

Young witnesses in court: Providing effective support

Special one-day conference

Thursday 17 November 2005

Galleries of Justice

Nottingham City Centre

9.30 am – 4.00 pm

Programme

- 9.30 – 10.00 Registration and refreshments
- 10.00 – 10.15 **Morning welcome and introduction**
Wendy Start OBE JP DL, President, Victim Support Nottinghamshire
- 10.15 – 10.45 **Keynote address:**
Making the criminal justice system work better for children and young people
(Speakers from Victim Support National Office and UK Youth Parliament to be confirmed.)
- 10.45 – 11.00 Tea & coffee
- 11.05 – 12.30 **Morning workshops (Choice of one – see workshop descriptions for details.)**
1. Understanding young witness needs
2. Operating a young Witness Service: Good practice guidance
3. Building capacity for a young Witness Service: Strategic considerations
4. Young witnesses in court - an inter-agency approach
5. The future of young witness services in the UK.
- 12.35 – 1.30 Lunch
- 1.35 – 3.00 **Afternoon workshops (Choice of one – see workshop descriptions for details.)**
1. Understanding young witness needs
2. Operating a young Witness Service: Good practice guidance
3. Building capacity for a young Witness Service: Strategic considerations
4. Young witnesses in court - an inter-agency approach
5. The future of young witness services in the UK.
- 3.05 – 3.20 Tea & coffee
- 3.25 – 3.40 Closing plenary
- 3.45 – 4.15 Optional private tour of Galleries of Justice

General information

Venue – Galleries of Justice

The conference will be held at:

NCCL Galleries of Justice
High Pavement
The Lace Market
Nottingham
NG1 1HN

Tel: 0115 952 0555

www.galleriesofjustice.org.uk

Situated in the heart of the cultural quarter of Nottingham, the historic Galleries of Justice is ideally located – just 10 minutes walk from Nottingham Station, three minutes walk from the nearest tram stop, and with a wealth of city centre amenities and accommodation right on the doorstep. For detailed directions, please visit www.galleriesofjustice.org.uk

The conference facilities are wheelchair accessible.

Payment

We accept cheques or we can invoice - whichever best suits your needs. Cheques must be made payable to Victim Support Nottinghamshire and attached to the booking form.

Registration fees for the one-day conference are:

- £125 for statutory organisations
- £75 for voluntary organisations

A 10% “early-bird” discount will be offered to those who register by 9 September!

Bookings and deadlines

Please return your booking form and payment to the Training Office by Tuesday 1 November 2005. We are not able to provide refunds if you cancel your place or are unable to attend; however, you may send someone in your place.

A 10% discount is available to those who register by Friday 9 September 2005. Group discounts may also be offered to those who send multiple delegates from the same organisation. If you are interested in a group discount, please contact Sue Younger at 0115 852 4286.

What do I need to bring?

Just yourself! We provide all stationery, handouts, lunch, teas and coffees.

Workshop descriptions

Workshop #1

Understanding young witness needs

It is widely accepted that children and young people aged 5-17 find the current legal process intimidating and distressing. This workshop will explore the reasons for establishing a young Witness Service to increase support of vulnerable child witnesses and enable them to participate in the legal process and give their best evidence. In doing so, the workshop will highlight the special needs of young witnesses and explain how the young Witness Service can meet those needs through its unique and innovative support methods both pre-trial and whilst attending court. Discussion will include:

- ensuring family access to child-appropriate court instructions and information
- improving standards of questioning children in court.

Case studies and research will be utilised during the discussion.

Workshop #2

Operating a young Witness Service: Good practice guidance from the Nottinghamshire model

This workshop will share good practices on service delivery and day-to-day operation of the innovative young Witness Service model established by Victim Support Nottinghamshire. Based on their experience, you will gain insight into:

- local integration with existing statutory, social services and inter-agency protocols
- referral procedures
- service delivery model
- understanding special measures for young witnesses in court
- use of volunteers within a YWS model with appropriate level of expertise.

Workshop #3

Building capacity for a young Witness Service: Strategic considerations

So you think your courts need better services for young witnesses? This session will explore ways of moving that concept to reality. We will examine how to develop a strategic plan for gaining support, obtaining funding and achieving implementation of groundbreaking new services for children. This strategic vision may well involve interactions and cooperation with local and national government, criminal justice agencies, and voluntary organisations. The workshop will cover:

- needs assessment and forward planning
- identifying funding streams
- structured resource management
- service marketing, development and implementation
- future directions for a national young witness model.

Workshop #4

Young witnesses in court - an inter-agency approach

This workshop will share good practices from the partnership approach to supporting young witnesses in court by the Crown Prosecution Service, Court Service, police, and Social Services. This lively and informative discussion will highlight techniques for successful inter-agency communications and identify common pitfalls to avoid.

- the importance of pre-trial support for court familiarisation
- establishing a consistent operating model with multiple agencies
- access to and availability of special measures, especially for children with special needs or disabilities
- facilitating the prioritisation of cases with young witnesses

Workshop #5

The future of young witness services in the UK

At present, there are a handful of diverse services in the UK for young and vulnerable witnesses. This workshop will explore the likely shape of things to come, including political considerations, funding scenarios, legal developments and the strategic directions of national and local service providers.