I feel. | 1 2 3 4 5 |

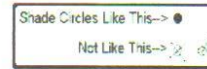
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Adolescent Self-Report Version

Below are the series of statements, please fill in the circle containing the number that is most common of the way you typically think, feel and act.

If you make a mistake simply cross it out and fill in the correct response!



Very Seldom
Seldom
Sometimes
Often
Very Often

○ ○ ○ ○ ○

- 31. I find it hard to make others excited about things. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
- 32. I can pick-up on what the 'vibe' is when other people are talking about something. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
- 33. I listen to my feelings when making important decisions. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
- 34. Other people know when I am worried or stressed. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
- 35. When I have upset someone I understand why they are upset with me. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
- 36. I find it hard to calm people down when their worried or stressed. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
- 37. I can still think clearly when I'm upset. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
- 38. I find it hard to let others know that I am worried or stressed. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
- 39. I can tell when another person's feeling or reactions don't 'fit' or make sense with what is happening. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
- 40. I can make my friends relax when they get stressed. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
- 41. The look on other people's faces tells me a lot about the way they are feeling. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
- 42. I find it hard to control really strong emotions. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
- 43. You should stop your feelings from having a big influence over any important decisions. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
- 44. I easily notice the 'feel' or atmosphere of different situations and places. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
- 45. When something gets me down I find it difficult to snap out of it. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
- 46. I trust my feelings when I make important decisions. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
- 47. I am good at knowing what my feelings are. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
- 48. When I talk about something, it is hard to tell if other people feel the same way as me. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
- 49. I can easily 'snap' myself out of feeling down or sad. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
- 50. I can tell when someone feels the same way as me about about other people without talking about it to them. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
- 51. I find it hard to stay 'positive' when I get stressed or worried. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
- 52. When I am upset with someone, I find it hard to tell how they might be feeling. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
- 53. When things go wrong in my life, I find it hard to stay 'positive'. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
- 54. Other people seem to find it easy tell how I feel about things. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
- 55. I try to keep my feelings out of the decisions I make. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
- 56. I can tell when someone doesn't really like me. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
- 57. When someone upsets me, I think about what they said and then usually find a solution. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

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Appendix 3: ASUEIT Consent form

This questionnaire is part of a study with Leeds University, looking at how young people who have committed crimes use their emotions.

The researcher is a Youth Justice Worker with the Leeds Youth Offending Service, and is the only person who will read the completed questionnaire.

No-one will be identified in the report, and information from each questionnaire will be put together before being used. The individual questionnaires will be shredded after the study is finished.

I understand how this questionnaire will be used, and allow it to be included in the study.

Signed.....

Date

I do not want this questionnaire to be included in the study

Signed.....

Date

YOIS ID

Appendix 4: Pilot Evaluation

Did the young person seem to understand the consent form? Was any further explanation needed, if so, what?	Yes No	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
What was their attitude to being asked to fill in the questionnaire?		
Did the young person understand how to complete the questionnaire? What further explanation was needed?	Yes No	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Did they need assistance in filling it out? Were there any particular questions they found difficult to understand? What explanation did you offer?	Yes No	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Did they understand after explanation?	Yes No	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have any comments about the layout of the questionnaire?		
Any other comments/suggestions?		

Appendix 5: Adolescent Self-Report Version



Below are the series of statements, please fill in the circle containing the number that is most common of the way you **typically** think, feel and act.

If you make a mistake simply cross it out and fill in the correct response!

		Very seldom	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Very often
1	I can tell how others are feeling	1	2	3	4	5
2	I try to make myself feel happy to get over being stressed or frustrated	1	2	3	4	5
3	I use my 'gut feelings' when I try to solve problems	1	2	3	4	5
4	I can still stay focused when I get worried	1	2	3	4	5
5	I can tell if others like each other or not	1	2	3	4	5
6	When I'm stressed, I get annoyed by people around me	1	2	3	4	5
7	I find it hard to talk about my feelings to other people	1	2	3	4	5
8	I find it hard to tell how others are feeling just from their 'body language'	1	2	3	4	5
9	Difficult situations bring out feelings in me that are hard to deal with	1	2	3	4	5
10	Others find it easy to tell how I am feeling	1	2	3	4	5
11	I get stressed-out when I am under a lot of pressure	1	2	3	4	5
12	I use my feelings to help me find new ideas	1	2	3	4	5
13	I can tell how others feel by the tone of their voice	1	2	3	4	5
14	When I get worried, I find it hard to tell other people	1	2	3	4	5
15	I find it easy to change other people's feelings	1	2	3	4	5
16	I don't easily pick-up on the 'vibe' of the place I'm in	1	2	3	4	5
17	I can tell when other people are trying to hide their true feelings	1	2	3	4	5
18	When I try to solve problems I keep my feelings out of it	1	2	3	4	5
19	I find it easy to control my anger and calm down	1	2	3	4	5
20	I can tell others how I feel about things	1	2	3	4	5
21	I don't think it's a good idea to listen to my feelings when I make a decision	1	2	3	4	5
22	I find it hard to tell if somebody is upset if they don't say it to me	1	2	3	4	5
23	I find it hard to get people to 'get along' with each other	1	2	3	4	5
24	I come-up with new ideas by logic and clear thinking instead of using my moods or feelings	1	2	3	4	5
25	I find it hard to stay focused if I'm really excited about something	1	2	3	4	5
26	I can show people how I am feeling through my 'body language'	1	2	3	4	5

		Very seldom	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Very often
27	I find it hard to tell how people feel about each other	1	2	3	4	5
28	I solve my problems using logic and clear thinking instead of my moods or feelings	1	2	3	4	5
29	I find it hard to think clearly when I am worried about something	1	2	3	4	5
30	I find it hard to say how I feel	1	2	3	4	5
31	I find it hard to make others excited about things	1	2	3	4	5
32	I can pick-up on what the 'vibe' is when other people are talking about something	1	2	3	4	5
33	I listen to my feelings when making important decisions	1	2	3	4	5
34	Other people know when I am worried or stressed	1	2	3	4	5
35	When I have upset someone I understand why they are upset with me	1	2	3	4	5
36	I find it hard to calm people down when they're worried or stressed	1	2	3	4	5
37	I can still think clearly when I'm upset	1	2	3	4	5
38	I find it hard to let others know that I am worried or stressed	1	2	3	4	5
39	I can tell when another person's feelings or reactions don't 'fit' or make sense with what is happening	1	2	3	4	5
40	I can make my friends relax when they get stressed	1	2	3	4	5
41	The look on other people's faces tells me a lot about the way they are feeling	1	2	3	4	5
42	I find it hard to control really strong emotions	1	2	3	4	5
43	You should stop your feelings from having a big influence over any important decisions	1	2	3	4	5
44	I easily notice the 'feel' or atmosphere of different situations and places	1	2	3	4	5
45	When something gets me down I find it difficult to snap out of it	1	2	3	4	5
46	I trust my feelings when I make important decisions	1	2	3	4	5
47	I am good at knowing what my feelings are	1	2	3	4	5
48	When I talk about something, it is hard to tell if other people feel the same way as me	1	2	3	4	5
49	I can easily 'snap' myself out of feeling down or sad	1	2	3	4	5
50	I can tell when someone feels the same way as me about other people without talking about it to them	1	2	3	4	5
51	I find it hard to stay 'positive' when I get stressed or worried	1	2	3	4	5
52	When I am upset with someone, I find it hard to tell how they might be feeling	1	2	3	4	5
53	When things go wrong in my life, I find it hard to stay 'positive'	1	2	3	4	5
54	Other people seem to find it easy tell how I feel about things	1	2	3	4	5
55	I try to keep my feelings out of the decisions I make	1	2	3	4	5
56	I can tell when someone doesn't really like me	1	2	3	4	5
57	When someone upsets me, I think about what they said and then usually find a solution	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix 6: Empathy Questionnaire

Multi-Dimensional Emotional Empathy Scale (Caruso & Mayer, 1998).

1.	I feel like crying when watching a sad movie.	1 2 3 4 5
2.	Certain pieces of music can really move me.	1 2 3 4 5
3.	Seeing a hurt animal by the side of the road is very	1 2 3 4 5
4.	I don't give others' feelings much thought.	1 2 3 4 5
5.	It makes me happy when I see people being nice to each other.	1 2 3 4 5
6.	The suffering of others deeply disturbs me.	1 2 3 4 5
7.	I always try to tune in to the feelings of those around me.	1 2 3 4 5
8.	I get very upset when I see a young child who is being treated meanly.	1 2 3 4 5
9.	Too much is made of the suffering of pets or animals.	1 2 3 4 5
10.	If someone is upset I get upset, too.	1 2 3 4 5
11.	When I'm with other people who are laughing I join in.	1 2 3 4 5
12.	It makes me mad to see someone treated unjustly.	1 2 3 4 5
13.	I rarely take notice when people treat each other warmly.	1 2 3 4 5
14.	I feel happy when I see people laughing and enjoying themselves.	1 2 3 4 5
15.	It's easy for me to get carried away by other people's emotions.	1 2 3 4 5
16.	My feelings are my own and don't reflect how others feel.	1 2 3 4 5
17.	If a crowd gets excited about something so do I.	1 2 3 4 5
18.	I feel good when I help someone out or do something nice for someone.	1 2 3 4 5
19.	I feel deeply for others.	1 2 3 4 5
20.	I don't cry easily.	1 2 3 4 5
21.	I feel other people's pain.	1 2 3 4 5
22.	Seeing other people smile makes me smile.	1 2 3 4 5
23.	Being around happy people makes me feel happy, too.	1 2 3 4 5
24.	TV or news stories about injured or sick children greatly upset me.	1 2 3 4 5
25.	I cry at sad parts of the books I read.	1 2 3 4 5
26.	Being around people who are depressed brings my mood down.	1 2 3 4 5
27.	I find it annoying when people cry in public.	1 2 3 4 5
28.	It hurts to see another person in pain.	1 2 3 4 5
29.	I get a warm feeling for someone if I see them helping another person.	1 2 3 4 5
30.	I feel other people's joy.	1 2 3 4 5

Appendix 7: Interview questions

Section A

Empathy questionnaire

Section B

For this interview, we are going to talk about the offences you committed to get your latest Supervision Order, and the other people who were affected by this. Do you feel OK about that?

1. Tell me about the offence(s) for which you received this order
(have relevant offence(s) listed)
2. Can you explain to me what a victim is?
(Explain if not: a victim is someone who has in been badly affected some way because of the actions of someone else)
3. Who do you think were the victims of what you did?
*Think as widely as you can about people who might in some way have been affected
Who else...? Who else...?

(note down everyone identified for use in Q8)*
4. Can you think of three words to describe how they might have felt about what happened?
5. (If not....) show emotions cards. Can you choose three emotions that you think they might have felt about what happened?
6. How do *you* feel now about what happened?
7. (If not sure...) show emotions cards. Can you choose some emotions to show how you feel about what happened?
8. Who do you think was most affected by what happened?
Go through their list of identified victims to remind them of who they said

Appendix 8: Interview Consent Form

My name is Kathy Hampson, and I am doing some research with Leeds University looking at how young people feel about themselves and others. This interview is part of that study. I would like to ask you to help me by answering the questions I ask, and allowing me to use this information.

You do not have to answer questions of you do not wish to.

You can stop the interview at any point, and information will not then be used if you do not wish.

No one else will know what you have said, and it will not be discussed with your worker, unless what you have said makes me concerned for your or someone else's safety, or you talk about an unresolved crime. Please don't do this, as I will have to pass the information on, but I will let you know if I am going to do this, and will tell you who will be informed.

I am a worker for the Youth Offending Service myself.

I would like to record this interview, but if you would prefer I can take notes, which you can read afterwards.

I understand how this interview will be used and agree to it being recorded and used for this research

Name (please print)

Signed

Date

I understand how this interview will be used and agree to this but would prefer notes to be taken instead of a recording.

Name (please print)

Signed

Date

ID:

YOIS

Appendix 9: Empathy questionnaire score

Name	Suffering	Positive sharing	Responsive crying	Emotional attention	Feel for others	General empathy
Mid point	3	3	3	3	3	3

Suffering – being upset when you see someone or something else mistreated

Positive sharing – sharing other people’s positive emotions

Responsive crying – how easily you respond to situations by crying

Emotional attention – how much attention you pay to other people’s emotions

Feeling for others – how much you can understand what other people might be feeling

<p><u>Comments:</u></p> <p>Suffering –</p> <p>Positive sharing –</p> <p>Responsive crying –</p> <p>Emotional attention –</p> <p>Feel for others –</p> <p>General empathy –</p>
--

Appendix 10 - Joint agreement

This PhD is registered with Leeds University, and is being supervised by Emma Wincup and Adam Crawford.

The purpose of this research is to investigate the possible links between a young person's emotional literacy and their offending. The research will be conducted using a general emotional literacy exercise to be used by Supervision Order case-holders with their clients, followed by more in-depth semi-structured interviews with young people on Supervision Orders conducted by myself. This will be backed up by general information available from the YOS computer system, YOIS.

Client information will be anonymised, ensuring that client confidentiality is maintained and not attributable to any specific person.

Care will be taken to ensure that information being conveyed between offices doesn't contain easily identifiable information, by using the YOIS ID number instead of names.

Client information will only be used with that client's consent.

The Leeds YOS will be acknowledged in the final report, and will have access to the findings.

Appendix 11: YOIS Data Sheet

Name:		YOIS ID:	
Date of birth: Help to complete?		Age at questionnaire completion: Age at first conviction:	
Ethnicity:		Sex:	
Looked after?		If yes, what type (or s/s involvement):	
PX? SEN?		Alternative provision to mainstream school?	
PYO?		ISSP?	
Current offence:		Gravity:	
Precons (number):		Precons (detail):	
ASBU involvement?		Custody (ever)?	
Asset scores (0-4): Living arrangements: Family and personal relationships: Statutory education: Training and employment: Neighbourhood: Lifestyle: Substance use: Physical health: Emotional and mental health: Perception of self and others: Thinking and behaviour: Attitudes to offending: Motivation to change: Risk of serious harm: ROSH? Risk plan? Risk of vulnerability: Vulnerability plan? Total asset score:		Details:	

Worker:

Appendix 12: Offence Gravity Ratings (between 1 and 8)

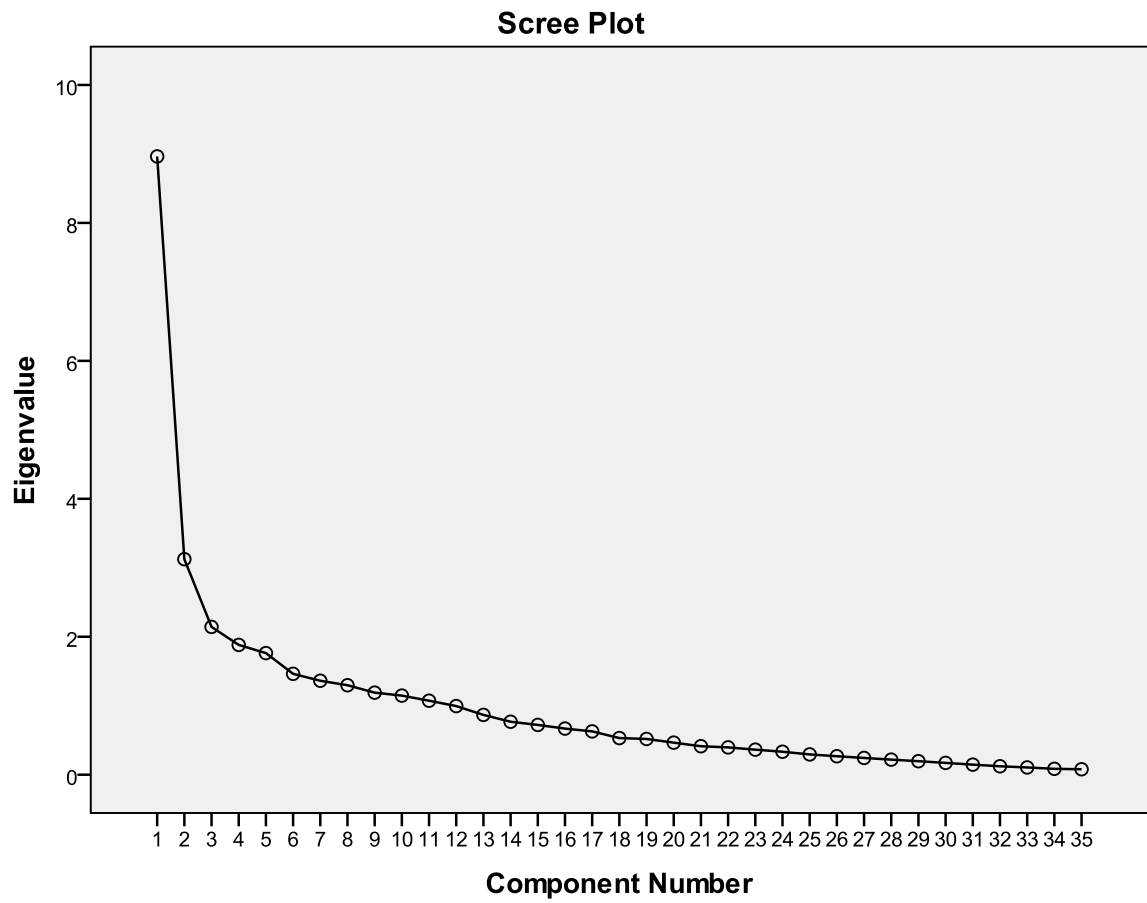
Affray 4
Aggravated TWOC 5
Arson 5
Assault – ABH (actual bodily harm) 4
Assault 3
Attempted robbery 6
Breach of ASBO 4
Breach of order 4
Burglary dwelling 6
Causing harassment, alarm or distress 2/3
Causing sexual activity without consent 5
Criminal damage 2
Dishonest handling of stolen goods 3
Going equipped for theft 4
Making hoax calls 1
Possession offensive weapon 3
Possession with intent to supply class B 6
Rape 8
Robbery 6
Sexual activity with children 5
Theft 3
Theft from person 5
Threatening and abusive behaviour 2
TWOC (Taking Without Consent) 4
TWOC carried 3

Appendix 13: Cronbach's Alpha Inter Item Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
i1	169.12	970.108	.473	.931
i2	169.29	976.024	.336	.932
i3	169.15	967.977	.505	.931
i4	169.42	970.771	.355	.932
i5	168.50	983.023	.298	.933
i6	168.36	974.081	.350	.932
i7	168.88	956.447	.527	.931
i8	169.27	971.094	.434	.932
i9	169.29	977.808	.299	.933
i10	168.89	964.558	.535	.931
i11	168.71	977.716	.323	.932
i12	169.59	984.615	.245	.933
i13	168.53	975.638	.379	.932
i14	169.03	958.491	.534	.931
i15	169.14	971.812	.412	.932
i16	169.27	973.863	.380	.932
i17	169.12	970.047	.486	.931
i18	169.08	958.163	.578	.931
i19	169.85	979.915	.332	.932
i20	169.20	983.638	.259	.933
i21	169.11	962.589	.577	.931
i22	169.36	968.173	.494	.931
i23	169.24	978.679	.382	.932
i24	169.18	974.305	.410	.932
i25	168.32	975.451	.386	.932
i26	169.09	962.853	.562	.931
i27	169.44	976.189	.434	.932
i28	169.30	962.676	.564	.931
i29	168.97	973.630	.404	.932
i30	169.08	957.210	.538	.931
i31	169.50	983.085	.289	.933
i32	168.77	960.455	.628	.931
i33	169.23	972.178	.440	.932
i34	168.59	974.369	.387	.932
i35	168.58	976.433	.392	.932
i36	169.12	982.570	.283	.933
i37	169.48	973.792	.356	.932

i38	168.91	966.053	.482	.931
i39	168.94	971.812	.483	.931
i40	168.91	987.561	.243	.933
i41	168.86	954.458	.671	.930
i42	169.03	967.168	.442	.932
i43	169.21	974.200	.403	.932
i44	168.91	952.392	.662	.930
i45	168.97	975.445	.359	.932
i46	169.00	975.569	.423	.932
i47	168.65	978.231	.318	.933
i48	169.17	966.510	.516	.931
i49	169.20	982.038	.270	.933
i50	168.68	978.990	.396	.932
i51	169.23	960.148	.511	.931
i52	168.92	975.394	.393	.932
i53	169.20	971.514	.409	.932
i54	168.95	962.444	.581	.931
i55	169.23	958.763	.646	.930
i56	168.38	981.193	.328	.932
i57	168.98	974.507	.389	.932

Appendix 14: Principal Components Analysis - Scree Plot



Appendix 15: Principal Components Analysis – Pattern Matrix

Pattern Matrix			
	Component		
	1	2	3
i1			-.453
i3			
i8			-.432
i32			-.683
i41			-.503
i44			-.568
i47			-.740
i55			
i24	.401		
i7		-.741	
i14		-.659	
i29		-.581	
i30		-.596	
i38		-.753	
i42		-.593	-.430
i45		-.783	
i51		-.743	
i53		-.592	
i48			
i21	.597		
i22	.500	-.434	
i28	.593		
i37	.806		
i43	.562		
i57	.465		
i18			
i16			
i10			
i23			
i26			-.467
i34			-.531
i39			-.616
i46			-.641
i54			
i17			

Appendix 16: Principal Components Analysis – Structure Matrix

Structure Matrix			
	Component		
	1	2	3
i1			-.503
i3	.441		-.476
i8			-.500
i32			-.724
i41	.425	-.462	-.640
i44		-.425	-.673
i47			-.641
i55	.499	-.436	-.458
i24	.497		-.445
i7		-.729	
i14		-.705	
i29		-.593	
i30		-.626	
i38		-.745	
i42		-.610	-.472
i45		-.718	
i51		-.761	
i53		-.611	
i48	.464	-.491	
i21	.635		
i22	.528	-.494	
i28	.642		
i37	.704		
i43	.583		
i57	.492		
i18	.516		-.404
i16			
i10		-.406	
i23	.428		
i26			-.561
i34			-.513
i39			-.642
i46			-.645
i54	.520		-.453
i17	.443		

Appendix 17: Emotions Card



Young People with Anti-Social Behaviours, Routledge © Kathy Hampson 2011

(Taken from Hampson, 2011: 17)