



WORKING WITH:-



“A police custody program designed to divert 18-25 year olds away from crime into employment, development and education”

Criminal Justice Alliance - Outstanding Organisation of the year 2017

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The Metropolitan Police Service created DIVERT in April 2015 to address a gap in statutory provision for young adults that come into police custody. Recognising the needs of young adults that are arrested, this unique program aims to divert 18-25 year olds into employment, development and education opportunities. DIVERT intends to prevent re-offending, have fewer victims of crime and help mitigate areas of vulnerability of young adults that come into police custody.

Now working with the Milestone Foundation we have equipped DIVERT with a highly effective organisation that addresses our objectives and ensures that there is a long-term support program for young adults so that their goals, passion and aspirations can be achieved.

Currently DIVERT is located at Brixton and Bethnal Green Police Station.

In the initial stages of the program, DIVERT has identified clear areas of vulnerability that can be addressed during what is a teachable moment during police custody. Having Milestone Foundation staff directly inside police custody will ensure a fast approach to addressing the needs of young adults.

DIVERT is the first police custody diversion program of its kind. Focussing on a teachable moment whilst a person is still in police detention. Milestone Foundation staff approach the individual while in custody and they are asked if they wish to speak with the trained practitioners working on DIVERT. If they do they are taken out of the cell and spoken to solely about their lifestyle, independent from the offence that they have been arrested for.

Milestone Foundation explain a number of opportunities that the individual can be referred into and if they wish, to engage with any of them. They then put in place a long (individual journey plan) term plan to ensure they fulfil their goals around employment, development and education. When the individual leaves custody they are continually supported throughout the process.

136 engaged with on DIVERT. Out of this 136, 76 people are now either employed or enrolled (maintaining attendance) on a training or development course.

Out of the 136 we have seen a re-offending rate of 7%, that is 22% less than the average for adult offenders in Lambeth. Out of the 76 people that are currently employed, four of them have since re-offended.

17 18-25 year olds have gained employment or training after being arrested for the possession of an offensive weapon.

DIVERT works in parallel to the CJS so as not to mitigate or complicate a criminal investigation.

DIVERT has been presented at the Home Office sharing best practice across the UK. In 2017 we hosted Sara Newton MP at Brixton to showcase DIVERT. In 2016 DIVERT received a Howard League Award and attracted national press coverage via the BBC's Victoria Derbyshire Show. The Open University has also hosted an Evidence Café and has started collating an Evidence Base for evaluation. Nationally the programme has been presented to Avon and Somerset aswell as Staffordshire Police Counties

DIVERTs aspiration is to have a practitioner in every custody suite in London and share the model nationally to implement this in other police custody suites.

Press & Information references

BBC - <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-35043223>

Wizard Radio - <http://www.wizardradio.co.uk/blog.php?p=2282>

Howard League - <http://howardleague.org/community-awards/2016-community-awards-winners/>

Brixton Blog - <http://www.brixtonblog.com/brixton-police-pioneer-knife-crime-project/42629>

CJA Alliance - <http://criminaljusticealliance.org/divert-panorama-top-cja-awards-2017/>