

# "Court in the Act"

A regular newsletter for the entire youth justice

THE YOUTH COURT OF NEW ZEALAND | TE KŌTI TAIOHI O AOTEAROA

## The Youth Justice Learning Centre – a new online 'college' for all youth justice learning opportunities in Aotearoa

*"New Zealand Youth Justice training has been patchy and has survived on the smell of an oily rag, number 8 fencing wire and strongly motivated individuals. But well meaning enthusiasm is not enough. We need good training, good standards, good learning."*

Judge Andrew Becroft  
Principal Youth Court Judge for  
New Zealand

On Monday 19 July 2010, Child, Youth and Family (CYF) hosted the launch of the Youth Justice Learning Centre (YJLC), a public website designed to be a one-stop-shop for all youth justice training in New Zealand, whether government or community, paid or unpaid.

The site was developed by a joint government agency and NGO steering committee from an initial idea by the Youth Justice Independent Advisory Group. The site is hosted on CYF computers and was developed by Wellington open source firm Catalyst IT.

In launching the site, CYF Deputy Chief Executive **Ray Smith** said "People working with young offenders are so committed to helping turn young lives around. I'm delighted to know we've had a role in building something that helps them do this, and strengthens professional knowledge and networks in the sector".

"I know a lot of people have worked hard to get this resource up and running, and can be very proud of what they've achieved".

"There's no doubt about the benefits of working together on initiatives such as this. It helps strengthen our understanding of each others' business and roles in supporting young people, and ways we can come together to give them the best possible chance to succeed".

The steering committee of the YJLC included personnel from

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Welcome to the Youth Justice Learning Centre | Youth Justice Learning Centre - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by Ministry

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What You Will Learn

Welcome to the Youth Justice Learning Centre

The Youth Justice Learning Centre (YJLC) is an open access web-based youth justice 'college'. It provides access to face to face training events, online learning materials and research articles for anyone working in the New Zealand Youth Justice sector.

A key feature is the Workshop Calendar which lists the dates and locations of relevant workshops, seminars and conferences held by government and non-government agencies. These events are for all those working in the sector.

YJLC homepage at [www.youthjustice.co.nz](http://www.youthjustice.co.nz)

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Police, CYF, Ministry of Justice, the National Youth Workers Network of Aotearoa, the Werry Centre for Child and Adolescent Mental Health, the Youth Court of New Zealand, Ministry of Social Development and the NZ Law Society.

When asked about the value of the YJLC to the youth work sector, National Youth Workers Network Chairperson **Rod Baxter** commented that the site would give employers and youth workers the ability to view the overall pic-

agencies and other organisations.

When asked about the YJLC and the place of mental health in New Zealand's youth justice system, The Werry Centre's Director Workforce **Sue Treanor** said "I believe that it has been vital to include mental health in the centre's development as we know that more than half of young people that come into contact with youth justice services will have a significant mental health or substance abuse problem. These issues frequently contribute to offending and if left un-

navigate their way through the youth justice system. The centre will open up many more opportunities for workers across different disciplines and agencies to increase their knowledge and skills and to work and train with colleagues across the sector. This can only benefit young people and their families as services become more "joined up" and effective."

Looking forward to the future of the YJLC, CYF's Workforce Development Manager of Learning and Capability Development **Fiona Owen** said



ture of youth justice training in New Zealand and then be able to discern the courses that were best suited to their particular needs. Rod Baxter said the YJLC provided a comprehensive, collaborative and exhaustive database of youth justice training. He said the youth work sector had traditionally provided a large amount of training, despite its general lack of resources and the YJLC would allow workers to prioritise training opportunities for themselves. Rob Baxter also said he thought the YJLC was a good model of collaboration that showed how resources can be built and shared between government

treated have long term negative impacts for the individual and society. Additionally, these young people are very likely to have significant adults in their life battling with mental health or addiction issues. Without attention these issues may jeopardise any progress made with the young person."

"As Director of Workforce at the Werry Centre for Child and Adolescent Mental Health I am delighted to be part of the development of the Youth Justice Learning Centre. This resource will bring tremendous benefit to the range of professionals who work with young people and their families as they

"Now that the site is up and running the work begins. We want to invite more government and non government organisations to access the YJLC and to encourage them to support it by sharing what they offer in the areas of research, resources and training. We want to keep building and extending what the YJL offers by developing together new learning and development resources where there are gaps and by eventually realising the ultimate aim of the YJLC - to offer qualifications or limited credits towards qualifications from the YJLC."

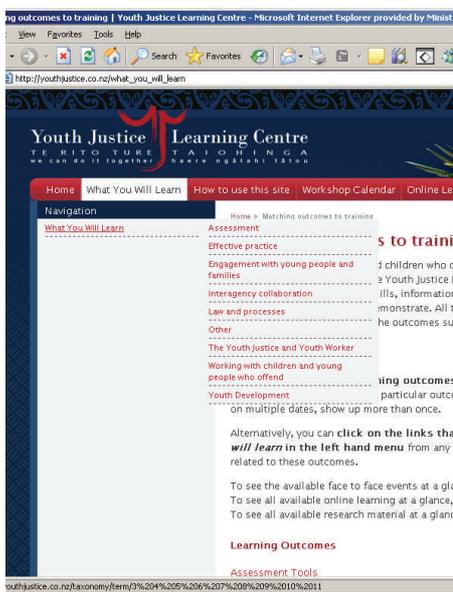
Fiona Owen said the YJLC

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working group had been working for 2 years behind the scenes “to achieve a shared vision and to realise a commitment to an idea that they knew would add value and make a contribution to the youth justice and broader youth work sectors”.

“As you can imagine, working across government and non government organisations meant manoeuvring through a range of interests, requirements and regulations that needed to be respected and worked through. Their were certainly those at the beginning who doubted that we could do it or that it would be of any significance or value - but to the credit of the YJLC Working Group, they kept their eye on the prize, worked together and never faulted when a solution was needed.”



## It's all about the 'learning outcomes'

The YJLC works by matching a set of 'learning outcomes' to training courses, YJLC online learning materials, and other online resources. Learning outcomes is the term used to describe the essential skills, information and values that people who work with young people and children in youth justice need to demonstrate.

The current set of learning outcomes includes:

**Assessment Tools**  
What's needed to assess and understand a young person's vulnerabilities, strengths and criminogenic needs.

**Effective Practice**  
How to demonstrate a working knowledge of effective practice with young offenders

**Engagement with young people and their families**  
How to demonstrate an ability to engage with young people and their families.

**Interagency Collaboration**  
Means working effectively with other agencies and community organisations.

**The Youth Justice and Youth Worker**  
needs to:

- Demonstrate an awareness of self
- Demonstrate an ability to work as part of a professional

team

- Demonstrate self management
- Demonstrate commitment to ongoing professional development and learning

**Youth Development**  
Means understanding the context of young people

**Youth Justice Law and Legislative Process**  
How to demonstrate an understanding of New Zealand legislation and court processes

**Working with children and young people who offend**  
How to work effectively with children and young people who offend.

All the resources on the YJLC have been matched with one or more of these learning outcomes. There are three types of resources:

### 1 Workshop Calendar



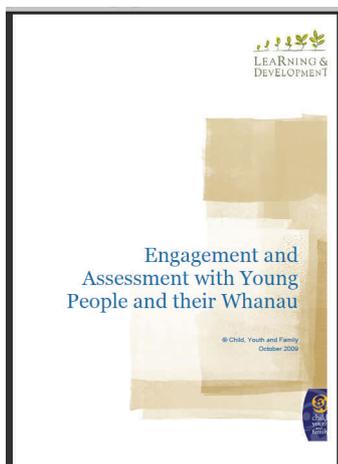
The site's 'Workshop Calendar' provides information about all scheduled youth justice

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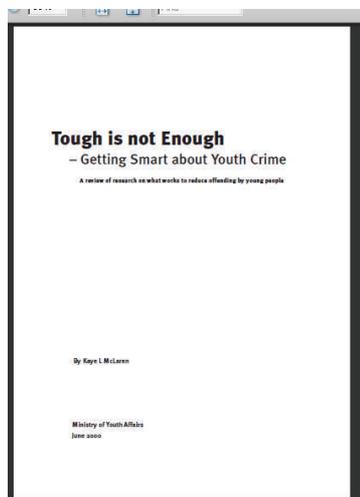
training courses. These courses are offered by Police, CYF, National Youth Workers Network, Werry Centre for Child and Adolescent Mental Health.

## 2 YJLC Materials



The YJLC provides pdf versions of self-directed workbooks and readings from agencies such as Child, Youth and Family. These workbooks are similar to those that might be received from a correspondence course and can be worked through at the users own pace.

## 3 Links to Resources



The YJLC also has links to peer reviewed research papers. These are intended to create awareness of the latest developments and policy in the youth justice and the youth work area.

The Youth Justice Learning Centre can be found at

[www.youthjustice.co.nz](http://www.youthjustice.co.nz)

**"Court in the Act"** is published by the office of the Principal Youth Court Judge of New Zealand.

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We welcome contributions to the newsletter from anyone involved in youth justice in New Zealand or internationally.

Back copies of the newsletter can be viewed or downloaded from our website.