

# **Beyond Youth Custody**

## **Looked after and in custody?**

Tim Bateman, University of Bedfordshire

Making Research Count 22 March 2018

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# What do we know?

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- There is a clear relationship between being in care and coming to the attention of the youth justice system (Laming, 2016)
  - Important to emphasise that most looked after children do not get in trouble with the law, in 2016 children in care were five times more likely to be cautioned or convicted for an offence than those in the general population (DfE, 2017)
  - In 2016/17, 38% of children in STCs and 42% of those in YOIs reported having experience of local authority care prior to entering custody (HMIP, 2017)
  - *'People start to notice you don't get post or visits and you become a target'; 'You go in on your own and you come out on your own'* (Children with experience of the care and criminal justice systems, cited in Laming, 2016)
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## What do we know? [2]

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- The custodial experience for all children frequently worsens their accommodation status (Hazel et al, 2012) but, unsurprisingly this situation is more problematic for looked after children (HMI Probation, 2015)
  - In 2016/17 50% of children in STCs did not know where they would be living on release (compared to 22% of those who were not looked after; more than a third of boys in YOIs (34%) considered they would have a problem finding accommodation on release (compared with 22% of those not in care (HMIP, 2017)
  - *'All of [those children who did not know where they were going to live on release] were anxious and unsettled and most did not understand why it could not be sorted out. In some cases, the child did not even know which local authority area or borough they were going to'* (HMI Probation, 2015)
  - *'Those children who are not returning to parents/carers, are particularly vulnerable on release to sexual exploitation, drug misuse or just failing to deal with difficulties they encounter and reoffend'* (HMI Probation, 2015)
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