

Family Matters Conference

NOMS Debate (following presentation by Gerry Marshall)

Gerry Marshall

Why hasn't the theory (agreed by all) been put into practice?

Probation Officers professional qualifications no longer cover families and children

There is a focus on risk – associated solely with the offender

A focus on the individual – loss of the family/social context

YOT – prevention work ceded to this agency

Progression - probation less connected to local agendas

Short-term prisoners – about half current offenders do not engage at all with

Probation due to length of sentence

Thames Valley c 7,000 cases/1,735 prisoners approx 2% of national caseload

Duncan Hume

'Joined-up' approach is key

Relevance and benefits of community engagement (eg in Banbury)

Key factor was effective identification of children and families

Focus on families where the benefits of the FM approach would be improved family cohesion

Importance of establishing and agreeing protocols

Case Studies – some outcomes for the few families identified so far "have been nothing short of miraculous"

Wernher von Rensburg

Need to be aware of the daily pressures on probation

Resources are a real issue

So is Consent – but can be achieved simply

Initial Bucks focus in High Wycombe

Practical difficulties of implementation of activity

Issues of management engagement

Pressures over staff resources – eg lack of time for home visits, but the initiative is exciting and has huge potential