NATIONAL REPORT ON YOUTH CRIME
2007 - 2013

By

The National Committee on Youth Guidance and Rehabilitation
INSIGHT SERIES

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

4PM  Malay Youth Literary Association
AGC  Attorney-General’s Chambers
AMP  Association of Muslim Professionals
CBS  Community-Based Sentencing
CCC  Community Court Conference
CDC  Community Development Council
CNB  Central Narcotics Bureau
COMWO  Community Work Order
CPC  Criminal Procedure Code
CRC  Community Rehabilitation Centre
CSO  Community Service Order
CSSP  Community Safety and Security Programme
CYGO  Central Youth Guidance Office
CYP  Children and Young Persons
CYPA  Children and Young Persons Act
DRC  Drug Rehabilitation Centre
DRO  Day Reporting Order
DSO  Drug Supervision Order
ESU  Enhanced STEP-UP
ESWP  Enhanced Streetwise Programme
FSC  Family Service Centre
GP  Guidance Programme
GP-ID  Guidance Programme with Intellectual Disability
HSA  Health Science Authority
HT  Home Team
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tr>
<td>HTBSC</td>
<td>Home Team Behavioural Science Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IAC</td>
<td>Inhalant Abuse Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMC</td>
<td>Inter-Ministry Committee on Dysfunctional Families, Juvenile Delinquency and Drug Abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMJD</td>
<td>Inter-Ministry Committee on Juvenile Delinquency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMYC</td>
<td>Inter-Ministry Committee on Youth Crime</td>
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<td>INSA</td>
<td>Intoxicating Substance Act</td>
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<tr>
<td>JRC</td>
<td>Juvenile Rehabilitation Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>MDA</td>
<td>Misuse of Drugs Act</td>
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<tr>
<td>MHA</td>
<td>Ministry of Home Affairs</td>
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<td>MOE</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
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<td>MSF</td>
<td>Ministry of Social and Family Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>MTO</td>
<td>Mandatory Treatment Order</td>
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<tr>
<td>NAMS</td>
<td>National Addictions Management Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCSS</td>
<td>National Council of Social Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>NITEC</td>
<td>National Institute of Technical Education Certificate</td>
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<tr>
<td>NPS</td>
<td>New Psychoactive Substance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRYC</td>
<td>National Report on Youth Crime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSF</td>
<td>National Serviceman (Full-Time)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NYGR</td>
<td>National Committee on Youth Guidance and Rehabilitation</td>
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<tr>
<td>PVEPS</td>
<td>Prevention Education Programme for Students</td>
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<td>SAF</td>
<td>Singapore Armed Forces</td>
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<tr>
<td>SDO</td>
<td>Short Detention Order</td>
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<tr>
<td>SINDA</td>
<td>Singapore Indian Development Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPF</td>
<td>Singapore Police Force</td>
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<td>SPS</td>
<td>Singapore Prison Service</td>
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<td>SSA</td>
<td>Social Service Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<tr>
<td>SSB</td>
<td>Secret Societies Branch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWP</td>
<td>Streetwise Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TFD</td>
<td>Taskforce on Drugs</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOP</td>
<td>Time Out Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UML</td>
<td>Unlicensed Moneylending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VWO</td>
<td>Voluntary Welfare Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WGYG</td>
<td>Inter-Ministry Working Group on Youth Gangs</td>
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<tr>
<td>YCI</td>
<td>Youth Crime Indicators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YEP</td>
<td>Youth Engagement Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>Youth Employment System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YGP</td>
<td>Youth GO! Programme</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Executive Summary
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The National Committee on Youth Guidance and Rehabilitation (NYGR) Youth Crime Indicators (YCI) Taskforce, then chaired by Dr Maliki Osman, noted that the youth crime and drug statistics that were released to the public were usually in the form of news releases. These releases might not always give in-depth analyses of youth offending trends.

2 Therefore, the YCI Taskforce recommended that NYGR publish a National Report on Youth Crime (NRYC) to provide a holistic view on youth delinquency and crime in Singapore. The report would map the pathways in which an at-risk youth may progress from pre-delinquency to criminal behaviour in the local context. By focussing on youth offending, NRYC would enable NYGR to review youth offending trends, evaluate intervention and rehabilitation outcomes, and garner support from the public and relevant community stakeholders to address youth crime concerns. The report would also inform the community at large and youth service organisations to design programmes and services to tackle current trends and meet specific needs.

3 The NRYC would be a seminal publication contributing to the knowledge on juvenile delinquency and youth crime locally. This report is a joint effort and collaboration by the NYGR agencies.
Introduction
INTRODUCTION

An inter-agency workgroup comprising representatives from the Ministry of Social and Family Development\(^1\) (MSF), Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), Central Narcotics Bureau (CNB), Central Youth Guidance Office (CYGO), SPF, Singapore Prison Service (SPS) and the State Courts\(^2\) was formed to develop this report.

2 This report is organised into 3 parts and 7 chapters. Part I paints a picture of the overall youth crime situation. Here, arrest statistics from SPF and CNB over a course of 6 years, between 2007 and 2013, are presented. Sections are also allotted to highlight areas of increasing concern in youth crime, e.g. youth gangs and unlicensed moneylending. Part II of the report focusses on the intervention and rehabilitation processes, i.e. what happens to the youth after the point of arrest. This part discusses the pre-Court diversionary measures available in this country, judiciary and legislative changes affecting the youth justice system, Court powers and sentencing outcomes, and finally, the recidivism rates of various existing programmes. Part III of the report casts the attention on upstream intervention and discusses what NYGR agencies have done or will be doing to strengthen youth guidance.

3 The report is organised to reflect the typical pathway of a youth offender. By adopting a life course perspective and development approach to studying youth crime, the YCI taskforce focussed on mapping the pathways in which an at-risk youth may progress from pre-delinquency to criminal behaviour in the local context, including the systems, institutions and structures the youth may undergo throughout his lifespan.

4 The Composite Pathway (Annexe A) attempts to capture the pathways of an at-risk youth from the point he first displays at-risk behaviour in school to the point of arrest, followed by rehabilitation and reintegration. Students may commit offences in school and / or are caught by the Police for misbehaviours and offences committed outside school. Depending on the nature and severity of the behaviours, the students may be referred to intervention programmes offered by schools or Voluntary Welfare Organisations (VWOs). Intervention during this phase focusses primarily on prevention for students manifesting delinquent or pre-delinquent behaviours so that they will not progress to a severity such that law enforcement agencies have no choice but to arrest the youths.

5 A youth who is arrested by Police for less serious offences with mitigating grounds may be warned or placed on diversionary programmes – the Guidance Programme or Enhanced Streetwise Programme in lieu of Court prosecution. The Pre-Court diversionary programmes are community-based programmes, with the objective of helping the youths turn around before they commit more serious offences.

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\(^1\) Formerly known as Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS). All references to MCYS would be changed to MSF where applicable for consistency.

\(^2\) With effect from 7 March 2014, the Subordinate Courts was renamed ‘State Courts”. All references to Subordinate Courts would be changed to State Courts where applicable for consistency.
6 A youth who is arrested and charged will be given a Court order, requiring him to undergo community-based and / or institutional rehabilitation. He may also be placed on various programmes under MSF and Prisons, depending on the youth’s risk of re-offending and level of family and community support.

7 The Pathways of Drug and Inhalant Abusers (Annexes B and C) are mapped and highlighted due to the seriousness of the offence which warrants further explication. This pathway attempts to map processes, data points, interventions and possible gaps in relation to drug and inhalant use among youths.

8 It is important to note that this report is not a study of any particular cohort of offenders. It does not track progression of offenders belonging to the same cohort(s). In fact, the statistics presented in the various sections of this report pertain to different cohorts of offenders.
CHAPTER 1: GENERAL YOUTH CRIME SITUATION

There has been a gradual decline in the number of youths\(^3\) arrested over the last six years, with a 10% decrease in youths arrested in 2013 from 2012. Out of the youths arrested between 2007 and 2013, the three most common offences committed were shop theft, rioting and other thefts.

### Diagram 1.1: Youth Arrest Statistics from 2007 to 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of Youths Arrested</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>4,526</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>4,240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>4,271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>4,174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>3,477</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>3,359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>3,020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: SPF

Besides the three most common offences, youths can also become involved in gangs. This can lead to serious and tragic consequences, such as becoming victims of rival gang clashes. Another area of concern is the involvement of youths in unlicensed moneylending (UML) activities.

#### Spotlight 1: Youth Gangs

**MSF’s Study on Violence Risk and Gang Affiliation in Youth Offenders: A Recidivism Study**

Through a review of the empirical research (Annexe D) on local youth gangs conducted by MSF in 2010, the study found that the majority of youth rioters were reportedly involved in gangs, and that gang-affiliated youth offenders were about twice as likely to commit further offence(s) as compared to their non-gang-affiliated counterparts. While the average age for joining gangs was 13-14 years, youth offenders were on average charged for their first offence at 15, suggesting a window of opportunity for anti-gang intervention.

\(^3\) Definition of youth for this chapter: aged 7-19 years old
Recommendations from Workgroup on Measures to Deal with Youth Gangs

An Inter-Ministry Working Group on Youth Gangs (WGYG) comprising MHA, MSF, Ministry of Education (MOE), SPF, SPS and Attorney-General’s Chambers (AGC) was set up in December 2010 to formulate measures to deter youths from joining gangs and to disrupt existing youth gangs. The WGYG recommendations were announced in November 2011, and comprised a range of levers and programmes to ensure relevant agencies continued to be on top of the youth gang situation. These included:

a) Greater investment in preventive, diversionary and rehabilitative measures for youths who are in the early stages of associating with gangs. Low-risk youths arrested for gang involvement would now need to attend a mandatory intervention programme in lieu of prosecution. Here, they receive counselling and undergo a specialised programme catered to their needs.

b) Increasing inter-agency collaboration between schools, SPF and MSF to better coordinate efforts to help youths-at-risk and rehabilitate young offenders. SPF established a Youth Offenders Unit in 2012 to reinforce their commitment towards dealing with the complex issue of youth crime and youth gangs more effectively. The Unit coordinates and drives youth crime-related policies and programmes with partner agencies, and monitor trends on youth offending. It also oversees public education and outreach efforts to youths.

c) Reviewing anti-gang legislation to give SPF and the Courts powers to deal with youth gangs and gang offenders more effectively by criminalising gang membership and activities. As gang congregation and recruitment are observed in Public Entertainment outlets such as billiard saloons, computer gaming centres and amusement centres, MHA reviewed regulations to ensure operators take reasonable steps to prevent gang activities.

Spotlight 2: Youth Involvement in Unlicensed Moneylending

Youth involvement in Unlicensed Moneylending

Youth involvement in UML activities was a concern. The majority of youths were arrested for distributing flyers, harassing debtors and opening bank accounts for unlicensed moneylenders. Youths are prey for loansharks who tempt them with financial incentives and provide false assurances that if caught, their punishment would be mitigated due to their young age. There was a rising trend of students being preyed upon by loansharking syndicates, and some cases revealed that loansharks resorted to infiltrating schools to expand their runner base.
Public Education & Outreach Efforts

SPF worked closely with schools on various initiatives, such as school talks and localised Community Safety and Security Programmes (CSSPs), to educate students and youths against falling prey to the lure of easy money offered by loansharks.

In 2012, SPF developed an anti-UML school talk package that was delivered to all Secondary 1 and 2 students. SPF also produced a video entitled “Second Thoughts” which depicted a youth’s involvement in UML activities and the punishment he received. SPF highlighted the consequences of being involved in UML activities to school leaders and parents through crime advisories for the school holidays. Anti-UML messages were also weaved into SPF’s Youth Engagement Programme (YEP) for at-risk youths.

Through their engagement with youths, SPF dispelled the myth that should the youths get caught, they would get away with light punishment such as warning or probation. Youths were taught that they could be sent for Reformative Training, even for first-time offenders.

Apart from persistent enforcement efforts and strengthening partnership with the community in combating loansharking activities, SPF constantly explores new methods to reach out to the public in support of its anti-loansharking campaign. For example, SPF launched a dedicated anti-loansharking webpage4 where members of the public can visit to obtain SPF’s most updated news as well as advice on UML and harassment matters. In addition, a dedicated tab containing information on UML and harassment was created on SPF’s Facebook Page5 which also allows fans to post queries, comments, feedback and provide tip-offs on loanshark-related activities.

In 2010, the National Crime Prevention Council started the 1800-X-Ah-Long (1800-9-24-5664) Hotline to allow callers to provide information on loansharking activities with anonymity. Since its implementation, the hotline has received more than 2,000 calls.

CHAPTER 2: YOUTH DRUG AND INHALANT SITUATION

Youth drug situation

The number of youth6 drug abusers arrested rose from 79 in 2007 to peak at 260 in 2011. The numbers declined to 181 in 2013. The proportion of youths arrested over the total number of drug abusers arrested has remained below 10% since 2007. The majority of youth abusers are new abusers.

4 http://www.spf.gov.sg/ahlong
5 https://www.facebook.com/singaporepoliceforce?sk=app_10531514314
6 Definition of youth for this chapter: aged below 20 years old
Youth inhalant situation

54 youth inhalant abusers were arrested in 2013. This continued a decreasing trend since 2007 when 443 were arrested. Youths remained the majority of inhalant abusers arrested, although this proportion dropped from 69% in 2007 to 40% in 2013.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>New Abusers</th>
<th>Repeat Abusers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>281</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Source: CNB
Spotlight 3: Taskforce on Drugs (2011)

3 MHA established an inter-agency Taskforce on Drugs (TFD) in October 2011 to address the problem of drug abuse, especially among youth and repeat offenders. The findings and key recommendations of the Committee were endorsed by Cabinet in April 2012.

Research Study on New Drug Abusers

4 As part of the TFD, the Home Team Behavioural Sciences Centre (HTBSC), SPS Psychological and Correctional Rehabilitation Division and CNB Psychological Unit conducted an in-depth analysis on new drug abusers to examine the behaviours and motivations of new drug abusers. The research study incorporated both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and analysis. It also included a review of journal articles on drug abuse, focus group discussions and interviews with content experts from CNB, the Health Science Authority (HSA) and National Addictions Management Service (NAMS), and interviews with CNB drug supervisees and abusers in the Drug Rehabilitation Centre (DRC) who have been arrested by CNB for the first time.
The study showed that new drug abusers, (particularly Methamphetamine and Heroin abusers):

a) Tended to come from lower to lower-middle socio-economic groups.
b) Preferred to take drugs alone or with peers.
c) Preferred to use smoking as the method of consumption.
d) Tended to abuse drugs in indoor private areas such as homes.
e) Took drugs mainly for coping with stress and problems or to enhance their moods.
f) Perceived to have control over their addiction (i.e. Methamphetamine abusers) and to be able to evade arrest.
g) Tended to hold liberal attitudes towards drug use and externalised drug-related behaviours by blaming the laws.
h) Perceived drugs and drug-related information to be easily available.

It also raised six noteworthy concerns:

a) **Peer influence and peer contamination** appeared to correlate with drug use initiation amongst the new drug abusers.
b) New drug abusers might be influenced by global factors. It was found that drug related information was readily available and easily accessible on the Internet and especially YouTube.
c) New drug abusers might have progressed from abusing substances such as inhalants to drugs like Cannabis and eventually to abusing Heroin and Methamphetamine at an older age.
d) Methamphetamine abusers tended to have a misperceived sense of their own control over addiction. There was a general impression that Methamphetamine was less destructive and addictive than other types of drugs. One reason for the misconception could be that there were few physiological symptoms of Methamphetamine addiction. However, these drug abusers failed to recognise that addiction also contained a psychological component as well.
e) Contrary to the common belief that Methamphetamine is a party drug that is mainly consumed in clubs, findings from the present study suggested that Methamphetamine tended to be consumed in private spaces such as homes.
f) New drug abusers tended to use drugs for mood regulation purposes - to enhance a positive mood, and / or to cope with a negative mood.

**TFD Recommendations**

The study helped shape the comprehensive approach recommended by the TFD to effectively address the problem of drug abuse. It affirmed the government’s zero-tolerance approach towards drug abuse. The TFD recommendations focussed on the following key areas:
a) Targeted prevention – improving the outreach and content of preventive drug education outreach;

b) Upstream intervention for young abusers – enhancing the Direct Supervision Order (DSO)\(^7\) to introduce casework and counselling for youth abusers, and establishing a Community Rehabilitation Centre (CRC) for young abusers to continue their education and employment in the day before returning in the evenings for programmes;

c) Strong deterrence and enforcement – enhancing CNB’s enforcement and intelligence capabilities, controlling new psychoactive substance\(^8\) and strengthening CNB’s punishment regime;

d) Rehabilitation and supervision to reduce relapse rate – restructuring DRC regime and implementing Mandatory Aftercare for high-risk offenders;

e) Engaging families and the community – improving engagement and support for ex-offenders and their families, and strengthening capability and professional development for workers and volunteers; and

f) Enhancing systems and structures – establishing a steering committee chaired by Mr Masagos Zulkifli, Minister in Prime Minister’s Office, Second Minister for Home Affairs and Second Minister for Foreign Affairs, and building coalition of international partners to support the fight against drugs.

Progress on recommendations by Taskforce on Drugs

**Targeted Prevention**

8 In 2012, CNB customised an anti-drug package (Project TriAce) for at-risk and out-of-school youths to bring home the anti-drug message and the importance of peer support to stay drug-free. CNB also proactively collaborates with various community organisations and agencies\(^9\) to customise and conduct anti-drug workshops or activities to reach out to the at-risk and out-of-school youths.

9 To enhance outreach to the post-16 youths, CNB organised a series of anti-drug themed roadshows at post-secondary educational institutions to educate students against drug abuse. CNB also purchased advertorials in youth magazines to further reinforce the anti-drug message that the youths received in school. To deepen CNB’s outreach to the older youths, CNB also collaborated with post-secondary educational institutions to organise competitions and campaigns in the past few years\(^10\) to imbibe the anti-drug message and to further the anti-drug message to their peers through them.

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\(^7\) Now known as the Youth Enhanced Supervision Scheme.

\(^8\) New Psychoactive Substances (NPS) refer to substances which produce the same (or similar) effects to controlled drugs such as cocaine, “ecstasy”, methamphetamine or heroin, and are usually not controlled under any anti-drug legislation.

\(^9\) The organisations and agencies include SPF, MSF, Yayasan MENDAKI, Singapore Indian Development Association (SINDA), Malay Youth Literary Association (4PM) and Association of Muslim Professionals (AMP).

\(^10\) In 2012, CNB collaborated with LASALLE College of the Arts to run an intra-school Anti-Drug Posters and Brochure Design. The champion team’s brochure design was adapted and produced as a new brochure for youths in 2013. CNB also worked with students from Singapore Polytechnic to organise “DanceWorks!” since 2013 and the Anti-Drug Abuse Campaign since 2011.
In addition to post-secondary students, CNB has also conducted talks for new batches of National Servicemen (Full-Time) (NSFs) from the SPF and Singapore Civil Defence Force since October 2012. Anti-drug talks were also conducted as part of Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) Military SPF Command’s Crime Prevention Programmes for new NSFs and SAF regulars at Basic Military Training Centres and SAF Camps.

To widen CNB’s outreach to social media-savvy youths and young adults, CNB also started leveraging on Instagram since 2012 to engage youth participants and supporters for DanceWorks!. These additional platforms complement CNB’s existing use of social media platforms such as Facebook and YouTube.

As parents are likely the first source of information for their children, they play an active role in reinforcing anti-drug messages to their children if they are well-informed about the dangers of drug abuse. To this end, CNB produced handbooks for parents of drug supervisees to equip them with useful information and tips to guide their children to remain drug-free. CNB also reaches out to parents through advertorials in magazines and anti-drug learning resources featured on the CNB’s corporate website.

Upstream intervention for young abusers

CNB had worked closely with MSF to roll out the CNB Youth Enhanced Supervision Scheme in July 2013. This enhanced supervision scheme incorporated counselling and casework components into the routine urine testing and reporting regime. The setting up of the CRC also began in 2013\(^1\).

Strong deterrence and enforcement

In 2013, legislative amendments were made to the Misuse of Drugs Act (MDA) to enhance the punishment for repeated trafficking, criminalise the organising of a drug gathering and the involvement of the young and vulnerable persons in drug-related activities. New Psychoactive Substances (NPS) were also placed under the Fifth Schedule of MDA in May 2013 that enabled CNB to seize such substances to prevent its circulation locally. In May 2014, all the drugs under the Fifth Schedule of MDA were relisted as Class A controlled drugs.

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\(^{11}\) The first inmate was admitted to the CRC in May 2014, and the CRC was officially opened in January 2015.
CHAPTER 3: PRE-COURT DIVERSIONARY AND REHABILITATION MEASURES

Singapore recognises that youth offenders may have different levels of risks and needs. Thus, a continuum of rehabilitation options is available to target the specific risks and needs of the offenders. At one end of the continuum are the diversionary programmes. Low risk youth offenders may be diverted away from the criminal justice system, and be given a police caution or placed on the Guidance Programme (GP) or Enhanced Streetwise Programme (ESWP). The merits of pre-court diversionary measures are three-fold.

2 First, the process of prosecution can be a stigmatising and traumatising experience for the youth and his family. Research has shown that offending by youth offenders can be time- and age-limited. By diverting youth offenders away from the criminal justice system, especially those with lower risk of re-offending, they are given a chance to be rehabilitated and avoid the stigma and effects of the criminal justice system at a young age.

3 Second, pre-court diversionary measures generally yield positive outcomes. For instance, the completion rate for GP cases closed in 2013 was 88% while the 3-year recidivism rate for the GP cases closed in 2009 was 11.9%.

4 Third, by diverting youth offenders who have committed minor offences away from the juvenile justice system (the Courts, the Police, the Probation Services and the Juvenile Homes), this frees up resources and enables the juvenile justice system to focus on youth offenders with higher risk profiles.

Guidance Programme

5 GP was launched in 1997 to rehabilitate first-time youth offenders who had committed minor offences, and prevent re-offending. It arose as a recommendation from the 1994 Inter-Ministry Committee (IMC) on Dysfunctional Families, Juvenile Delinquency and Drug Abuse to address the rising juvenile crime rate. The IMC noted that, on average, one in three youths let off with a police caution without any intervention would subsequently re-offend.

6 GP is a six-month pre-Court diversionary programme that focusses on counselling and rehabilitation with the active involvement of parents. It seeks to help the youth develop pro-social mindsets and empathy for others. GP is conducted by Social Service Agencies (SSA) appointed by MSF, and the activities conducted by these SSAs for the youths include:
• individual counselling
• family counselling
• group sessions
• enrichment activities (e.g. community service, sports etc)

Enhancements to Guidance Programme

7 In 2003, GP was extended to offenders aged 16 to below 19 years. Called GP Plus, the programme was designed to meet the older youths’ needs, such as engaging in employment or tertiary education.

8 In 2006, GP for youth offenders with intellectual disability (GP-ID) was introduced. The approach was customised to better suit the learning needs of these youth and consists of mainly individual and family sessions. The programme is conducted by a trained social service agency.

Table 3.1: Enrolment in GP programmes from 2007 to 2013 (by age and gender)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Year 2007</th>
<th>Year 2008</th>
<th>Year 2009</th>
<th>Year 2010</th>
<th>Year 2011</th>
<th>Year 2012</th>
<th>Year 2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7 to below 12</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 to below 14</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 to below 16</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>220</td>
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<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 to below 19</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>189</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>648</td>
<td>593</td>
<td>567</td>
<td>528</td>
<td>654</td>
<td>767</td>
<td>650</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: MSF
Table 3.2: Enrolment in GP programmes from 2007 to 2013 (by schooling status)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Schooling Status</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7 to below 12</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-Student</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 to below 14</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-Student</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 to below 16</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>323</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-student</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 to below 19</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-student</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>648</td>
<td>593</td>
<td>567</td>
<td>528</td>
<td>654</td>
<td>767</td>
<td>650</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: MSF

Table 3.3: GP Completion Rate from 2007 to 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total no. of cases closed</td>
<td>709</td>
<td>584</td>
<td>561</td>
<td>528</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>692</td>
<td>708</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GP Completion Rate</td>
<td>89.0%</td>
<td>88.0%</td>
<td>87.7%</td>
<td>87.5%</td>
<td>89.6%</td>
<td>89.6%</td>
<td>88.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: MSF

9 In 2012, the scope of GP was expanded to allow a greater portion of youth offenders who are amenable to rehabilitation to be diverted away from the criminal justice system.

10 Changes have been made to the workflow and processes in GP in order to (i) streamline the placement of a youth offender on GP after the conclusion of police investigations; and (ii) to send a stronger message to the youth offender upon his enrolment into GP. In respect of (ii), a conditional warning is given to the youth offender from the onset of the GP, as opposed to the warning being issued at the completion of GP. The conditions included in the warning require the youth to complete GP and remain crime-free for a stipulated period of time. The first meeting for a youth placed on GP now takes place at the police station instead of at a social service agency. The intention is to send a strong message to the youth offenders to take the programme seriously and appreciate the opportunity to receive social intervention.

12 GP completion rate is measured by the percentage of the total number of cases that are closed successfully in a given year (i.e. no. of cases closed successfully / total no. of cases closed in a given year).
Recidivism Rate of the Guidance Programme

11 MSF tracks the youth completers of GP for a period of 3 years after their successful completion of the programme. Recidivism is measured by the percentage of cases who committed further offences within 3 years after their completion. The recidivism rates for GP are comparable across the years.

Diagram 3.1: Recidivism Rates for 2007 to 2009 cohorts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Recidivism Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Streetwise Programme and Enhanced Streetwise Programme

12 Launched in 1997 together with GP as a recommendation from the 1994 IMC, Streetwise Programme (SWP) is a voluntary early intervention programme for youths who are in gangs but are willing to leave the gangs. The programme helps such youths make a fresh start in life through a series of individual counselling, group work and family counselling sessions focussed on gang intervention and building the youths’ self-efficacy.

13 In 2012, SWP was enhanced to be a pre-Court diversionary programme, called the Enhanced Streetwise Programme (ESWP) for youth offenders who play a minor role in a gang-related offence. The additional components of the ESWP include having the youths report in person on a regular basis to the Police, close monitoring of attendance at school or work, restrictions on places which the youths can visit (to keep them away from gang haunts) and restrictions on people such as gang members whom the youths can associate with. Similar to GP, a conditional warning is administered to the youth offender from the onset, with the condition that he/she completes ESWP successfully and remains crime-free for a stipulated period of time.
Table 3.4: Enrolment in SWP from 2007 to 2013 (by age and gender)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 to below 12</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 to below 14</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 to below 16</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 to below 19</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Secret Societies Branch (SSB), SPF and MSF

Table 3.5: Enrolment in SWP from 2007 to 2013 (by schooling status)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Schooling Status</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 to below 12</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-Student</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 to below 14</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-Student</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 to below 16</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-student</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 to below 19</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-student</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: SSB, SPF and MSF

Table 3.6: SWP Completion Rates from 2007 to 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total no. of cases</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWP Completion Rate</td>
<td>71.2%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>83.9%</td>
<td>77.9%</td>
<td>89.9%</td>
<td>85.9%</td>
<td>84.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: SSB, SPF and MSF
The Youth Enhanced Supervision Scheme was introduced at the Young Persons Reporting Centre in July 2013, in line with the recommendations by TFD to enhance the supervision order for young abusers. The Youth Enhanced Supervision Scheme is a diversionary programme for youths under 21 years of age who are arrested for first-time drug abuse and are assessed to be of low risk of relapsing. They would not have to undergo treatment at DRC or incarceration in SPS. CNB partners MSF and SSAs to administer the Youth Enhanced Supervision Scheme. This programme strengthens the current urine test regime of CNB with a compulsory casework and counselling component. Guided by social workers, the youth offenders undergo individual, group-based and family sessions aimed at motivating them to stay away from drugs and equipping them with relapse-prevention skills. The families of young abusers will also be engaged as family support is integral to rehabilitation.

The Drug Supervision Scheme derives its powers from MDA Cap 185, Section 34(2)(a). Under MDA, the Supervision Order is served on former drug abusers (supervisees) for a period not exceeding 2 years. They are required to report to CNB for drug supervision after their release from the DRC or prison. The objectives of the scheme are to deter supervisees from abusing drugs again and to detect them quickly should they relapse.

For drug supervisees aged 20 and below, they will be assigned to the designated Young Persons Reporting Centre located at SPF Cantonment Complex. The Young Persons Reporting Centre was set up in 2012 to prevent recalcitrant abusers from adversely influencing the young drug abusers.

Supervision of former drug abusers is done by carrying out regular urine tests, surprise urine tests and periodic interviews. Case reviews are conducted and supervisees who perform well are eligible for early revocation of their Supervision Order while non-compliance could result in court prosecution or the Supervision Order being extended for a period not exceeding two years under MDA Section 34(4A).

The Inhalant Supervision Scheme derives its powers from the Intoxicating Substance Act (INSA) Cap 146A, Sections 16(1) and 16(2). Under INSA, the Inhalant Supervision Order is served on former inhalant abusers (supervisees) for a period not exceeding 1 year. They are required to report to CNB for inhalant supervision after their release from the Inhalant Abuse Centre (IAC) or prison. The objectives of this scheme are to deter supervisees from abusing intoxicating substances again and detect them quickly should they relapse.
19 For inhalant supervisees aged 20 and below, they will be assigned to the designated Young Persons Reporting Centre located at SPF Cantonment Complex. Supervision of former inhalant abusers is done by regular reporting to their Supervision Officers and periodic interviews. Blood tests may be conducted on supervisees who are suspected of inhalant abuse while surprise urine tests are conducted to ensure that they stay away from drugs. Case reviews are conducted and supervisees who perform well are eligible for early revocation of their Supervision Order, while non-compliance could be treated as an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding $1,000 under INSA Section 16(4).

20 Direct Inhalant Supervision Order is similar to the above scheme but refers to first time abusers who are directly placed on supervision after arrest without undergoing treatment at IAC or incarceration in prison.

Drug Rehabilitation Centre

21 A DRC inmate may be detained at an approved centre to undergo treatment and rehabilitation for a period of 12 to 18 months, under MDA (Cap. 185) Section 34.

22 ADRC inmate will undergo a drug treatment programme during the period of detention. The counselling and psycho-educational sessions are conducted in a group setting as group therapy allows for processes such as vicarious learning and relevant challenges from other offenders about matters discussed in the group. Depending on the intensity of the programme, the number of hours of group sessions differs. Deserving inmates will be released early on community-based supervision, where they will undergo further counselling and case management.

Community Rehabilitation Centre

23 CRC is a 6-month step down arrangement after a period of detention in DRC. Once transferred to CRC, young offenders will participate in a structured residential component and attend compulsory counselling sessions in the evenings. They will be allowed to continue their education or employment in the day to minimise disruption to their daily lives.

Inhalant Abuse Centre

24 Under Section 17 of INSA (Chapter 146A), an inhalant abuser may be admitted to an approved centre to undergo treatment and rehabilitation for a period not exceeding 12 months. All inhalant abusers, regardless of number of admissions, will undergo the same treatment programme.

25 The programme adopts a family-based approach, revolving around meaningful rehabilitative, recreational and social activities. Counselling plays an important role and forms a major portion of the treatment programme.
CHAPTER 4: JUDICIARY AND LEGISLATIVE CHANGES

Establishment of the Community Court

The Community Court was officially launched by the then Honourable Chief Justice Chan Sek Keong at the 15th State Courts Workplan Seminar 2006-2007. In his keynote address, he said this about the need to set up the Community Court:

“[…] a justice system that enjoys the confidence of the public is one that pays proper heed to the needs of the community. As fundamental justice reforms have been institutionalised, the time is right for the establishment of a specialist court that is responsive to the needs of the community. A new Community Court will be established.”

2 The Community Court seeks to achieve the same goals as any other criminal court, namely to prevent and reduce the incidence of crimes and to ensure that those suspected, accused or convicted of crimes are dealt with fairly, justly and appropriately. The Community Court is, however, additionally committed to the dual principles of restorative justice and rehabilitation, and undertakes a non-traditional approach to dealing with offenders, exploring sentencing alternatives and community based sanctions with input from criminal justice agencies, social service providers and criminal justice professionals to promote rehabilitation and address the underlying causes of criminality. The Community Court maintains a clear interest in ensuring that offenders receive the appropriate programmes and sentences that will help to curb future criminal behaviour.

3 In providing a high level of integrated service, the Community Court is supported by the Community Court Secretariat comprising a team of psychologists, social workers and other court staff in the assessment, referral, management and co-ordination of its cases. The Community Court Secretariat engages the various community agencies in providing rehabilitation services and treatment options for offenders. It follows up on cases to not just monitor them, but also instil hope in the offenders and their beleaguered families. It also works closely with the counsellor for the offenders to formulate non-traditional solutions towards rehabilitation which focusses on treatment of the root causes and underlying problems with the aim of reducing recidivism.

The Philosophy that Governs the Community Court

4 Principles of rehabilitation involve an examination of the offence with a view to imposing the appropriate sentence and changing the offender’s values so that he or she will learn that such conduct is wrong and refrain from committing offences in the future. Restorative justice seeks to achieve a balance between the therapeutic and retributive models of justice; a balance between offenders’ rights and victims’ needs and a balance between the need to rehabilitate the offender and the duty to protect the public. Recognising its value, the Community Court
started to incorporate restorative justice processes into their sentencing philosophy. These processes are largely non-custodial in nature and include victim-offender mediation, family group conferencing, restorative or community conferencing, community restorative committees and restorative circles which assist the offender in his or her successful transition back to the community.

The Community Court from Its Inception

Over time, the Community Court has undergone changes in tandem with the evolution of types of cases, legal frameworks, resource agencies, and court processes. Originally dealing with young offenders aged 16-18, Community Court extended its remit to 16-21 year olds. Other types of cases (e.g. mentally disordered, community conflicts, racial / religious problems, animal abuse cases, family violence, etc.) were seen with less frequency. Between 2009 and 2011, about 900 youth offender (aged 16-21) cases were concluded annually on average, comprising half of the Community Court cases. In addition, as legal frameworks and benchmarks evolved, increasing numbers of adult offenders (aged above 21 years old) were placed on probation, especially for those with mental disorders.

From 2006 to 2008, the Community Court case manager was replaced by a Senior Consultant Psychologist and an additional staff (psychologist or social worker) complemented the support staff. The Community Court Secretariat was formed and Community Court Conferences (CCCs) were conducted to determine appropriate placement for accused persons with mental disorders as well as to handle periodic family violence cases requiring intervention on behalf of victims. Thus, from an average of 8 CCCs per month in 2007, the number has increased to 45 CCCs per month in 2011.

Introduction of Community-Based Sentencing

Community-Based Sentencing (CBS) was introduced in Part XVII of the Criminal Procedure Code (CPC) Cap 68 (Rev Ed 2012) which came into operation on 2 January 2011. The goal of CBS is to enable offenders of less serious crimes to be dealt with in ways other than the imposition of fines or imprisonment to enhance the offenders’ chances of rehabilitation, without diluting the deterrent objective of our penal regime or jeopardising the public’s sense of

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13 Part XVII – Community Sentences; Sections 335 to 354, CPC Cap 68 (Rev Ed 2012).
safety. One key feature of the community sentences is that upon the successful completion of the community sentence by the offender, the conviction for that crime is rendered spent\textsuperscript{14}.

8 There are five types of community sentences which the Court can impose. They are\textsuperscript{15}:

a) Mandatory Treatment Order;
b) Day Reporting Order;
c) Community Service Order;
d) Community Work Order\textsuperscript{16};
e) Short Detention Order.

Detailed descriptions of these orders are set out in Chapter 5.

9 The Court may require the offender who is placed on any community sentence or order, with the exception of a Short Detention Order, to furnish security or give an undertaking to ensure that he complies with the sentence or order\textsuperscript{17}. This is similar to the execution of a bond by the offender’s parents or caregivers in the case of a probation order.

What That Means For Youth Offenders

10 The inception of the Community Court in 2006 and the implementation of CBS options in 2011 have given judges handling youth offenders more options in sentencing. Traditionally, most youth offenders would have been placed on probation or in a reformative training centre. With the new CBS options, judges can now consider Community Service Order or Day Reporting Order in combination, on their judgment of youth offenders who have committed minor offences.

Changes to the Children and Young Persons Act

11 The Children and Young Persons Act (CYPA) is the key legislation that provides for the care, protection and rehabilitation of children and young persons. The CYPA was amended in 2011 and came into force in July 2011 to provide greater protection for children and young persons, as well as to better meet the needs of juvenile offenders.

Licensing of Children and Young Persons Homes

12 A key amendment includes licensing of all Children and Young Persons (CYP) Homes in Singapore to enhance the welfare of children and young persons in residential care. All Homes must be inspected and must meet operational requirements and criteria before they are issued

\textsuperscript{14} Sections 7DA and 7E of the Registration of Criminals Act, Chapter 268. When a conviction is rendered spent, that offender shall be deemed to have no record of that conviction. So if the offender is asked whether he has a criminal record, it is lawful for him to say that he has no criminal record of that conviction.

\textsuperscript{15} See Section 336(1) CPC Cap 68 (Rev Ed 2012).

\textsuperscript{16} See Section 344 CPC Cap 68 (Rev Ed 2012). The community work order applies only to offences prescribed by the Minister.

\textsuperscript{17} See Section 349 CPC Cap 68 (Rev Ed 2012).
with a license to function as a CYP Home. As part of the licensing requirements, all children residing in CYP Homes must have their progress reviewed by a Review Board, consisting of independent members from the community. This is to ensure proper care plans are put in place for the welfare of the children. The Review Board will also visit the Homes regularly to ensure that the children are cared for in a conducive environment.

**Length of Residential Orders**

13 The minimum length of residential orders, at 24 months previously, was removed for juvenile offenders and beyond parental control cases. This allows greater flexibility for the Courts to take into account the needs and circumstance of each case in determining the appropriate length of order.

14 On a related note, there were changes in the nomenclature for institutions taking in children and young persons to better underscore the different rehabilitation approaches. The formerly-known “Approved Homes” for Beyond Parental Control and Care and Protection cases was re-gazetted as “Places of Safety”, while the formerly-known “Approved Schools” for juvenile offenders were re-gazetted as “Juvenile Rehabilitation Centres”.

**Protection and Welfare of Children and Young Persons**

15 There are also additional measures in the amended Act to enhance the protection of children and to provide for their safety and well-being. These include allowing inquiries to be made by the Protector\(^{18}\), where there is reasonable cause to suspect that an offence against any child or young person is being committed, or the child or young person is in need of care or protection. The Court may also exempt the child or young person from court proceedings where it is assessed that court attendance may adversely affect the child’s well-being.

16 To further strengthen protection for the privacy of children and young persons, a new provision is introduced to prohibit the publication or broadcast of information that leads to the identification of any child or young person who is subject to an investigation, or has been taken into care or custody under the Act.

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\(^{18}\) Protector means the Director of Social Welfare or any person appointed or authorised by the Director under the Act to exercise the powers and duties of a protector under the Act.
CHAPTER 5: POWERS OF CRIMINAL COURTS AND THE JUVENILE COURT

The traditional sentencing powers of the Court are the imposition of fines, imprisonment or both fine and imprisonment. For serious offences, the Court may be empowered to impose caning. The Court may also impose Court orders that are set out below.

Discharge / Conditional Discharge (Criminal Courts and Juvenile Court\(^\text{19}\))

2 The Court may grant the offender an absolute discharge or a conditional discharge\(^\text{20}\). The Court may do this if it feels it is “[…] inexpedient to inflict punishment and that a probation order is not appropriate”\(^\text{21}\). An absolute discharge is one where the offender is discharged of the offence absolutely without any condition attached. A conditional discharge is one where the offender is discharged on condition that he does not commit an offence during the prescribed period. The maximum period that the Court can grant a conditional discharge is 12 months. If the offender does not breach the condition during the prescribed period, then he will be considered not to have any criminal antecedent. If he commits another offence during the prescribed period, then he would be brought back to Court to be sentenced for the original offence.

Probation (Criminal Courts and Juvenile Court)

3 Probation provides the courts with an alternative sentencing option in dealing with offenders who may otherwise be committed to a juvenile rehabilitation centre or prison. It aims to instil in offenders a strong sense of social responsibility and self-discipline so that they can lead a crime-free life. Offenders’ suitability for probation and intervention recommendations are derived via the use of validated risk assessment tools. The rigour in the risk assessment approach enables Probation Officers to state the offender’s risk of re-offending with greater confidence and address the factors that contribute to offending. Evidence-based approaches are also used to shape attitudes, values and behaviours of the offenders.

4 The Court may attach conditions to the Probation Order that are necessary for securing the good conduct of the offender or preventing the commission of further offence(s)\(^\text{22}\). The Probation Order places the offender under the supervision of a probation officer for a period specified in the order, which would not be shorter than 6 months or longer than 3 years. The offender is also required to adhere to other terms and conditions specified in the order.

\(^\text{19}\) The Juvenile Court was renamed as the Youth Court with effect from 1 October 2014.

\(^\text{20}\) Section 8 of the Probation of Offenders Act, Chapter 252

\(^\text{21}\) Section 8(1), Probation of Offenders Act, Chapter 252

\(^\text{22}\) Section 5(2), Probation of Offenders Act, Chapter 252
5 Based on the gravity of the offence and the offender’s risk issues, the offender could be placed on different grades of probation that vary in the level of supervision according to the risk of the offender: administrative, supervised, intensive or split probation (combination of grades during the course of probation period).

6 The offender is required to abide by several conditions. These could include observing a curfew, being on the electronic monitoring scheme, performing community service, residing in a hostel, amongst others.

Community Sentences (Criminal Courts only)

7 There are five community-based sentences which the Court can make. They are:

   a) Mandatory Treatment Order (MTO);
   b) Day Reporting Order (DRO);
   c) Community Service Order (CSO);
   d) Community Work Order (COMWO)\textsuperscript{23};
   e) Short Detention Order (SDO)

\textbf{Mandatory Treatment Order}\textsuperscript{24}

8 An MTO empowers the Court to order the offender to seek psychiatric treatment. The focus of MTO is on rehabilitation and treatment rather than punishment. The root cause of the offence which is usually the offender’s mental disorder or condition, is addressed to prevent recidivism. MTO is used for cases where the offender suffers from a treatable psychiatric condition at the time of the offence, and the psychiatric condition is one of the contributing factors for committing the offence. The appointed psychiatrist from the Institute of Mental Health will give his opinion on these matters to the Court. The maximum period that the Court can order the offender to undergo mandatory treatment is 24 months. If there is a breach of the MTO by the offender, the Court may issue a warning, or vary the order, or impose a fine not exceeding $1000, and in all three instances, the Court may allow the MTO to continue. Alternatively, the Court may also revoke the MTO and impose such sentence which is provided for the offence.

\textbf{Day Reporting Order}\textsuperscript{25}

9 A DRO allows the Court to order the offender to report to a Day Reporting Centre on a regular basis. The offender must be 16 years old or above for him to be placed on DRO. The DRO is administered by SPS and currently there is one Day Reporting Centre. The offender is required to report to the Centre for monitoring purposes. He is also required to attend counselling sessions or other programmes designed and tailored to address his offending behaviour. In some instances, the offender may also be required to be placed on electronic tagging. The

\textsuperscript{23} See footnote 19.

\textsuperscript{24} The relevant provisions for MTO are Sections 339 to 340 CPC Cap 68 (Rev Ed 2012).

\textsuperscript{25} The relevant provisions for DRO are Sections 341 and 343 CPC Cap 68 (Rev Ed 2012).
period during which the offender may be required to report to the Day Reporting Centre shall not be less than three months and not more than 12 months. The consequence of a breach of a DRO is the same as that for an MTO, except that the Court has the additional recourse to make an order for the offender to be detained in prison for a period of not more than 14 days, and thereafter order the DRO to continue\(^{26}\).

**Community Service Order\(^{27}\)**

10 A CSO empowers the Court to sentence the offender who is 16 years old or above to perform any unpaid community service so that he can make reparation to the community while being punished for his misdeeds. The offender can be ordered to perform between 40 and 240 hours of community service. The CSO is similar to the unpaid community service commonly imposed as a condition in a probation order. A CSO can either be used as a “stand-alone” sentencing option or in combination with other community-based sentences. The Court frequently combines a CSO with a DRO because the supervision and counselling elements present in DRO will also help to address the offender’s criminal behaviour concurrently with the making of reparation through the performance of unpaid community service. The unpaid community service will be done under the supervision of an MSF community service officer. The type of community work which the offender can be made to perform under a CSO includes general cleaning, repair, maintenance and restoration works, administrative duties, the provision of care services and any other work that contributes to the community at any hospital or any charitable, educational, cultural or recreational institution or organisation that contributes to a social cause. The consequences of a breach of a CSO are the same as that for a MTO.

**Community Work Order\(^{28}\)**

11 A COMWO empowers the Court to sentence the offender who is 16 years old or above to perform community work that is associated with that offence. The community work is associated with the offence if the performance of that work will promote in the offender a sense of responsibility for, and an acknowledgement of, the harm that the offender has done by committing the offence. The offender will perform the community work under the supervision of a community work officer. The consequences of a breach of a COMWO are the same as that for a DRO.

**Short Detention Order**

12 A SDO empowers the Court to order the offender to be detained in prison for a period of not more than 14 days. A SDO is designed to give the offender a short but sharp experience of being detained in prison. The aim is to deter the offender from future re-offending behaviour. It serves as a stark reminder to the offender of the consequences of re-offending which is a more severe and prolonged stay in prison. At the same time, the short duration of incarceration is aimed at minimising any dislodgement from family and job. To prevent contamination with the harder and undesirable elements of prison society, the offender will be separated from the mainstream prison population during the SDO period.

\(^{26}\) See Section 352(7) CPC Cap 68 (Rev Ed 2012).

\(^{27}\) The relevant provisions for CSO are Sections 346 and 347 CPC Cap 68 (Rev Ed 2012).

\(^{28}\) The relevant provisions for COMWO are Sections 344 and 345 CPC Cap 68 (Rev Ed 2012). Please also see footnote 19.
Juvenile Rehabilitation Centre Orders

13 The Juvenile Court may order that an offender be sent to a Juvenile Rehabilitation Centre (JRC) for up to 3 years. This option is for juveniles who are assessed to be unsuitable for community-based probation due to various reasons, such as the display of a cavalier attitude towards community-based supervision, or close and strong association with highly undesirable peers.

14 These centres provide a structured environment to support the rehabilitation of the offender. There are facilities in such centres to cater to the offender’s academic or vocational needs. After a measure of stabilisation has set in and if the resident has displayed good behaviour and good response to the rehabilitative programmes, residents in these institutions could be granted home leave during weekends and may be allowed to return to their schools and employment.

Reformative Training (Criminal Courts and Juvenile Court)

15 The reformative training scheme has its origin from the Borstal system in the United Kingdom under section 20 of the Criminal Justice Act 1948 which has since been abolished. The provision for reformative training is found in section 305 CPC Cap 68 (Rev Ed 2012). Prior to the CPC Cap 68 (Rev Ed 2012), only the High Court and the District Court were empowered to impose a sentence of reformative training. Under the CPC Cap 68 (Rev Ed 2012), the Magistrate’s Court is now empowered to impose a sentence of reformative training. To be sentenced to reformative training, the offender must be at least 14 years old but below 21 years old on the date of his conviction and has, before that conviction, been dealt with by a court in connection with another offence and had, for that offence, been ordered to be sent to a juvenile rehabilitation centre established under section 64 of the CYPA (Cap. 38). The whole basis of sentencing the offender to reformative training is that the offender is considered to be amenable to reform, having regard to his character, previous conduct and the circumstances of the offence. Reformative training has both rehabilitative and deterrent elements, i.e. it “provides the courts with the middle ground that broadly encapsulates the twin principles of rehabilitation and deterrence in relation to young offenders.” The minimum period which the offender has to undergo reformative training is 18 months. The length of reformative training which the offender has to undergo is determined, not by the Court, but by the Visiting Justices.

29 Formerly known as Approved School Order.

30 Section 13 (1) of the CPC (Cap 68, 1985 Rev Ed) provides that “Where a person is convicted by the High Court or a District Court of an offence…that Court may,…pass a sentence of reformative training. Section 305(1) CPC Cap 68 (Rev Ed 2012) provides that “Where a person is convicted by a court of an offence…the court may impose a sentence of reformative training…”. The word “court” here is defined in Section 2 to include the Magistrate’s Court.

31 Section 305 CPC Cap 68 (Rev Ed 2012)

32 The case of PP v Mohammad Al-Ansari bin Basri [2008] 1 SLR 449 at [47], [57] and [58] per V K Rajah JA
16 Under the Children and Young Persons Act, Reformative Training is available as an option for offenders dealt with at the Juvenile Court\(^{33}\). The case will be transferred to a District Court for such an order to be made.

**Imprisonment (Criminal Courts only)**

17 Under CPC Cap 68 (Rev Ed 2012), the District Court may impose imprisonment for a term not exceeding 10 years\(^{34}\), while the Magistrate’s Court may impose imprisonment for a term not exceeding 3 years\(^{35}\). However, these Courts may impose imprisonment higher than these limits if the specific statute explicitly states that the District and Magistrate’s Courts may impose the full penalty prescribed for the offences in that statute.

18 Where the offender is convicted at one trial of at least three distinct offences and the Court imposes imprisonment sentences for these offences, the Court must then order the imprisonment sentences of at least two of those offences to run consecutively\(^{36}\). In making this order of consecutive sentences, the Court will bear in mind the need to avoid an aggregate sentence that is overly harsh on the offender and not taking into account his criminal record and prospects.

19 The Courts may also order that the sentence of imprisonment be backdated in circumstances where the offender is already in remand for that offence before he is sentenced. For instance, the offender may have been remanded for the purposes of investigation, or may have been refused bail because he is a serious flight risk, or may have been unable to meet the bail conditions set by the Court. The Court is however, not obliged to backdate a sentence of imprisonment in every case where the offender is in remand.

20 Under CPC Cap 68 (Rev Ed 2012), the District Court may impose a fine not exceeding $30,000\(^{37}\), while the Magistrate’s Court may impose a fine not exceeding $10,000\(^{38}\). However, these Courts may impose fines higher than these limits if the specific statute explicitly states that the District and Magistrate’s Courts may impose the full penalty prescribed for the offences in that statute. The purpose of sentences of fines generally is to “[...] take away from the convicted offender the desire to offend in a similar manner again\(^{39}\)” Fines imposed have to be paid in full on the same day that the sentence is imposed, except that the court may allow time for the payment to be made\(^{40}\). The court may also allow the payment of the fines to be made by

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\(^{33}\) Section 44(1)(k) CYPA

\(^{34}\) Section 303(2). Before the CPC Cap 68 (Rev Ed 2012) came into force, the District Court was only empowered to impose imprisonment for a term not exceeding seven years.

\(^{35}\) Section 303(3). Before the CPC Cap 68 (Rev Ed 2012) came into force, the Magistrate’s Court was only empowered to impose imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years.

\(^{36}\) Section 307(1) CPC Cap 68 (Rev Ed 2012)

\(^{37}\) Section 303(2)(b). Before the CPC Cap 68 (Rev Ed 2012) came into force, the District Court was only empowered to impose a fine not exceeding $10,000.

\(^{38}\) Section 303(3)(b). Before the CPC Cap 68 (Rev Ed 2012) came into force, the Magistrate’s Court was only empowered to impose a fine not exceeding $2,000.

\(^{39}\) Chia Kah Boon v PP [1999] 4 SLR 72 at [14]

\(^{40}\) Section 319(1)(b)(i) CPC Cap 68 (Rev Ed 2012)
instalments\textsuperscript{41}. If the fines are not paid, the court may impose imprisonment in default of payment\textsuperscript{42}. The default imprisonment term is intended to prevent evasion of the payment of the fine imposed, and not to punish those who are genuinely unable to pay\textsuperscript{43}. So the period of imprisonment in default should deter the offender from evading payment and at the same time commensurate with the amount of fines involved.

21 Judicial caning is seen as an effective and powerful deterrent to the offender as well as to other potential criminals. The District Court is empowered to impose a sentence of caning not exceeding 12 strokes, whereas the Magistrate’s Court is empowered to impose a sentence of caning not exceeding 6 strokes\textsuperscript{44}. In a case where the offender faces multiple charges in one trial, the maximum number of strokes that can be awarded at the trial is 24 strokes for an adult offender and 10 strokes for a juvenile\textsuperscript{45}. Caning is forbidden in respect of three categories of offenders and they are (i) women, (ii) men who are more than 50 years of age at the time of infliction of the caning, and (iii) men who have been sentenced to death\textsuperscript{46}. The sentence of caning cannot be executed in instalments\textsuperscript{47}.

Other Powers Exercisable by the Juvenile Court Under the Children and Young Persons Act

22 Section 44 of the CYPA provides for the orders that the Juvenile Court may make. The range of possible orders is very wide. They include options also provided for under other Acts (when dealing with non-juveniles), such as discharge, probation, community service orders, short-term detention, fines and reformatory training.

23 Other options include:

(a) Committing the offender to the care of a relative or a fit person for a specified period\textsuperscript{48};
(b) Ordering that the offender’s parents enter into a care and guardianship bond\textsuperscript{49};
(c) Requiring the offender to perform community service\textsuperscript{50};

\textsuperscript{41} Section 319(1)((b)(ii) CPC Cap 68 (Rev Ed 2012)
\textsuperscript{42} Section 319(1)(b)(iv) CPC Cap 68 (Rev Ed 2012)
\textsuperscript{43} Low Meng Chay v PP [1993] 1 SLR 569 at [13]
\textsuperscript{44} Sections 303(2)(c) and 303(3)(c) CPC Cap 68 (Rev Ed 2012)
\textsuperscript{45} Section 328 CPC Cap 68 (Rev Ed 2012). In section 2 CPC Cap 68 (Rev Ed 2012), a ‘juvenile’ means a person who, in the absence of legal proof to the contrary, is 7 years of age or above and below the age of 16 years in the opinion of the court. Section 37(3) of CYPA states that “Notwithstanding the provisions of any other written law, no child or young person shall be sentenced by any court other than the High Court to corporal punishment.”
\textsuperscript{46} Section 325(1) CPC Cap 68 (Rev Ed 2012). In subsection (2), it provides that in the case of women and men above 50 years of age, if the offence or offences to which the offender has been convicted are punishable with caning, the court may impose a term of imprisonment of not more than 12 months in lieu of the caning which it could have ordered.
\textsuperscript{47} Section 330 CPC Cap 68 (Rev Ed 2012)
\textsuperscript{48} Section 44(1)(c), CYPA Chapter 38
\textsuperscript{49} Section 44(1)(d), CYPA Chapter 38
\textsuperscript{50} Section 44(1)(f), CYPA Chapter 38
(d) Detaining the offender for a period of up to 6 months\textsuperscript{51}; and
(e) Ordering the weekend detention of an offender for up to 26 weekends\textsuperscript{52}.

24 These options are available individually or in combination with others\textsuperscript{53}. For instance, an offender could be ordered to undergo detention followed by a term of probation. An order putting parents under a bond and a fine could be appended to a juvenile rehabilitation centre order.

25 The Act also empowers the court to make orders concerning the juvenile’s parents or guardians. Parents or guardians could be ordered to pay the fines levied, or execute certain bonds.

Statistics\textsuperscript{54} on Court Orders for Youth\textsuperscript{55}

\textbf{Total Number of Criminal Courts and Juvenile Court Cases involving Children and Youths Aged 7 to below 21, brought before the State Courts in 2009 to 2013}

26 In 2009 and 2010, more than 3,000 cases were brought before the State Courts; involving youths aged 7 to below 21. This number declined to about 1,900 cases in 2013. More significant declines were observed for cases involving youths aged 12 to below 14, and aged 14 to below 16 proportionally.

\textsuperscript{51} Section 44(1)(g), CYPA Chapter 38
\textsuperscript{52} Section 44(1)(h), CYPA Chapter 38
\textsuperscript{53} Section 44(2), CYPA Chapter 38
\textsuperscript{54} Note: The age information provided by the enforcing agencies is not complete and cases where the age information is unknown to the State Courts are excluded from the data tables. This inevitably resulted in the undercounting of the number of Criminal Courts and Juvenile Court cases involving youths aged 7 to below 21.
\textsuperscript{55} The count of cases for years 2009 to 2012 involved youths that are Singaporeans, Singapore Permanent Resident and foreigners, registered in the State Courts Case Recording and Information Management System II (SCRIMSII) charged with a criminal case (excluding Town Council summonses) or juvenile case. The count of cases for year 2013 involved youths that are Singaporeans, Singapore Permanent Resident (PRs) and foreigners, registered in SCRIMSII and the Integrated Criminal Case Filing and Management System (ICMS). Youths that are below the age of 16 will be charged in the Juvenile Court. Youths aged 16 and above will be charged in the Criminal Courts.
Table 5.1: Number of Criminal Courts and Juvenile Court Cases involving Children and Youths Aged 7 to below 21, brought before the State Courts in 2009 to 2013 (by age)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year (By Filing Year)</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Offender aged 7 to below 12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offender aged 12 to below 14</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offender aged 14 to below 16</td>
<td>570</td>
<td>438</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offender aged 16 to below 21</td>
<td>2,543</td>
<td>2,607</td>
<td>1,954</td>
<td>1,564</td>
<td>1,538</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,190</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,121</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,305</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,911</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,880</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: State Courts

Total Number of Criminal Courts and Juvenile Court Cases involving Children and Youths Aged 7 to below 21, where the Children and Youths were Acquitted in 2009 to 2013

27 In 2009 to 2013, there were about 200 to 300 cases involving children and youths that were acquitted annually. An increase of such cases was noted over the 3 years period between 2009 and 2011, especially for cases involving youths aged 16 to below 21.

Table 5.2: Number of Criminal Courts and Juvenile Court Cases involving Children and Youths Aged 7 to below 21, where the Children and Youths were acquitted in 2009 to 2013 (by age)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year (By Disposition Year)</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Offender aged 7 to below 12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offender aged 12 to below 14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offender aged 14 to below 16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offender aged 16 to below 21</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>198</strong></td>
<td><strong>271</strong></td>
<td><strong>286</strong></td>
<td><strong>227</strong></td>
<td><strong>168</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: State Courts

Total Number of Criminal Courts and Juvenile Court Cases involving Children and Youths Aged 7 to below 21, where the Children and Youths were given Orders in 2009 to 2013 (by age)

28 In 2009 to 2013, majority of the cases involving youths aged 7 to below 16 were given Probation Orders by the Juvenile Court.

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56 Acquitted refers to cases with all charges that are ‘Acquitted’ or ‘Discharge amounting to Acquittal (DATA)’ which means that the prosecution cannot charge the offender for the same offence ever again.
Among cases involving youths aged 16 to below 21, close to 30% were placed on Probation Orders while another 30% were sentenced with Fines. About 1 in every 5 cases was sentenced to imprisonment while another 10% were sentenced to Reformative Training.

Table 5.3: Number of Criminal Courts and Juvenile Court Cases involving Children and Youths Aged 7 to below 21, where the Children and Youths were given orders in 2009 to 2013 (by age)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year (By Filing Year)</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Offender Aged 7 to below 12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probation Orders&lt;sup&gt;57&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approved school / Juvenile Rehabilitation Centre Orders</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others&lt;sup&gt;58&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offender Aged 12 to below 14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probation Orders&lt;sup&gt;61&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approved school / Juvenile Rehabilitation Centre Orders</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others&lt;sup&gt;62&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offender Aged 14 to below 16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probation Orders&lt;sup&gt;61&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>338</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approved school / Juvenile Rehabilitation Centre Orders</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others&lt;sup&gt;62&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offender Aged 16 to below 21</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probation Orders&lt;sup&gt;61&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>778</td>
<td>673</td>
<td>610</td>
<td>540</td>
<td>501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fines</td>
<td>567</td>
<td>725</td>
<td>595</td>
<td>425</td>
<td>340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imprisonment&lt;sup&gt;59&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>501</td>
<td>452</td>
<td>369</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reformative Training</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community-Based Sentence&lt;sup&gt;60&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2,661</td>
<td>2,522</td>
<td>2,126</td>
<td>1,726</td>
<td>1,596</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: State Courts

<sup>57</sup> Probation Orders given for cases involving offender aged 7 to below 16, may be given together with other sentencing options, for example ‘Probation Order + Community Service Order’, ‘Probation Order + Detention Order’ etc.

<sup>58</sup> Others refer to cases with standalone ‘Place of Detention Order’ or ‘Community Service Order’ or ‘Fines’ or ‘Reformative Training’.

<sup>59</sup> Imprisonment given for cases involving offender aged 16 to below 21, may be meted out together with sentencing options, for example ‘Imprisonment + Caning’, ‘Imprisonment + Caning + Fine’ etc.

<sup>60</sup> Community-Based Sentencing (CBS) came into effect in 2011.
Recidivism Rate for Probation Orders and Juvenile Rehabilitation Centre Orders

30 Recidivism is measured by the percentage of cases who committed further offences within 3 years after their successful completion of their Probation Orders or Juvenile Rehabilitation Orders.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Probation Orders</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juvenile Rehabilitation Orders</td>
<td>34.4%</td>
<td>31.1%</td>
<td>31.1%</td>
<td>N.A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: MSF

31 There is a general decline in the recidivism rates for the two programmes across the years. This is an indication that these MSF programmes have been effective in helping offenders stay crime-free. The recidivism rates tend to be higher for Juvenile Rehabilitation Orders cases due to the higher risk profile of the juvenile offenders placed under institutional rehabilitation.

61 The 3-year recidivism rates for Guidance Programme and Juvenile Home cases are not available for those who completed the programme in 2010.
Going Forward – Enhancing Guidance Upstream
CHAPTER 6: THE CASE FOR UPSTREAM INTERVENTION

“As morning broke, Nicholas stepped into the chill of the stream and waded through the oily slick that drifted over the surface. He stopped to peer into the reeds. There, as ever, he found the young birds fouled by the slick, unable to either swim or fly. Gently, he picked each fledgling from the water, untangled it from the sticky reeds, cleaned off its feathers as best as he could, and set it down again. Some would paddle their way downstream, others found the shore. But many more were simply beyond rescuing. As the sun rose high, a traveller approached.

‘What are you doing?’ the traveller called. ‘I’m trying to save the birds,’ Nicholas answered. The traveller crouched on the bank and watched a while. Then he said ‘This is good work you’re doing. The world is a better place for the birds you saved today.’ Nicholas looked up.

‘So I hope,’ he said. ‘But I’m afraid it’s too little, too late. By tomorrow, the reeds will be full of more young birds.’ The traveller frowned. He gazed along the banks, squinted into the reeds, and turned back to Nicholas. The traveller stood and stepped into the water. ‘Tell me what to do,’ he offered. ‘Just do what I’m doing,’ Nicholas replied, ‘so I can get on my way.’

‘But why?’ the traveller wanted to know. ‘Where are you going?’

‘Upstream,’ Nicholas told him. ‘It’s time to find out what is polluting the water.’

The Committee on the Prevention of Reoffending found that one of the strongest predictors of re-offending is early anti-social and criminal behaviour. The data shows a strong correlation between those who drop out of the school system to those who enter MSF as offenders and subsequently end up in the prison system. There is scope to improve management of such at-risk populations, regardless of whether they are drop-outs, juveniles or adults, and if they have been given diversionary programmes, community or custodial Court Orders. The focus should be on upstream measures to prevent youths from offending in the first place. There is a need to work across the relevant agencies (MOE, MSF and MHA) to ensure coordination of efforts, so that we can break the cycle of offending early. This would give the greatest payoff.

Several studies point to the need for such early intervention. A summary of the relevant studies is provided below:

MSF Recidivism Study for Cohorts 2007-2009

The average reoffending rate for youth offenders who completed GP, Probation and Juvenile Home rehabilitation from 2007 to 2009 was 12.1%, 14.2% and 32.2% respectively. The recidivism rates were considered low as compared to equivalent rehabilitation programmes overseas. Nevertheless, the findings showed that, despite having gone through intervention programmes, some youth offenders may still reoffend. This was especially so for the youth offenders who were placed in the Juvenile Homes, due to their higher risk profile. MSF will
continue to enhance its rehabilitation efforts for the higher risk youths, including strengthening family intervention work, building stronger support networks and enhancing the therapeutic programmes to address the risks and needs of these youths. At the same time, more could also be done through upstream measures and support to prevent youths-at-risk from getting entrenched in offending behaviour and enter the criminal justice system consequently.

**Study on the Profile of Young Offenders by MSF and SPS**

4 This study investigated the typical profile of residents in Juvenile Homes and Reformative Training Centre. The aim of the study was to understand the different trends present in the pathways of offending for juveniles who were in Juvenile Homes and in Reformative Training Centre. Specifically, it sought to answer the question of whether salient early warning signs could be determined along the following four domains: individual, school, family and peers.

5 A total of 30 Juvenile Home residents and 65 Reformative Training inmates were randomly selected. They represented 50% of young offenders who were newly admitted into Juvenile Homes and Reformative Training Centre between January and August 2008.

6 Early warnings signs were found. In primary school, pilfering habits, truancy and smoking were found to be common. In lower secondary level, aggressive behaviours emerged and low motivation in studies was observed. In the family domain, about half of the young offenders were from divorced, single or reconstituted families, most had a poor relationship with their father and one-quarter had family members with a criminal history. Converging evidence from both samples showed that delinquent acts start when the child is as young as seven years old and the age of first formal contact with police was at 13 years old.
Restructuring of the National Committee on Youth Guidance and Rehabilitation (NYGR)

In 1994, then Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong announced the formation of IMC to study the problems of broken families, juvenile delinquency and drug abuse, and to recommend solutions.

2. Following the recommendations of IMC, the Inter-Ministry Committee on Juvenile Delinquency (IMJD) was set up in 1995 and tasked with reducing the incidence of juvenile delinquency. The IMJD also monitored and steered the ‘implementation of progressive programmes in the educational, social service and law enforcement sectors’. The IMJD worked with community agencies such as Community Development Councils (CDC) and Family Service Centres (FSC) to coordinate programmes for youths-at-risk (Choi and Lo 2002: 114).

3. In 1998, IMJD became known as the Inter-Ministry Committee on Youth Crime (IMYC). The name change reflected a ‘broadening scope’ of the committee’s target group and programmes. The Committee aimed to ‘reach out to youths before they are exposed to the juvenile justice system, as well as to provide those who have strayed with a second chance’.

4. In 2007, IMYC was renamed National Committee on Youth Guidance and Rehabilitation (NYGR). The change in name reflects the committee’s comprehensive and holistic approach to tackling youth crime. When it first started in the 90s, IMYC focussed largely on rehabilitation and intervention, addressing more immediate societal concerns on the rising number of youth arrests at that time. Ten years on, NYGR’s programmes span a wider spectrum. In particular, NYGR is going upstream to address developmental issues and tackling the phenomenon of pre-delinquency and the onset of problem behaviour. Many community agencies have also aligned their programmes over the years to nurture positive youth development and devise prevention strategies, focussing on youths as assets by engaging them in positive activities and creating opportunities for their growth.

5. The NYGR comprises representatives from MSF, MHA, MOE, MOH, National Council of Social Service (NCSS), CNB, SPF, SPS as well as resource persons from the AGC, State
Courts, National Crime Prevention Council and academia. The current chairman of NYGR is Mr. Masagos Zulkifli, Minister in Prime Minister’s Office, Second Minister for Home Affairs and Second Minister for Foreign Affairs.

6 Traditionally, the NYGR had functioned as an advisory and consultative platform for various agencies to raise cross-agency issues and tap on the expertise of its members. Given the increasing emphasis on addressing youth-at-risk issues on a whole-of-government level, it was decided in 2011 that the NYGR should take on a more proactive and strategic role. It would henceforth have oversight over all youth-at-risk issues. In addition to reviewing and identifying service gaps, the NYGR would effect systemic changes at the inter-ministry level. The Committee is supported by CYGO, which provides secretariat support and follows through the decisions of the Committee.

7 To reflect this enlarged role, the NYGR was re-constituted into a Steering Committee comprising political appointment holders, representatives from relevant ministries’ Government Parliamentary Committees and senior ministry officials. The Steering Committee is supported by a working group comprising ministry officials and domain experts who can be tapped on for operational inputs and support in the execution of the committee’s directions.

8 The terms of reference for NYGR were also refined to better reflect its scope of work. The revised terms are as follows:

- Develop and drive an integrated approach towards prevention and early intervention so as to provide better support to youths-at-risk and help them find positive alternatives to crime and anti-social behaviour. This approach would span across agencies and include community organisations;
- Coordinate and review existing prevention, early intervention and rehabilitation efforts by agencies to address gaps in service delivery and develop new programmes;
- Develop a central system to facilitate data sharing across agencies and for better identification, assessment, tracking, intervention and research purposes;
- Lead in collaborative research on offending behaviour and the effectiveness of prevention and intervention programmes and in turn design appropriate programmes to address youth-at-risk issues; and
- Engage and work with SSAs, Self-Help Groups as well as other community organisations to develop programmes and to build up their capacity and capabilities.

Formation of the Central Youth Guidance Office

9 In April 2009, MHA formed an inter-ministry committee to study and propose recommendations to address the problem of re-offending. Mr Masagos Zulkifli, then Senior Parliamentary Secretary for Education and Home Affairs, led the “Committee on the Prevention of Re-Offending”.

10 The committee recognised that offending and re-offending is a social problem which the Government attempts to minimise, by having a closer coordination of efforts by the key
Ministries, working in partnership with community partners. If the cycle of offending and re-offending is not broken, the problem will continue and over time, there will be a bigger group of our citizens at the margins of society. The social costs can be high: the repeated imprisonment not only detaches the offender from society, but also puts his family and children in a crisis and at risk of intergenerational crime. Being more proactive in reducing the number of re-offenders will help to reduce the problem of dysfunctional families in the long term.

11 The committee found that youths were tracked and given access to services only within each agency’s boundary. While good progress has been made to lower school attrition and reduce re-offending, there remains a need to intervene early before students drop out of school, become youth offenders and subsequently develop a criminal lifestyle. With the move to adopt methods beyond traditional boundaries, there is a need for greater coordination to improve services for the youth-at-risk population, to help this group in a systematic manner. The committee recommended a more focussed and comprehensive approach to effectively address the problem of offending and re-offending, with greater attention on upstream efforts to break the cycle of offending early.

12 CYGO was thus set up to co-ordinate inter-agency efforts to tackle youth at risk issues such as juvenile delinquency and the cycle of offending and re-offending. CYGO takes a life-course perspective of at-risk youths and develops an integrated approach across agencies to identify, engage and intervene at all stages of the youth’s life. It provides a focal point to strengthen and facilitate inter-agency collaboration and integration on a full-time basis. It will have a comprehensive overview of offending and re-offending issues, identify gaps in current intervention measures and enhance them, as well as initiate new programmes for children and youths-at-risk. CYGO will also co-ordinate the work of existing committees62 on youth work and offending. It is expected to work closely with community organisations and Self-Help Groups to ensure a comprehensive network of support services. The mandate of CYGO is youths between the ages of 12 – 21 years old.

13 As each agency knows its current work and target groups well, CYGO will not duplicate existing services and programmes. The respective agencies will continue to be responsible for programmes and interventive measures under their respective purview (For example, Prisons will continue to oversee the rehabilitation of prison inmates, MSF will continue to oversee the rehabilitation of youth offenders in the Juvenile Homes, MOE will continue to find innovative ways to keep youths engaged in the schools).

14 CYGO was officially set up on 1 July 2010. It is staffed by officers from MSF, MHA and MOE and is led by a Director from MSF, Ms Nancy Ng. The Office is physically housed within MSF.

62 For example, the Committee for Youth Guidance was wound up following the set up of CYGO. Its work was subsumed under the NYGR.
Time Out Programmes

15 Time Out Programmes (TOP) are ground-up initiatives by secondary schools to help reduce attrition among students who are at risk of dropping out of schools prematurely. TOP involve temporarily withdrawing students from mainstream curriculum and providing them with a modified curriculum. The modified curriculum, while retaining a certain level of academic focus, puts emphasis on the enhancement of social-emotional and affective skills, so as to help students overcome personal, family or social barriers that confound their motivation for learning.

16 Schools customise their TOP to best cater to the profiles of their students. TOP designed by schools generally comprise elements of academic coaching, character development and counselling for the students. Schools may choose to engage their teachers and counsellors or enlist assistance from external organisations such as FSCs or VWOs, to conduct TOP. TOP include long-term follow-up plans to monitor the progress of the students to ensure students remain in schools and complete their education. MOE has provided schools with a TOP Resource Kit which includes information on how schools can identify and support youths who are at risk, features of good school-based TOP, implementation guidelines as well as steps on how schools can assess and review their TOP.

17 In line with the “many helping hands approach”, MOE also works with other agencies such as MSF, MHA, VWOs and Self-Help Groups to support the schools as they work with students who are at risk of dropping out as well as out-of-school youths.

Enhanced STEP-UP

18 Enhanced STEP-UP (ESU) is an initiative by MSF to support MOE schools. It is a client-centric school social work programme specifically catered to youths (Singapore citizens or permanent residents below age of 21) who require additional support and encouragement to remain in school, as well as youths who have already dropped out of the schools.

19 Participation of the youths in the 12-month programme is voluntary. MSF works with NCSS to contract VWOs to conduct the programme, which comprises individualised casework, intervention work with the families of the youths, and group activities aimed to support the youths in bringing about positive changes in their lives.

20 The objectives of ESU are:
   a) To complement the school system by providing services to build and strengthen social and emotional resilience among students to reduce risk of dropping out of school; and
   b) To engage out-of-school youths so that they may return to schooling or be meaningfully engaged.

21 ESU consists of two services:
a) Service A: Youth at risk of dropping out and have school attendance issues;
b) Service B: Out-of-school youth, or youth who have not been to school for a prolonged period of time, or with very irregular attendance.

22 Components in Service A and Service B include:

a) Case Referral and Programme Administration;
b) Individualised Casework;
c) Family Intervention;
d) Outreach; and
e) Group work.

23 For both services, intervention includes working with the youths and their families to achieve the following outcomes:

a) Improved school attendance and continue to remain in school; or re-admit to mainstream schools (where applicable);
b) Issues identified at case registration have been addressed;
c) Enrol in alternative academic learning, vocational training institutions or National Service;
d) Engage in gainful employment.

24 Desired outcomes from the ESU are explained in Diagram 7.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Counsellors as Case Manager</th>
<th>Enhanced STEP-UP Agency Worker as Case Manager</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Youth at risk of dropping out and have school attendance issues (20-40% absenteeism)</td>
<td>Out-of-school youth, youth who have not been to school for a prolonged period of time, or with very irregular attendance (more than 40% absenteeism)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme Components: Outreach, Casework (individual counselling and case management, and consultation and case conference with school personnel), Family Intervention, and Groupwork (optional).</td>
<td>Programme Components: Outreach, casework (individual counselling and case management, and consultation and case conference with school personnel), Family Intervention, Group work (optional), Life-/ Work-Skills Training Programme and School Exit Interview (if applicable)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desired Outcomes (includes the addressing of issues identified at case registration)</td>
<td>Enhanced STEP-UP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Improved school attendance and continue to remain in school</td>
<td>Source: CYGO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Youth GO! Programme

25 Youth GO! Programme (YGP) is a community-based programme that provides outreach and case management service to youth-at-risk that may have fallen through the cracks in our system. The long-term goal of YGP is for youths served to achieve self-reliance and stability. In order to work towards this long-term goal, YGP seeks to achieve the following objectives:

- Link youths-at-risk to appropriate services through the Information and Referral service;
- Engage youth meaningfully either in their studies or work;
- Youths stay crime free;
- Support and strengthen youths-at-risk through casework and intervention programme to achieve:
  - Enhanced problem-solving / coping skills;
  - Enhanced relationships / networks that improve their situation;
  - Improved ability to manage on their own; and
- Collaborate with key stakeholders such as schools, CDCs, Social Service Offices (SSOs) and grassroots organisations to ensure youths-at-risk are supported and have access to needed resources and assistance.

26 This programme is youth-centric, family focussed and interventions would be based in the community. The key features of the programme rest on the youth worker building social relationship with the youth before moving on to provide case management and intervention. Where necessary, the youth worker would also be able to provide service referral and coordinate various community resources towards the needs of the young person.

27 YGP serves 12- to 21-year-old youths who:

- Are out-of-school and are not engaged in meaningful work;
- Are school students with high absenteeism and / or youths who opted or dropped out of ESU, GP and SWP; and
- Have completed the GP, ESU, SWP, ESWP and Probation but require further support upon completion of the programme.

28 YGP has 3 core services: conducting Outreach Work, providing Casework & Intervention services and facilitating Unstructured Group Work.
29 The service provider needs to carry out youth outreach work to reach out to the youths-at-risk at potential hotspots. The service provider needs to liaise with the police, grassroots organisations and CDCs to seek out such gathering places and establish contact with the youths. Acts of outreach can range from a youth worker introducing himself and giving the youths an information brochure with his contact number, to getting the youths to train and participate in a street football competition instead of hanging out aimlessly. The outreach work will seek to build a social relationship with the youths before moving on to a working relationship.

**Youth Employment System**

30 Over the years, MOE has reduced the school dropout rate to an all-time low of below 1%. A study by the Committee on the Prevention of Re-offending in 2010 found that a significant proportion of our school drop-outs had brushes with the law within five years after leaving school. This finding was consistent with overseas research that juvenile delinquency is typically preceded by disengagement from school.

31 The cost of juvenile delinquency can be substantial. There is the cost of youth justice, reduced lifetime economic production and foregone work income. The impact may extend to the next generation, where the children – raised in a disadvantaged family – may have higher risk factors. Thus, even with a low school dropout rate, there is value in enhancing upstream engagement of the youths, via training and education, to further stave them off crime and create significant cost savings to society.

32 To create alternative pathways to success for youths-at-risk, a Youth Employment System Sub-committee was formed under NYGR.

33 The Sub-committee developed a Youth Employment System (YES), which is a national framework for the training, apprenticeship, coaching and employment of youths up to the age of 21 or for males, before National Service. YES drives services to help the following target groups, with the vision that these youths would attain a successful transition to adulthood and a longer-term vision that they will earn middle income by middle age:

   a) Youths who are in school and are at risk of dropping out.
   b) Youths who have dropped out of mainstream school system before ‘O’ / ‘N’ levels or attaining the National Institute of Technical Education Certificate (NITEC), and are not in further structured education system.
   c) Youths ‘lost in transition’ who have not progressed to the next level of education after completion of primary or secondary education.
d) Youths who have completed rehabilitation programmes at MSF, namely GP, Probation and the Juvenile Homes.

e) Youths who are not meaningfully engaged.

34 YES is a universal service to all youths aged under 21 not in education, employment or training – with a focus on those who have achieved less than NITEC standard.

YES Framework

35 The central principles of the framework are:

a) Return to mainstream education where possible: When youths are disengaged from school, the utmost priority should be on getting the youths back to school. Training and employment should only come in as the next alternative. YES must also not be more attractive than mainstream education.

b) Multiple pathways for success: After entering YES, the youths should have access to multiple options to connect with training and employment. Even if a youth is not ready for work, there should be options for him to work towards higher education or further skills upgrading.

c) Positive Youth Development: Being employed is not the sole desired outcome. The youths should concurrently develop positive life skills and values and become self-motivated and independent individuals.

SPF’s Youth Engagement Programme

36 Early intervention is critical to prevent and deter youths from crime. SPF works closely with relevant secondary schools to identify and place such youths on SPF’s YEP.

37 The first YEP was piloted by Ang Mo Kio SPF Division in 2010. Following its success, YEP was rolled out to all SPF Land Divisions in 2011. A conceptual review guided by empirical research was conducted by SPF psychologists in 2012 to enhance the effectiveness of YEP. The review focussed on risk and protective factors related to the five main domains in an individual's life - individual, family, peer, school and community. Divisions were given recommendations on how they could enhance their YEP based on the principles shared. For example, Jurong Police Division expanded the family factor in their YEP and embarked on “Supporting Parents in Neighbourhood Groups" to strengthen the family support of YEP participants.

A checklist of behavioural indicators\textsuperscript{64} based on the theories of delinquency was also formulated by SPF’s psychologists to aid in the selection of youths for future runs of YEP. These psychologists also conduct surveys before and after the programmes to evaluate the effectiveness of YEP and look for areas for further refinement.

The specific activities in YEP are jointly worked out by SPF and schools based on the participants’ profiles. YEP is generally carried out over a period of 12 months to keep the youths meaningfully engaged, especially after school hours. Crime prevention and anti-drug messages are incorporated into specific activities.

Since 2013, SPF has collaborated with CNB to inject anti-drug elements into the existing YEP activities to reach out to the at-risk students. Customised anti-drug themed activities such as amazing race, laser tag activities and a dance workshop were organised for the YEP participants. Such activities also build up the participants’ self confidence, encourage team work as well as cultivate positive peer support. Anti-drug talks were also conducted for some of the YEP participants and their parents.

SPF strives to keep in touch with YEP graduates once a year until they graduate from secondary school. There are also plans to involve YEP graduates in other programmes like Delta League and the \textit{Sports and Arts Framework}.

\textbf{SPS’s Preventive Education Programme for Students}

Preventive Education Programmes are run in SPS for at-risk youths (including SWP participants, probationers and CNB supervisees). One particular programme is the Preventive Education Programme for Students (PVEPS). PVEPS targets students who are considered by their schools as ‘high-risk’ based on their school discipline records. The programme aims to deter potential first-time offenders by exposing them to the harshness of prison life.

Launched in 2004, PVEPS is a joint initiative by SPF, SPS and MOE.

\textsuperscript{64} Checklist derived from research studies cited in \textit{Adolescent Reputations and Risk: Developmental Trajectories to Delinquency}. Carroll, A., Houghton, S., Durkin, K., & Hattie, J.A. (2009). N.Y: Springer
Conclusion
CONCLUSION

Like many other countries, the phenomenon of delinquency and youth offending is a cause for concern for Singapore. Youth offending not only harms community safety and security, but it also depicts the state of attitudes and behaviour amongst youths in our society. There is no single factor that can be specified as the main cause of criminal behavior in our youths. While the factors contributing to delinquency may be fairly similar worldwide, the solutions to tackling delinquency are however far more varied across different jurisdictions.

2 Though the at-risk youth population is small with respect to the total population of Singapore, they remain an important building block of Singapore’s population as “every youth matters”. This is the philosophy we follow for our approach in upstream intervention. We cannot afford to neglect youths and their skills, knowledge, energy and potential. Youths of today are the leaders of tomorrow, and we believe that every youth has the potential to become a pillar of Singapore’s society.
References
REFERENCES

This report is a joint effort and collaboration by the following NYGR agencies:

- Central Youth Guidance Office;
- Ministry of Education;
- Ministry of Home Affairs;
  - Central Narcotics Bureau
  - Singapore Police Force
  - Singapore Prison Service
- Ministry of Social and Family Development; and
- State Courts
Appendix
Annexe A: Composite Pathway of At-Risk Youth To Youth Offender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Youth Arrest</th>
<th>Legal Proceedings</th>
<th>Rehabilitation</th>
<th>Re-integration</th>
<th>Re-offending</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-delinquency</td>
<td>Delinquency</td>
<td>Enforcement</td>
<td>Rehabilitation</td>
<td>Re-integration</td>
<td>Recidivism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **School**: Youth commits No crime > School provides appropriate intervention
- **School**: Youth commits No crime > Student responds positively
- **School**: Youth commits No crime > School continues to monitor
- **School**: Youth commits No crime > Termination from programme and follow-up by CID
- **School**: Youth commits New offence
- **School**: Record with ROS
- **School**: Warning
- **School**: Programme Breach

Notes:
*This include anti-social behaviours (e.g. defiance towards school authority, aggression, bullying), breaking of school rules (e.g. improper school attire, frequent latecoming) and disengaged in school, truancy and poor academic performance.*
Annexe B: Pathway of Drug Abusers

- **CNB Youth Enhanced Supervision (YES) Scheme**: Similar to DSO but incorporated counseling and casework component administered by Social Service Agencies (SSAs).
- **CNB Direct Supervision Order (DSO)**: 2 year duration, early revocation or extended supervision based on performance, to report to police land divisions, initial reporting (2 times a week), with good conduct (upgraded to once a week urine test).
- **Treatment/Rehabilitation (Community Rehabilitation Centre)**
- **Treatment/Rehabilitation (Drug Rehabilitation Centre)**
- Warnings or no early revocation or extension of SO

Notes:
- Breaches of Supervision Order include both relapses into drug taking or inhalant abuse (as indicated by a positive test result by HSA) and administrative breaches such as a failure to report for urine test. CNB’s definition of recidivism is based solely on relapses.
- 1st timers who are non-students above the age of 16, may be considered for treatment and rehabilitation depending on the case.
- CNB YES Scheme is only applicable for 1st timers aged below 21 years old and assessed to have low risk of relapse.
- Community Rehabilitation is applicable for 1st timers aged below 21 years old with medium risk of relapse. It is targeted to operationalise in 2014.
Annexe C: Pathway of Inhalant Abusers

APPENDIX

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**Legend**
- Chapter 2
- Chapter 3
- Chapter 4
- Chapter 5
- Chapter 6

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**Positive blood test**

- CNB/Polic from arrest
- Inhalant abuser

- 
  - < 16 yrs & non-student
  - > 16 yrs & student

- 
  - 1st timer
  - 2nd, 3rd & 4th timer

- Positive blood test

- School reports case to CNB

- CNB-School Case Reporting Framework

- Inhalant abuser caught by school

- 1st timer

- 2nd & 3rd timer

- 4th timer

- 5th timer & above

- Relapse

- Breach

- Breach

- Breach

- CNB Direct Supervision Order (DSO)
  - In lieu of Court prosecution or treatment
  - 1 year duration
  - Early revocation based on performance
  - No extension of SO

- CNB Supervision Order (SO)
  - Issued after completing treatment or imprisonment for inhalant abuse
  - Similar to DSO
  - 1 year duration

- Inhalant Treatment Centre (ITC)
  - Maximum 3 chances

- Refer to MOE Counselling or MSF Supervision

- Breach

- State Courts

- Juvenile Court

- Juvenile Home/Probation

- Warning

- Charge

- Relapse

- Breach

- Breach

- Breach

- 1st timer

- 2nd timer

- 3rd timer

- 4th timer

- 5th timer & above

- 6th timer & above

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**Chapter 2**

**Chapter 5**

**Chapter 3**

**Chapter 6**

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MINISTRY OF SOCIAL AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT

INSIGHT SERIES NO. 1

NATIONAL REPORT ON YOUTH CRIME 2007-2013

63
Annexe D: MSF’s Study on Violence Risk and Gang Affiliation in Youth Offenders: A Recidivism Study

Towards an Understanding of Youth Gangs in Singapore

Dr Chu Chi Meng, Rehabilitation and Protection Group, MSF

Youth gangs are a common phenomenon across the world, and many of their activities often adversely impact the general community. In addition to the fear of victimisation, there are also costs associated with the provision of social, legal and criminal justice services to gang members and their victims.

Studies in Western contexts have shown that youth gang members are more likely than non-gang-affiliated youth to use weapons as well as to engage in violent and drug offences. In addition, youth gang membership is associated with a higher rate of offending even after accounting for the effect of having delinquent friends. Moreover, youths associated with gangs, but not full-fledged members report more delinquency than youths who were not associated with gangs at all, but less delinquency than full-fledged gang members.

Youth Gangs in Singapore

Secret societies have been active in Singapore since the early 19th century, and they have played a significant role in the protection and livelihoods of the early Chinese immigrants. In recent years, secret societies in Singapore have been greatly suppressed through tough laws and rigorous law enforcement. However, youth gangs (which adopt the names of secret societies and loosely model themselves after triads and secret societies) remain operational, and continue to pursue criminal activities and engage in violence.

Youth gangs in Singapore differ from triads and secret societies in several aspects. The latter are considered highly organised crime groups that: (1) are constituted mainly for economic gains through criminal activities, and (2) operate as a whole group rather than subsets. In contrast, youth gangs have generally abandoned the traditional secret society practices (e.g. initiation and rituals), and tend to be loosely organised in terms of structure and hierarchy. Moreover, youth gang membership serves a number of different functions, and albeit the delinquent behaviour that is associated with youth gang membership, youth gang membership may primarily satisfy social rather than economic needs. As with most countries around the world, youth violence is a major concern in Singapore; for example, rioting is considered a common form of youth crime in Singapore, with almost 13% of all youth offenders being arrested for rioting offences in 2007.

Empirical Research on Local Youth Gangs

In a study of youth rioters, 87.6% were reportedly involved with gangs. Another study of gang-affiliation and general criminal recidivism within youth offenders in Singapore found that gang membership did not significantly predict general recidivism amongst youth offenders (although violent recidivism was not examined). A more recent study of gang-affiliated youth offenders showed that the average age of entry to youth gangs was 13-14 years old, and gang-affiliated youth offenders were more likely to have violent offending behaviours, substance use, and weapons use when compared with non-gang-affiliated youth offenders. Furthermore, gang-affiliated youth offenders were also 1.71 and 2.46 times more likely to engage in general and violent recidivism respectively when compared to their non-gang-affiliated counterparts, even after accounting for potentially confounding effects of age at first charged offence and substance use.
Implications and Future Directions

Overall, it will not only be useful for interventions to focus on violence reduction, but also on drug and alcohol use and abuse, and attitudes towards weapons. Examining the functions of gang membership is imperative, as it will allow us to understand why youth join, leave, and resist gangs. Through this, more adaptive means of satisfying these functions can be incorporated in our intervention efforts. The average age for joining gangs appears to be around 13 years, but youth offenders were, on average, charged for their first offence around 15. This suggests that there is perhaps a window of opportunity for effective gang-resistance education programs and identification of gang members before they enter the criminal justice system. Primary and secondary prevention initiatives directed at early teens should be considered, especially for those at risk of delinquency and gang affiliation. These local findings suggest that such prevention efforts may have more utility if targeted at those aged 13 years and younger, and will require collaborative efforts between the relevant youth and police agencies. Early warning signs such as problematic behaviours in school, gang affiliation, substance use and violent behaviours may indicate the need for immediate intervention.

Further research should focus on (1) whether there are unique criminogenic needs and responsivity factors associated with gang-affiliation, (2) the utility of specific interventions targeting the needs and responsivity issues of gang-affiliated youth offenders; (3) the prevalence of gang-affiliation within the youth population in Singapore; (4) the long-term trajectories, in terms of offending behaviours and criminogenic needs, of “general” gang affiliated youth offenders as compared to those in gang leadership positions; and (5) the desistance factors that are associated with these youth gang members joining, leaving, and resisting gangs.

*Please contact the author for the bibliography.*
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Violence risk and gang affiliation in youth offenders: a recidivism study

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Violence risk and gang affiliation in youth offenders: a recidivism study

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Youth gangs are ubiquitous around the world and have been problematic for the social and criminal justice agencies. Despite widespread public concern, there has been relatively scarce empirical scrutiny of youth gangs internationally and little outside of America and Europe. In particular, the activities of youth gangs, the function of gang membership, the criminogenic needs of gang-affiliated youth, and the risk of criminal recidivism for gang-affiliated youth remain unclear. Against this background, this study explored the sociodemographic characteristics, risk and rate of criminal recidivism in a cohort of 165 male youth offenders in Singapore, of which 58 were gang-affiliated. Multivariate analyses revealed that gang-affiliated youth offenders were significantly more likely to have histories of substance use, weapon use and violence than nongang-affiliated youth offenders. Gang-affiliated offenders also scored higher on measures of risk for recidivism (SAVRY and YLS/CMI), and engaged in violent and other criminal behaviors more frequently during follow-up. These differences indicate a significant relationship between gang affiliation and criminal recidivism in youth offenders. Furthermore, these findings have important clinical and policy implications, indicating an increased requirement for additional and more intensive assessment and tailored interventions for gang-affiliated youth offenders.

Keywords: gang affiliation; recidivism; risk assessment; violence; youth offenders

Introduction

Contemporarily, youth gangs are a ubiquitous phenomenon. Although youth gang behavior varies according to setting and contextual stressors (Hardman, 1967; Spergel, 1995) and that the functions of membership are likely to differ, gang activity universally impacts adversely on the general community. This is due to fear of victimization, and inevitably, because of the costs associated with the provision of social, legal and criminal justice services to gang members and their victims (Covey, 2003). Unfortunately, due to a lack of empirical research in the area, the behaviors of gang-affiliated youth, their criminogenic, social and clinical needs, as well as their risk for criminal recidivism remain relatively unclear.

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Definition of a youth gang

There is no universally accepted definition of a youth gang (Horowitz, 1990). Some scholars, working under the aegis of the Eurogang Program, have defined a youth gang as ‘any durable, street-oriented youth group whose own identity includes involvement in illegal activity’ (Klein, Weerman, & Thornberry, 2006, p. 418; see also Esbensen & Weerman, 2005). Other scholars have disagreed about whether engagement in criminal activities should be a criterion for ‘gang’; those who do not see this as necessary emphasize the roles of shared identity, activities, as well as a sense of solidarity and territoriality as critical determinants of ‘gang’ (see Ball & Curry, 1995; Duffy, 2004; Esbensen, Winfree, He, & Taylor, 2001; Spergel, 1995 for reviews). Further, simply committing criminal behavior with others does not constitute a gang as most criminal behavior perpetrated by young people occurs in concert (Reiss & Farrington, 1991). Notwithstanding the differences in youth gang definitions, the majority of the definitions of gang include the following characteristics: (1) a self-formed youth group that is united by mutual interests, and controls particular territories, facilities, or enterprises; (2) employs symbols in communications; and (3) collectively involved in crime (see Howell, 1998 for a review).

Youth gangs and crime

Despite the continual disagreement with the definition of a youth gang, studies in America and Europe suggest that the prevalence rates of gang affiliation within different youth populations vary between 3% and 37%, depending on the definition that is adopted (e.g. Battin, Hill, Abbott, Catalano, & Hawkins, 1998; Esbensen & Weerman, 2005; Klein et al., 2006; Taylor, Peterson, Esbensen, & Freng, 2007, see also Klein & Maxson, 2006 for a review). In addition, studies in America, Australia, and Europe have shown that youth gang members are significantly more likely than nongang-affiliated youth to engage in a variety of offenses that include, but not limited to, violent and drug offenses as well as using weapons (e.g. Curry, 2000; Curry, Decker, & Egley, 2002; Esbensen & Huizinga, 1993; Huff, 1998; Klein et al., 2006; Thornberry, Krohn, Lizotte, & Chard-Wierschem, 1993; White & Mason, 2006). Moreover, youth gang membership is associated with a higher rate of offending even after accounting for the effect of having delinquent friends (Battin et al., 1998; Klein et al., 2006). Furthermore, youth associated with gangs but not full-fledged members report more delinquency than youths who were not associated with gangs at all, but less delinquency than full-fledged gang members (Curry et al., 2002).

Asian youth gangs in western contexts

Gang research in America has found that Asian youth gangs are similar to other youth gangs, but are also qualitatively different (e.g. Chin, 2000; Tsunokai & Kposowa, 2002 for reviews). For example, Asian youth gangs are active in violent activities as with other youth gangs, but tend to perpetuate different types of violence (simple assault, robberies and extortion vs shootings or aggravated assault). It is also a common misconception that many of the Asian youth gang members are knowledgeable about triad and secret society values (Joe, 1994), but the internalization of these norms and values, as well as the conflicting cultural identities tend to
increase the likelihood of gang involvement (Chin & Fagan, 1994; Song, Dombrink, & Geis, 1992). Contrary to Posner’s (1988) and Bresler’s (1981) assertions that Asian youth gangs are part of a bigger hierarchy of organized crime and are responsible for extreme violence, some scholars have since suggested otherwise (e.g. Joe, 1994; Tsunokai & Kposowa, 2002). There are relatively few systematic studies on Asian youth gangs internationally, and an important question will be whether youth gangs in Asia are different from those Asian youth gangs in western contexts. The different functions and activities of Asian gangs in Asia and in western countries may differ. For example, Asian youth in western countries may feel the need to join a gang to protect themselves from threats by other ethnic groups, whereas this need may not be dominant when they are not an ethnic minority. Studying the functions, operations and reasons pertaining to why youth join gangs in an Asian context will help inform whether cross-cultural applications of western interventions and assessment measures for youth gang members in Asia are appropriate, and this may have further implications on crime prevention policy decisions.

Youth gangs in Singapore

Singapore is an independent island-state in South East Asia with a total population of 4.98 million; the ethnic composition of Singapore’s resident population is 74.2% Chinese, 13.4% Malay, 9.2% Indian and 3.4% others (Singapore Department of Statistics, 2009). Tracing their origins to the triads in China, secret societies have been active in Singapore since the early 19th century. They played a significant role in the protection and livelihoods of the Chinese immigrants (Lim, 1999). In recent years, secret societies in Singapore have been greatly suppressed through tough laws (e.g. the Criminal Law (Temporary Provisions) Act, 2004) and rigorous law enforcement. However, street gangs, predominantly consisted of youth, remain operational, and continue to pursue criminal activities and engage in violence (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2006).

Although youth gangs in Singapore tend to adopt the names of secret societies and loosely model themselves after triads and secret societies, they are different in several aspects (Covey, 2003). Triads and secret societies are considered highly organized crime groups that are: (1) constituted mainly for economic gains through criminal activities, and (2) operate as a whole group rather than subsets. In contrast, youth gangs have abandoned the traditional secret society practices (e.g. initiation and rituals), and tend to be loosely organized in terms of structure and hierarchy. Moreover, youth gang membership serves a number of different functions, and albeit co-occurring delinquency, youth gang membership may primarily satisfy social (Covey, 2003; Shelden, Tracy, & Brown, 1997) rather than economic needs. As with most countries around the world, youth violence is a major concern in Singapore. According to crime statistics, rioting is one of the three most common youth crimes in Singapore, with almost 13% of all youth offenders being arrested for rioting offenses in 2007 (Singapore Police Force, 2008). In a study of 300 youth rioters (aged 21 years and below), 87.6% were reportedly involved with gangs (Subordinate Courts of Singapore, 1998). However, the only Singaporean study examining gang affiliation and general criminal recidivism within youth offenders (Ang & Huan, 2008) found that gang membership did not significantly predict general recidivism amongst youth
offenders. The authors suggested that gang involvement might be more strongly associated with violent rather general recidivism, although this was not examined.

**Risks and criminogenic needs in gang-affiliated youth offenders**

Notwithstanding Ang and Huan’s (2008) study, the extant literature suggests gang-affiliated youth offenders possess numerous criminogenic needs (e.g. Battin et al., 1998; Curry et al., 2002; Huff, 1998; Subordinate Courts of Singapore, 1998; White & Mason, 2006). According to Andrews, Bonta, and Hoge (1990), the assessment of risk and criminogenic need is important for making informed decisions about the level of supervision and the intensity of treatment required for effective offender rehabilitation. Accurate classification of risk is imperative as it assists clinicians to determine which individuals and groups of offenders require intensive intervention. According to the Risk principle, treatment should be directed towards offenders with the highest level of risk (Andrews & Bonta, 2007).

Historically, the assessment of offenders’ risk and criminogenic needs has been based on unstructured clinical judgment, which has been criticized for being subjective and unreliable (Monahan & Steadman, 1994; Quinsey, Harris, Rice, & Cormier, 2006; Webster, Douglas, Eaves, & Hart, 1997). However, there is a current consensus that structured risk assessment methods are superior, in terms of predictive validity (Douglas, Cox, & Webster, 1999; Grove & Meehl, 1996; Quinsey et al., 2006). In the arena of youth risk assessment, the Structured Assessment of Violence Risk in Youth (SAVRY; Borum, Bartel, & Forth, 2002) and the Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI; Hoge & Andrews, 2002) are two structured risk assessment instruments commonly used for assessing an offender’s risk of violent and general offending, respectively.

The emergent literature on the SAVRY and YLS/CMI suggests their predictive validity ranges from modest to good (Catchpole & Gretton, 2003; Dolan & Rennie, 2008; Gammelgaard, Koivisto, Eronen, & Kaltiala-Heino, 2008; Jung & Rawana, 1999; Lodewijks, Doreleijers, & de Ruiter, 2008; Lodewijks, Doreleijers, de Ruiter, & Borum, 2008; Meyers & Schmidt, 2008; Schmidt, Hoge, & Gomes, 2005; Thompson & Pope, 2005; Welsh, Schmidt, McKinnon, Chattha, & Meyers, 2008). To the best of our knowledge there has been no study examining the risk of recidivism between those youth who are gang-affiliated or not.

**Present study**

This study forms part of a program of research into gang-affiliated criminal behavior, risk and treatment needs. The aims of this study were to explore: (1) socio-demographic similarities and differences between gang-affiliated and nongang-affiliated *youth offenders*; (2) the risk ratings and level of criminogenic needs in gang-affiliated and nongang-affiliated youth offenders; and (3) the relationship between gang affiliation and criminal recidivism.

Against the background of previous research, the following hypotheses were formulated: (1) gang-affiliated youth offenders would score higher on contemporary risk assessment measures, considering their likelihood of engaging in substance use and antisocial activities, procriminal attitudes, and association with antisocial peers; and (2) gang-affiliated youth offenders would reoffend more often and sooner after
being sentenced in court than nongang-affiliated offenders. Several exploratory hypotheses were also included: that gang-affiliated youth offenders would be different from nongang-affiliated offenders in terms of offender characteristics (e.g. age at first charge offense, problematic behaviors in school, histories of abuse, substance use, violence and weapon use).

Method
Source sample
The sample comprised 165 youth male offenders (aged 12–18 years). All were referred for psychological evaluation and/or treatment at the Clinical and Forensic Psychology Branch (CFPB; formerly known as the Psychological Services Unit) of the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports, Singapore, between January 2004 and December 2005. All youth were charged with and convicted of the current criminal offenses (which brought them into contact with CFPB), and placed on probation following evaluation and sentencing. The probation services and the courts refer youth offenders to CFPB for a psychological evaluation during pre-sentence assessment when required. Typically referrals include those youth offenders with sexual and violent offending issues, chronic and repetitive offending patterns, as well as mental health issues. In addition, CFPB also accepts referrals post-sentence from the probation services and youth correctional institutions for assessment and treatment of offense-related and/or mental health issues.

Classification of the gang-affiliated youth offender
This study adopted the Klein et al.’s (2006) definition of a youth gang. Youth offenders were classified as ‘gang-affiliated’ if they had (a) stated their membership of specific youth gangs (i.e. those that met Klein et al.’s criteria) during psychological assessment, and/or (b) had official criminal records that indicated affiliation to specific youth gangs. Having gang members as peers or criminal associates did not automatically qualify the youth as a ‘gang-affiliated offender.’

Ethics
Ethical approval to conduct this program of research was granted by CFPB, the Probation Services Branch, and the Residential and Aftercare Services Branch from the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports, Singapore.

Procedure
Data was collected from multiple data sources, including: (a) psychological reports prepared by psychologists at CFPB, (b) pre-sentencing reports prepared by probation officers, (c) charge sheets, (d) statement of facts, (e) any previously existing assessment and treatment reports on the youths’ CFPB files, as well as (f) school reports. Psychological interviews conducted at the CFPB follow a standardized semi-structured interview schedule. Hence, the resultant psychological reports contain specific information pertaining to several key areas of assessment (i.e.
personal, family, psychiatric, and criminal offending histories, as well as the current offending behaviors and risk management issues).

The following information were collated from the various data sources:

(1) **Sociodemographic characteristics**: Age at referral, education level (i.e. primary or special needs education vs secondary and above), ethnicity (i.e. Chinese, Indian, Malay or others), and family structure (i.e. intact family of origin vs non-intact family of origin).

(2) **Offender characteristics**: Age at first charged offense, type and number of index offenses (i.e. violent, sexual, theft/fraud, substance use, and illegal sale), past offense history (i.e. previous charged and convicted offenses), history of weapon use, history of substance use (i.e. alcohol, illicit drugs, and inhalants), history of abuse (i.e. physical and/or sexual), history of bullying and being bullied in school, as well as history of school truancy and expulsion.

(3) **Gang-related characteristics**: Gang affiliation, age at entry to gang, duration of gang affiliation, history of gang-related violence (i.e. gang fights), and history of nonviolent gang-related activities (e.g. illegal sale of videos, cigarettes, and drugs).

(4) **Recidivism**: Recidivism data was obtained from a criminal records check with Singapore Police Force’s Criminal Record Office. Criminal convictions were detailed in the criminal records check, which was completed on 4 February 2009. The average length of the follow-up (i.e. from start of court order to end of follow-up) was 1658 days (SD = 299), but varied between 1127 and 2906 days. Recidivism was coded in the following way with a record made as to whether each offender recidivated by engaging in any of the following criminal behaviors during follow-up: violent recidivism, sexual recidivism, nonviolent recidivism (i.e. any offenses not classified as violent or sexual in nature), general recidivism (which includes sexual, violent and other offenses), and type of offenses.

For the purpose of this study the following risk assessment measures were coded from case files using the aforementioned materials:

(1) **Structured Assessment of Violence Risk in Youth** (SAVRY; Borum et al., 2002). The SAVRY is a 24-item risk assessment instrument that was developed from existing research and the professional literature on adolescent development, as well as youth violence. It is based on the structured clinical judgment model (see Webster et al., 1997; Webster, Eaves, Douglas, & Wintrup, 1995), and is designed to assist in the assessment and intervention planning for youths (aged 12–18 years) where there appears to be a risk for violence. The risk items are classified into three risk domains (Historical, Social/Contextual, and Individual/Clinical), and each risk item is rated on a three-point scale (Low, Moderate, High) according to specific rating guidelines. In addition to the 24 risk factors, the SAVRY has six protective factors that are rated as either Present or Absent.

(2) **Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory** (YLS/CMI; Hoge & Andrews, 2002). The YLS/CMI is a structured assessment instrument designed to facilitate the effective intervention and rehabilitation of youth
offenders (aged 12–18 years) by assessing their risk level and criminogenic needs. It consists of 42 items divided into eight subscales (prior/current offenses/dispositions, family circumstances/parenting, education/employment, peer relations, substance abuse, leisure/recreation, personality/behavior, and attitudes/orientation).

The key terms in this study were operationalized to minimize the likelihood of subjective bias in coding process, and any difficulties encountered during the coding process were referred to the first author for discussion and resolution. Where discrepancies between data sources arose, the information recorded in the most recent psychological assessment or progress report was used. A SAVRY or YLS/CMI item was not scored if information necessary for coding was unavailable. The relevant risk assessment data for the SAVRY and YLS/CMI were not analyzed if there were more than two and five omitted items, respectively; only two cases had more than two omitted items for the SAVRY. The retrospective coding of variables and risk assessment measures using file and archival information is an accepted methodology for studying adult and youth samples (see Campbell, Porter, & Santor, 2004; Gray, Taylor, & Snowden, 2008; Welsh et al., 2008).

Five research assistants were involved in the initial data collection and coding of the variables. The inter-rater reliability (intra-class correlation coefficients) for the SAVRY and YLS/CMI total scores were 0.67 and 0.79, respectively. Although the inter-rater reliability were specifically not examined for sociodemographic and offense variables, the research assistants were aided by a set of detailed coding guidelines and were given a daily group debrief to address any coding difficulties. All the research assistants were blind to the recidivism data, which were subsequently sourced and coded by first author following the completion of the initial coding of sociodemographic and offense information.

**Statistical analyses**

The sample was characterized using descriptive statistics, with categorical data reported as numbers and percentages, and continuous data presented in relation to the mean and standard deviation. Histograms of the continuous data were plotted to check for skewed distributions. Univariate analyses sought to compare the characteristics of offenders with and without gang affiliation, as well as the recidivists and nonrecidivists. Chi-square tests of association were computed for categorical data, while two-tailed independent t-tests were utilized for continuous data. A forward stepwise logistic regression model was also conducted in order to develop the most parsimonious classification model (to identify gang-affiliated offenders from those who were not) including those that were univariately significant with the outcomes of interest. Those that became statistically nonsignificant in the multivariate model were removed to enhance the parsimony of the resultant model. Effect sizes are also computed to demonstrate the strength of the associations between variables.

The area under curve (AUC) of the receiver operating characteristics (ROC) curve was plotted as an indication of the predictive accuracy of the resultant model (Mossman, 1994), and the ‘goodness of fit’ test of the models checked using the Hosmer–Lemeshow test (Agresti, 1996). Additionally, to consider factors associated
with time to recidivism, Cox regression models were developed to compare the
general and violent recidivistic outcomes of the offenders with gang affiliation and
those without. In particular, Cox regression models can control for the differences in
time-at-risk period, as well as other relevant factors. The end points were a
recidivistic act or the end of the follow-up period. Analyses were carried out using
the SPSS version 16.

Results
Sample characteristics
Sociodemographics
The average age of the sample at time of referral was 15.97 years (SD = 1.41,
range = 12–18). The majority had received at least secondary-level mainstream
education (158/165, 95.8%), and came from an intact family of origin (103/163,
63.2%). The ethnic composition of the sample was 53.9% Chinese (89/165), 37.6%
Malay (62/165), 7.9% Indians (13/165), and 0.6% (1/165) of other ethnicity.

Offender characteristics
Table 1 summarizes the sample’s sociodemographic characteristics and offense
histories. The average age of the youth offenders at their first charged offense was
15.42 years (SD = 1.41), the youngest being 12 and the oldest 18 years old. One-fifth
(33/165) of the current sample had committed other offenses prior to their index
offenses (i.e. those offenses that brought them into contact with CFPB). More than
half (88/165, 53.3%) reoffended during the course of the follow-up period and
notably, more than a third (61/165, 37%) reoffended during the confines of their
court orders.

Characteristics of gang-affiliated vs nongang-affiliated offenders
Fifty-eight (35.2%) youth offenders were classified as gang-affiliated offenders, and
the remainder of the sample (n = 107, 64.8%) was classified as nongang-affiliated
offenders. The mean age of entry into gangs was 13.86 years (SD = 1.39,
range = 10–17) and the mean duration of gang affiliation until the time of referral
was 14.73 months (SD = 13.91, mdn = 10.00, range = 1–60). Ten of the 53
gang-affiliated youth offenders (18.9%) held leadership positions in gangs. More than
a third (20/57 35.1%) had engaged in gang fights, and 22.8% (13/57 18.7)
reported having used weapons during gang-related violence.

Univariate analyses indicated that histories of violence, \( \chi^2 (1, N = 165) = 13.01, \)
\( p < 0.001, \phi = 0.28; \) substance use, \( \chi^2 (1, N = 165) = 19.94, \)
\( p < 0.001, \phi = 0.35; \) weapon use, \( \chi^2 (1, N = 165) = 17.65, \)
\( p < 0.001, \phi = 0.33; \) and the presence of index
violent offenses, \( \chi^2 (1, N = 165) = 11.28, \)
\( p = 0.001, \phi = 0.26 \) were significantly
associated with gang affiliation. However, only the histories of violence, substance
use, and weapon use remained statistically significant when applied to a forward
stepwise logistic regression model. This model suggested that gang-affiliated offenders
were more likely than nongang-affiliated offenders to have histories of violence
(OR = 2.80; 95% CI = 1.14–6.90), substance use (OR = 3.13; 95% CI = 1.50–6.54),
Relationship between gang affiliation and recidivism

As shown in Table 1, gang-affiliated offenders had significantly higher risk for violent offending (i.e. higher SAVRY total score), $t(161) = 5.42, p < 0.001, d = 0.91$, and general offending (i.e. higher YLS/CMI total score), $t(163) = 4.23, p < 0.001, d = 0.70$, than nongang-affiliated offenders.

Table 1. Characteristics for the overall sample, gang- and nongang-affiliated youth offenders.

| Variables                                      | Overall $(N = 165)$ | Gang $(n = 58)$ | Nongang $(n = 107)$ | $p$  
|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------|---------------------|------
| Follow-up Period (days)$^\dagger$             | 1658 (299)          | 1715 (356)     | 1627 (259)          |      
| Time-at-risk Period (days)$^\dagger$          | 1413 (410)          | 1348 (401)     | 1448 (413)          |      
| Age when Assessed$^\dagger$                   | 15.97 (1.41)        | 16.29 (1.28)   | 15.79 (1.45)        |      
| Age at First Charged Offense                  | 15.42 (1.41)        | 15.55 (1.35)   | 15.35 (1.44)        |      
| SAVRY Total Score                             | 16.76 (6.18)        | 20.02 (5.30)   | 14.94 (5.84)        | $^*$ 
| YLS/CMI Total Score                           | 13.96 (4.35)        | 15.81 (4.00)   | 12.95 (4.21)        | $^*$ 
| Has History of Physical/Sexual Abuse          | 32/165 (19.4)       | 15/58 (25.9)   | 17/107 (15.9)       |      
| Has History of School Truancy                 | 113/164 (68.9)      | 47/57 (82.5)   | 66/107 (61.7)       |      
| Has History of School Expulsion                | 8/163 (4.9)         | 5/57 (8.8)     | 3/106 (2.8)         |      
| Bullied Others in School                      | 33/163 (20.2)       | 14/57 (24.6)   | 19/106 (17.9)       |      
| Was Bullied in School                         | 19/163 (11.7)       | 7/57 (12.3)    | 12/106 (11.3)       |      
| Has History of Substance Use                  | 67/165 (40.6)       | 37/58 (63.8)   | 30/107 (28)         | $^*$ 
| Has Prior Offense History$^\S$                | 33/165 (20)         | 11/58 (19)     | 22/107 (20.6)       |      
| Has History of Violence against Others        | 113/165 (68.5)      | 50/58 (86.2)   | 63/107 (58.9)       | $^*$ 
| Has History of Weapon Use                     | 29/165 (17.6)       | 20/58 (34.5)   | 9/107 (8.4)         | $^*$ 
| Has Index Violent Offenses                    | 60/165 (36.4)       | 31/58 (53.4)   | 29/107 (27.1)       | $^*$ 
| Has Index Sexual Offenses                     | 35/165 (21.2)       | 9/58 (15.5)    | 26/107 (24.3)       |      
| Has Index Theft/Fraud Offenses                | 81/165 (49.1)       | 22/58 (37.9)   | 59/107 (55.1)       |      
| Has Index Substance Use Offenses              | 8/165 (4.8)         | 5/58 (8.6)     | 3/107 (2.8)         |      
| Has Index Illegal Sale Offenses               | 6/165 (3.6)         | 5/58 (8.6)     | 1/107 (0.9)         |      

Note. Recidivism statistics included charged recidivistic acts that were committed during probation and/or residential orders.

* Differences between gang- and nongang-affiliated offenders were significant after making Bonferroni corrections ($p < 0.0029$).

$^\dagger$ These variables were not included in the group comparisons.

$^\S$ Including offenses that resulted in police warnings (without conviction).

*Illegal sale offenses refer to the illegal sale of videos, cigarettes, and drugs.

and weapon use ($OR = 2.65; 95\% CI = 1.01–6.90$). This simple three-factor model correctly classified 75\% of the sample. However, it was noted that the model was better at correctly classifying nongang-affiliated offenders (82\% correct) as opposed to gang-affiliated offenders (60\% correct). The Hosmer–Lemeshow test suggested no evidence of a lack of fit with this model, $\chi^2 (3, N = 165) = 2.81, p = 0.421$. 

**Relationship between gang affiliation and recidivism**

As shown in Table 1, gang-affiliated offenders had significantly higher risk for violent offending (i.e. higher SAVRY total score), $t(161) = 5.42, p < 0.001, d = 0.91$, and general offending (i.e. higher YLS/CMI total score), $t(163) = 4.23, p < 0.001, d = 0.70$, than nongang-affiliated offenders.
Univariate analyses showed that gang-affiliated offenders were more likely to engage in general (69% vs 44.9%), $\chi^2 (1, N = 165) = 8.78, p = 0.003, \phi = 0.23$; and violent recidivism (25.9% vs 10.3%), $\chi^2 (1, N = 165) = 6.88, p = 0.009, \phi = 0.20$. Moreover, the gang-affiliated offenders were more likely to reoffend during their court orders (55.2% vs 27.1%), $\chi^2 (1, N = 165) = 12.27, p < 0.001, \phi = 0.29$. Further analyses using Cox regression models, accounting for the potentially confounding effects of age at first charged offense and substance use, revealed that gang-affiliated offenders were 1.71 times (95% CI = 1.07–2.73) and 2.46 times (95% CI = 1.02–5.95) more likely to engage in general and violent recidivism. The survival curves are shown in Figures 1 and 2.

Discussion

The extant literature suggests gang affiliation is associated with violent offending and criminal activity. This study describes the characteristics of a cohort of gang and nongang-affiliated youth offenders, shows the relationship between total criminogenic needs and risk using contemporary risk assessment measures, and reveals a statistically significant relationship between gang affiliation and criminal recidivism. It should be pointed out, before we discuss our findings, that there is a relatively higher percentage of gang-affiliated youth (35%) in our sample as compared to the other youth gang studies that are conducted in America and Europe. This difference is unsurprising considering our comparisons are made in the context of a strictly
youth offender instead of the general youth population. Hence, the results of our study will be framed in the context of comparing between gang- and nongang-affiliated youth offenders, who have been referred for specialist psychological assessment with regard to offense-related and/or mental health issues. Regardless, this study raises important considerations for mental health and criminal justice professionals responsible for appraising, managing and rehabilitating youth offenders at risk of criminal behavior.

Although differences in psychosocial characteristics (e.g. history of abuse and neglect, as well as school truancy and expulsion) are statistically nonsignificant between gang- and nongang-affiliated youth offenders, several notable differences are identified in this study. Specifically, even within a youth offender population, gang-affiliated youth had significant problems with violent offending behaviors, substance use and a greater likelihood of weapons use comparatively. It is noted that the characteristics of gang-affiliated youth offenders in this study were, broadly speaking, similar to those reported in studies from America, Australia and Europe. This is true for age at joining gangs, age at first charged offense, past substance and weapon use, and previous violent behavior (Battin et al., 1998; Curry, 2000; Curry et al., 2002; Esbensen & Huizinga, 1993; Huff, 1998; Klein et al., 2006; Thornberry et al., 1993; White & Mason, 2006). Therefore, all these can be considered culturally independent youth gang characteristics.

Notwithstanding that weapon use appears to be relatively more common amongst gang-affiliated youth across cultures, it is notable that there were no
instances of gun use in our sample. This is perhaps due to the strict regulations and severe punishment for the illegal possession and discharge of firearms in Singapore. The present data also suggest that youth gang membership in Singapore appears to be more transient than in America. Specifically, only one in six of the present sample remained as gang members after two years as compared to 45% in an American sample (Thornberry et al., 1993).

Risk assessment and recidivism
Compared to nongang-affiliated youth, gang-affiliated youth were assessed to be at significantly higher risk of violent and general recidivism, and to have more criminogenic needs. These findings provide support for our hypothesis that gang-affiliated youth offenders score higher on contemporary risk assessment measures than their nongang counterparts. Higher risk of reoffending amongst gang-affiliated offenders appears to be linked to more prevalent substance use, procriminal attitudes, association with antisocial peers, and engagement in criminal activities; although the differences and similarities in the profile of gang- and nongang-affiliated groups requires additional scrutiny.

After controlling for time-at-risk, substance use and age at first charged offense, gang-affiliated youth offenders were significantly more likely to recidivate violently and to engage in general criminal activity, when compared with nongang-affiliated youth. Approximately 14% and 55% of the gang-affiliated offenders had engaged in further violent and general recidivism within three years of their court orders, respectively, as compared to approximately 6% and 35% of the nongang-affiliated offenders. In direct contrast with Ang and Huan’s (2008) findings, which suggested gang membership does not predict general recidivism, the present findings, which are consistent with the extant literature, clearly support our hypothesis that gang-affiliated offenders would reoffend more often and more immediately after sentencing than nongang-affiliated offenders. Our findings did not confirm Ang and Huan’s suggestion that gang membership is more strongly associated with violent recidivism than general recidivism. Although gang-affiliated offenders appear more likely to engage in violent recidivism than general recidivism, this difference is nonsignificant (Hazard Ratio_{Violent} = 2.46 (95% CI = 1.02–5.95) vs Hazard Ratio_{General} = 1.71 (95% CI = 1.07–2.73)).

Implications
Following the Risk principle, this study clearly shows that gang-affiliated youth, as a group, require additional and intensive intervention. Considering that gang-affiliated offenders appear to have a more established repertoire of violence and substance use as well as a greater facility with weapons, it will be useful for intervention to focus on violence reduction generally, albeit more intensive, but also on drug and alcohol use and abuse, and attitudes towards weapons. Although it is not the focus of this study, the functions of gang membership require delineation and more adaptive means of satisfying these functions should be introduced.

Finally, the average age for joining gangs in this sample appears to be around 13 years. However, in this study youth were, on average, charged for their first offense around the age of 15. In fact, only one gang-affiliated youth offender in this sample
was charged for offenses before entry into a gang. It is possible that some of gang-affiliated youth offenders might have engaged in offending behavior for which they have not been arrested and charged for, and this has not been systematically investigated in the present study. Therefore, we cannot conclusively state that this sample is not criminally inclined before their entry into gangs. Nevertheless, there is perhaps a window of opportunity for effective gang-resistance education programs and identification of gang members during this two-year hiatus for intervention before they enter the criminal justice system (Huff, 1998). In addition, other primary and secondary prevention initiatives that are directed at early teens may also be considered, especially for those considered as being at risk of delinquency and gang affiliation. Our findings suggest that such early prevention efforts may have more utility if targeted at those aged 13 years and younger. Such programs will require collaborative efforts between the relevant youth and police agencies, and early warning signs such as problematic behaviors in school, gang affiliation, substance use and violent behaviors that may indicate the need for immediate intervention.

Limitations
It is important to note a couple of limitations with this study that may impact on generalizability. Firstly, this is a retrospective study of a unique sample of offenders that relied on data collected for the purpose of assessment and management, which were not necessarily designed or collected for the specific purposes of these particular research questions. Nevertheless, it is noted that there is support for the use of file and archival information in the retrospective scoring of youth risk assessment measures (e.g. Campbell et al., 2004; Welsh et al., 2008). Secondly, we were also unable to reliably examine the extent of self-reported delinquency (i.e. nonadjudicated offenses) within this group of youth offenders before their initiation to gangs due to the retrospective nature of this study. Further, it was not possible to determine whether youth who engaged in criminal activity were gang-affiliated during the follow up period, and whether their criminal behavior was a product of gang membership or not (even for the gang-affiliated youth offenders). What this study clearly shows is that past gang affiliation elevates the risk of recidivism whilst serving their court orders, as well as during the follow-up. Lastly, this is not an exhaustive sample of youth who were convicted of criminal offenses during the two-year period, but this study provides a novel comparison of the characteristics and risks (using established risk assessment measures) between gang- and nongang-affiliated youth offenders, as well as a springboard to ultimately understand the youth gang situation in Singapore better.

Conclusion
This study found that over a third of youth male offenders referred for psychological assessment and treatment over a two-year period were gang-affiliated. In addition to several notable differences in terms of offender characteristics, these gang-affiliated youth offenders presented a higher risk of violent and general recidivism and were also more likely than nongang-affiliated youth offenders to engage in violent and general recidivism during follow-up. The higher likelihood of gang-affiliated youth offenders reoffending during their court orders warrants more stringent supervision
and intensive rehabilitation effort. Further research needs to examine (1) whether there are unique criminogenic needs and responsivity factors associated with gang affiliation; (2) the utility of specific interventions targeting the needs and responsivity issues of gang-affiliated youth offenders; (3) prevalence of gang affiliation within the youth population in an Asian context (e.g. Singapore); (4) the long-term trajectories, in terms of offending behaviors and criminogenic needs, of ‘general’ gang-affiliated youth offenders as compared to those in leadership positions; and (5) the factors that are associated with these youth gang members joining and leaving gangs.

Notes
1. Rioting is defined as a violent public disturbance whereby physical force or violence is used by an unlawful assembly (of five or more people), or any of its members, on another person or group (Singapore Penal Code, 1985).
2. Violent offenses refer to armed robbery, (physical) assault, attempted murder, causing bodily harm, making threats to harm or kill, murder, rioting, robbery, and unlawful use of weapon.
3. Sexual offenses refer to attempted rape, indecent exposure, molestation, peeping, rape, and sodomy.
4. Theft/fraud offenses refer to all forms of theft, criminal breach of trust (to cheat others), embezzlement, as well as possession and handling of stolen goods or proceeds of crime.
5. Substance use offenses refer to consumption of illicit drugs (e.g. amphetamines cannabis, cocaine, heroin, and other hallucinogenic drugs), illicit use of inhalants (e.g. glue, paint, and petrol), underage consumption of alcohol, as well as the unauthorized use of prescription drugs.
6. Illegal sale offenses refer to the illegal sale of videos, cigarettes, and drugs.
7. Physical abuse refers to a situation where the youth has suffered significant and/or repeated harm from an injury inflicted by the youth’s parent or caregiver. The injury might be inflicted intentionally or might be the inadvertent result of physical punishment or physically aggressive treatment. Some examples include belting, kicking, punching, severe and/or repetitive caning (where injuries and physical scarring may result), and throwing the youth against a wall.
8. A behavioral definition of bullying is adopted in this paper. As a victim, it refers to being punched, insulted, kicked, tripped, and having possessions stolen; consequently, leading the youth to feel distressed and harassed. Conversely, for the perpetrator, these behaviors are typically exhibited with the expressed intention of making others feel distressed or harassed. Bullying or being bullied is only coded if behavioral examples were included in the reports.
9. For general recidivism, these recidivistic acts were defined as any charged sexual, nonviolent, as well as violent offenses.
10. The differences in the denominators are due to missing data.

References


