

**The Safe Moves Initiative:
An Evaluation**

by

**Deborah Quilgars
Anwen Jones
Nicholas Pleace
with
Diana Sanderson**

**Centre for Housing Policy
University of York
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Deborah Quilgars

Anwen Jones

Nicholas Pleace

Diana Sanderson

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Executive summary

Introduction

Safe Moves was an eighteen month pilot project (October 2002-March 2004), developed by the Foyer Federation and Connexions, in four local authority areas in England (Ryedale, Suffolk Coastal, Birmingham and Wolverhampton). The initiative aimed to test a new model of preventing homelessness for young people aged between 13-19, involving the development and delivery of a package of services to young people, and where appropriate their families, including:

- Life-skills training;
- Family/ inter-generational mediation and support;
- Peer mentoring;
- Appropriate support to move into supported or independent accommodation, where needed.

The Centre for Housing Policy at the University of York was commissioned to evaluate the Safe Moves initiative. This report represents the final evaluation of the pilot period.

Developing the Safe Moves Initiative

National coordination

The four pilots were selected at a national level. Foyers in England were asked to express an interest in the pilot project and support of Connexions at a local level was also investigated. Two urban and two rural areas were purposefully chosen to pilot the model in different localities.

Areas were chosen where youth homelessness was a significant concern. However, the pilot timetable did not allow local needs analysis to be undertaken, so the areas were selected using a combination of existing information and anecdotal evidence. It was felt that greater local consultation might have increased local ownership of the project in some areas. Any future projects should ensure that a needs analysis is undertaken and that projects are part of local homelessness strategies.

A part-time National Coordinator was appointed to support the pilot projects. National coordination was seen as very important by all the pilot projects, and this support played a key role in the direction of the projects. However, resources for central assistance were limited and more input at a national level would have been welcomed. If Safe Moves is developed in other areas, national coordination is likely to remain pivotal to establishing effective and consistent services.

The development of local structures

A local steering group was established to oversee the development of each project, bringing together key agencies with an interest in the prevention of youth homelessness. Some steering groups appeared to operate more successfully than others. In particular, the establishment of a common agenda at the local level and good inter-agency working facilitated the development of the more effective steering groups.

Whilst key players understood the overall aim of the project, to prevent youth homelessness, the translation of this aim into specific objectives was sometimes difficult. It was clear that many agencies were used to operating within a framework of crisis intervention and providing reactive services and were unused to a focus on prevention. The development of preventative services required partner agencies to develop new ways of thinking and clear direction at a national and local level.

In three areas, the local foyer was the lead agency for Safe Moves, whilst the fourth project was located within a local detached youth work agency. Following staffing problems at one foyer, the lead partner changed after a year to a leading homelessness agency. The pilot experience indicates that whilst a local foyer can be the lead agency for Safe Moves, other relevant organisations may also be appropriate lead agencies.

In two of the pilot areas, the lead agency and Connexions enjoyed very positive working relationships. In the other two areas, although relations between individual workers on the ground were positive, a lack of communication between the lead agencies and Connexions was evident. Whilst these difficulties were overcome through discussion, it is important that all parties at the local level recognise and understand that there may be cultural differences between partner agencies.

Three of the pilot projects found it difficult to appoint appropriately qualified staff leading to delays in development. These difficulties were thought to reflect national trends in the shortage of housing and support staff. Problems were also experienced with retention of staff in two areas. A challenging project of this nature may need to consider the appointment of two staff members to support each other and to ensure continuity in service provision. Effective line management is also crucial.

In all areas, Connexions services identified at least one local Personal Advisor (PA) to work with the project. One project had two days of a Connexions worker dedicated to the project, however others had to share one of only a few PAs working in the local area. Although dedicated Connexions PA time was important, effective working relationships were more important than the amount of time dedicated to the project.

Three of the four projects had their main office base in the local foyer, with the fourth project being based with the local Connexions PA in a community office. Some projects however also had second bases available to them including youth projects. It was important that working bases were both accessible and appropriate for the needs of young people.

Development of the pilot services

Peer mentoring

The intention of the Safe Moves service was to recruit up to 20 peer mentors. The Coordinator was responsible for arranging the recruitment and training of the young people who were to act as peer mentors. The two urban projects developed peer mentoring earlier than the rural projects, as there were difficulties in identifying appropriate training courses for the peer mentors in rural areas.

The recruitment of potential peer mentors went smoothly in all pilot areas. It was envisaged that peer mentors would be young people who had experienced housing related problems in

the past but who were now living in stable housing. However, the pilots attracted interested young people in a variety of situations, including those living in foyers, those with no experience of homelessness, and also Safe Moves users.

The retention of peer mentors was a problem in the early stages of the pilot and it was clear that peer mentors should not be recruited too early before referrals were available for them to adopt as mentees. It became clear that the original aim of recruiting 20 mentors was unrealistic and projects appeared to be working more effectively with between five and ten mentors.

Family mediation

It was envisaged that specialist family mediation services would be identified and purchased locally. The two urban Safe Moves projects were able to identify suitable services relatively easily, however the two rural projects found it extremely difficult to identify family mediation providers at a local level. In one area, the services of an independent family mediator/ counsellor were utilised, whilst in the second rural area Safe Moves itself undertook early intervention work with families within the project. The availability of an appropriate level of funding for this service proved important.

Life-skills

The Safe Moves projects were concerned with developing two different forms of life-skills training: firstly, the delivery of day-to-day life skills to young people as part of a supportive role provided by Safe Moves staff and other key workers, and secondly; the development of more formal programmes of life-skills that could be accredited at a national level. The former was found to be much easier to develop than the latter, Safe Moves staff themselves provided support with day-to-day life-skills.

A number of approaches were examined for the delivery of accredited life-skills training. The lack of an appropriate life-skills package for those under the age of 16 was identified at the national level. Funding was secured by the Foyer Federation from O2 in autumn 2003 to adapt an existing school-based programme 'Make a Connection', developed by the Children's and Youth Partnership Foundation, for use in an informal and one-to-one setting. 'Make a Connection'¹ was being piloted in a number of Connexions locations in 2004 but was not available for use by Safe Moves during the pilot period.

Other services

The Safe Moves projects delivered a range of other services and support to young people, including:

- Assisting young people to move into supported or independent accommodation;
- Providing practical support to some young people as well as direct one-off financial support at times of emergency;
- Organising regular activities for the young people, including social events;
- In one area, a parents' support network was established.

¹ <http://www.makeaconnection.org.uk/>

Referrals to Safe Moves

A total of 170 referrals were made to the four Safe Moves projects by the end of the pilot period and almost all of these young people (152 or nearly 90 per cent) were offered and took up the service.

Connexions accounted for just over a quarter of all referrals (28 per cent). The next most prominent source of referrals was social services departments, followed closely by local authority housing departments. The other main sources of referral were local foyers and services with a broad educational welfare remit, sometimes located in local colleges.

The vast majority of the referrals were within the target age range of 13-19. Two-thirds of accepted referrals were aged between 16 and 17 years old. The next largest group were young people aged 13-15 (one-fifth of accepted referrals). As the pilot programme progressed, the typical age of young people referred to the projects fell.

The projects worked with more young women (62 per cent) than young men (37 per cent). Almost seven in ten young people (67 per cent) were from a White/ European ethnic origin, with one third describing themselves as from a Black or Minority Ethnic (BME) group.

As a preventative service, Safe Moves attempted to work with young people before they became homeless wherever possible. This however was not always easy to achieve, with quite a number of young people already being homeless or in housing difficulty at the point of referral. However, the proportion of young people who were still living at home but assessed as being at risk of homelessness increased towards the end of the monitoring period. Just under half (45 per cent) of the young people were living with a parent or parents at the time of referral. Other young people were living in a range of housing situations, including with friends and relatives, in foyers or supported accommodation.

Forty per cent of young people reported having experienced homelessness and over half (56 per cent) had run away from the parental/ guardian home. Over three-quarters (77 per cent) of the young people who reported having been homeless also reported having run away.

A majority of the young people were in full time education or training at the point of their referral (58 per cent) and 11 per cent were engaged in voluntary work or employed. Almost a third of the young people with whom Safe Moves worked were in a NEET situation (Not in Education, Employment or Training).

Nearly a quarter (24 per cent) of the young people had committed a criminal offence/ been in trouble with the police although only 11 (7 per cent) had been convicted of an offence, and only three reported having been remanded in custody or imprisoned. Only one young person working with Safe Moves was subject to an anti-social behaviour order (ASBO). Over a quarter (27 per cent) of the young people had experienced bullying at some point in the past, whilst 13 per cent reported having been a victim of crime.

Young people accepted onto Safe Moves were being supported by a range of different agencies, including Connexions, social services, housing services, youth justice/ probation workers, educational welfare officers and foyer workers.

In the early days of the pilot, agencies found it difficult to identify young people who were ‘at risk’ of homelessness. It was necessary for the Safe Moves pilot staff, after educating themselves, to educate other agencies and referrers as to the potential of working in a preventative way.

Appropriate assessment procedures were still being developed at a local level – these needed to be comprehensive and accessible to all parties and take account of the wide target age group for Safe Moves.

Most young people described the referral process as being relatively informal, and did not find the process either difficult or complicated. Some of the young people were a little apprehensive about meeting with Safe Moves but said that they felt reassured following the appointment with the worker.

Delivery of the Safe Moves service

Support provided

All Safe Moves projects provided three core services: peer mentoring, family mediation and life-skills training. However, as these services took some time to develop, most of the projects had adapted to offer a wider range of services that could be provided immediately.

Nearly three in ten young people received family mediation/early intervention services, and life-skills training, respectively. One in seven young people were involved in peer mentoring. Over half of young people received practical support at some point during their time with Safe Moves, just over a quarter received housing related support and 17 per cent received assistance with employment or education. The precise pattern of support varied across the four pilot projects.

The intended role of the Safe Moves Coordinator was to organise the delivery of the core services and coordinate this provision working with other agencies. The original model for Safe Moves had drawn on the ‘Safe in the City’ project within London, which had focused on workers acting as service brokers for young people at risk of homelessness. During the pilot period, however, some of the Coordinators occupied a much more ‘hands-on’ role, directly supporting young people as well as referring them onto other services. This adaptation of the model was in large part linked to low levels of existing service provision, a good example being family mediation, in some of the Safe Moves pilot areas.

The projects offered a generalist support service for young people, willing to help them with most aspects of their lives. Young people described a service offering support that included: help with finding accommodation; advice on education, training and employment; help with paying bills, budgeting, managing debts; arranging or providing transport to interviews and to work; practical support; peer mentoring training and residential courses; counselling; social activities; and providing someone who would listen to them.

Only a small number of peer mentors had been matched with a mentee at the end of the pilot period. Staff and the peer mentors interviewed suggested that peer mentoring was proving to be a positive experience for young people, however as only very few interviewees had experience of being mentored it was not possible to confirm this from the service user

perspective. The need for careful matching of mentor and mentee, and a high degree of support and supervision for mentors, was acknowledged by all Safe Moves projects. A number of young people had been involved in training to become a peer mentor but had not yet been designated any mentees. However, the peer mentors said that they had enjoyed the training and felt it had provided them with a range of skills and benefits, although not many had the opportunity to practice their mentoring skills. At this stage, agencies and staff felt that the most positive outcome of peer mentoring had been the impact of the training process on peer mentors.

The take-up of family mediation was greatest in the two areas where specialist providers were working very closely with the Safe Moves project. It appeared particularly important that family mediation services adopted a flexible approach to working with young people and their families. For example, in one area, a bespoke counselling service had been developed in response to young people's needs.

Some young people did not feel that a family mediation service was appropriate to their circumstances (for example, where a young person had already made the decision to move out of the family home). However, other young people explained how much they valued family mediation and how it had been very helpful in improving their relationships with parents.

The delivery of life-skills to young people was an integral part of the role of the support offered by both Safe Moves workers, other key workers and peer mentors. Pilot projects placed a high emphasis on helping young people develop practical and also social life-skills. An essential element of providing support was also seen as offering emotional literacy in terms of developing young people's self esteem and ability to take control of their life.

An important role of Safe Moves projects involved assisting young people to access appropriate accommodation. A number of young people also explained that Safe Moves had supported them quite considerably in terms of accessing education, training or employment. Young people particularly appreciated practical support.

Adequacy of support

Some of the young people using Safe Moves had quite high levels of need, and required intensive support, whilst others appeared to require assistance at key crisis points but were relatively independent. In the majority of cases, the young people interviewed explained that Safe Moves had helped them with everything that they felt they needed. However, in a couple of cases, young people did not feel that the service had been flexible enough to respond to their needs.

Approach to delivering support

The Safe Moves projects delivered support to young people in a number of different settings. As well as regular bases like the foyer or youth centre, most pilots met with young people in other community settings, including cafés, and occasionally the young person's home. A flexible and proactive approach to meeting with young people appeared to be most successful.

The use of different means of communication to keep in touch with young people was also important, with mobile telephone contact and text messaging proving particularly effective. Contact by letter was a less successful method of communication with young people sometimes ignoring or forgetting potential appointments. It was also important that Safe Moves workers were proactive in initiating and sustaining contact levels with young people.

Young people found the Safe Moves workers friendly and approachable. A number of young people stated that they preferred Safe Moves to other services that they had contact with as they felt that staff listened to them to a greater extent and treated them as an equal rather than as a child.

Inter-agency working

Effective links between Safe Moves and other agencies were crucial in order to deliver a holistic service to young people. Connexions and Safe Moves workers needed to be clear about their respective roles in the project. In most areas, good relationships had been established with other agencies such as schools and local housing providers, although most projects found it hard to engage social services and this was an enduring concern given the age group of the young people.

Outcomes and costs

The project worked with 152 young people over the pilot period and eighty of these young people were still receiving the Safe Moves service on the 31st March 2004.

Just over one quarter of leavers left as the service had come to a planned end. Sometimes the Safe Moves project could not continue working with the young person (for example they moved area or needed specialist support) whilst a third of young people lost contact with the project.

In two fifths of cases, Safe Moves was helping to maintain, or had helped maintain, a young person in the parental home. A small number of young people had also returned to the parental home or had been helped to move to a more secure setting.

Most of the young people interviewed felt that their lives had improved since becoming involved with Safe Moves, including helping them remain at home, improving relationships with parents and help with moving into other accommodation. Repeat interviews with a small number of young people also suggested that some young people felt they had more control over their life. Safe Moves however could not transform everyone's lives - in some cases, the project was supporting young people through continuing difficult situations.

Key agencies also felt that Safe Moves had provided a positive impact on many young peoples' lives. In addition, they felt Safe Moves offered a complimentary and needed service in their area as well as providing a catalyst to bring agencies together at a local level.

The Safe Moves pilot project cost £300,000, with funders including Connexions, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, the Department for Education and Skills, the Home Office and the Freemasons Grand Charity. Each pilot cost between £35-47,000, excluding in-kind costs provided by agencies.

An average *total* cost per client (unit cost) was calculated at between £500 to £1,400 across the four projects, with an overall average of approximately £1,000 (excluding in-kind costs). This compares to the average cost of £400 a week for a hostel bed, £650 for processing a local authority homelessness application and £2,800 for a failed tenancy. An effective Safe Moves project, helping young people to remain in the parental home, can be considered good value for money.

Conclusion

The Safe Moves model proved a complex one to establish, with structures taking longer to be put into place than anticipated. Further, the projects operated within very different local contexts with varying patterns of provision. The pilot projects had therefore developed creatively to offer a wider range of services than originally envisaged in the Safe Moves model.

One of the key lessons learnt from the pilot period was the need for better resourced, and longer lead-in times, for the development of services at a local level. The local context heavily influenced the speed at which services could be developed. This was particularly the case in rural areas where existing family mediation services and structures to support the development of peer mentoring were inadequate.

Whilst there were some early difficulties with the referral process, by the end of the pilot period the four projects were well established in the local area and were delivering a valued service to young people with a range of housing needs.

The key success of Safe Moves was in helping young people at risk of homelessness remain safely in the parental home. However, most young people and key agencies reported that Safe Moves also had a positive impact on young people's confidence, self-esteem, emotional well-being and motivation.

1 Introduction

Safe Moves was set up in October 2002 by the Foyer Federation and Connexions service as an eighteen-month pilot initiative designed to test a new model of preventing homelessness for young people aged between 13-19. Four pilot projects were established, in Ryedale, Suffolk Coastal, Birmingham and Wolverhampton, that delivered a package of support services, including peer mentoring, family mediation and life-skills, to young people at risk of homelessness. Due to the innovative nature of the pilot initiative, the Foyer Federation commissioned an independent evaluation, which was undertaken by the Centre for Housing Policy, University of York.

This first chapter introduces the background to the project, the initiative's aims and details the evaluation methods.

Background to the Safe Moves model

The Safe Moves initiative has been established within a context of an increasing understanding of youth homelessness, and growing emphasis on homelessness preventative services throughout the UK.

As youth homelessness has increased, so too has understanding of the experiences of young homeless people and the dangers and problems they face (Jones, 1999; Jones, 2002; Raws, 2001). Young homeless people are likely to be unemployed, to lack social supports and to sleep rough, exposing themselves to danger, hunger and ill health, alcohol, drugs and to physical and sexual abuse (Palmer, 2001; Raws, 2001). Evidence also suggests that running away and youth homelessness are often associated with a pattern of repeated homelessness throughout later life (Jones, 1999; Anderson and Tulloch, 2000; Motion, 2000).

There is a large amount of research evidence on the causes and consequences of homelessness among young people, and on pathways into youth homelessness. Structural factors such as the contraction of the youth labour market or a shortage of appropriate and affordable housing in some areas are important, but the causes of youth homelessness are more complex. A number of individual risk factors, which make some young people more vulnerable to homelessness, have been identified. These include: having been in local authority care, family disruption, household friction, neglect, abuse, and sibling conflict (Bruegel and Smith, 1999; Jones and Higate, 2000).

Research has also identified a number of 'triggers' or specific events that result in homelessness, these include: leaving care or institutions, relationship breakdown and being asked or forced to leave the parental home (Stein and Rees, 2002; Tate and Yanetta, 2001; Fitzpatrick, 2000; Nistala and Dane, 2000). Risk behaviours that can precipitate leaving the family home include, drug misuse, youth crime, pregnancy, truancy and school exclusion (Bruegel and Smith, 1999). The lack of support, advice and information available to young people has also been cited as factors contributing to their vulnerability to homelessness (Bannister *et al*, 1993).

Young people may choose, or be forced, to leave home. Whatever the reasons, those young people who leave home in a hurried or unplanned fashion and without the support of family or agencies, are more likely to experience difficulties in finding appropriate accommodation

and in maintaining independent tenancies, while younger teenagers may be taken into care (Jones and Higate, 2000; Jones, 1995). Most young people want self-contained, unfurnished flats and do not want to live in shared accommodation or bed sits. However, many are forced to rely on insecure forms of accommodation, sharing with friends and relatives or living in the lower end of the private sector, which leaves them at increased risk of homelessness (Hutson, 1999; Jones, 1999; Jones and Higate, 2000).

It is also important to note that not all young people who experience these risk factors will become homeless. The RSU (2001) has identified a number of 'protecting factors' that are thought to prevent homelessness even where risk factors are present. These protecting factors include: strong social networks of family and friends, employment, training or education and being in receipt of help and support from statutory or voluntary agencies.

Services can help strengthen these 'protecting' factors, through promoting self-esteem, interpersonal skills, understanding of options and entitlements, and a sense of control over life and basic skills, among those young people who have been homeless or who might become homeless (Nistala and Dane, 2000). The reinforcement of these 'protecting factors' defines the central role of preventative services.

Within England, homelessness strategies that must be produced by each housing authority under the terms of the Homelessness Act (2002) are expected to include both preventative services and a specific consideration of the needs of young people. All Supporting People services for homeless people are also expected to have a dual preventative role, stopping homelessness from reoccurring when it has already occurred once and, wherever possible, preventing its occurrence in the first instance.

Youth homelessness prevention services however are a relatively recent innovation in the UK and only a small literature exists on their effectiveness. Evaluations of the Safe in the City² initiative suggest that the projects offered a safe and encouraging environment in which young people could develop the skills and self-confidence required to make the transition to independent adult life (Nistala and Dane, 2000; Safe in the City, 2002; Dickens and Woodfield, 2004). The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) review (2003) of youth prevention projects demonstrates that a variety of interventions have been embraced, such as individual and family support services, life skills, peer mentoring and accommodation support services. The review (ODPM, 2003) also found that that flexible services were particularly effective but that preventative work could start earlier with young people. Earlier research had highlighted the potential of mediation services in combating homelessness, but also how partnerships with homelessness agencies were under-developed (Lemos and Crane, 2001). A number of recent evaluations of adult mentoring initiatives for disaffected young people have also charted the potential benefits of such schemes for positively impacting on some, if not all, areas of people's lives (Shiner *et al*, 2004; Philip *et al*, 2004).

² Safe in the City, an independent charity and action research organisation, was set up in 1998 by Centrepoint and the Peabody Trust to pilot and evaluate new ways of preventing youth homelessness. Eight cluster projects were established in London to work with young people and their families delivering family support, skills and employability and personal development services. The organisation closed in 2004 but the experience of the initiative is recorded on: <http://www.safeinthecity.org.uk/>.

The Safe Moves model

The Safe Moves initiative sought to build on the existing evidence and experience of preventative services to test the effectiveness of a new approach to the prevention of homelessness. The ultimate aim of Safe Moves was to establish an effective national service model that could assist in the prevention of youth homelessness.

The Foyer Federation and Connexions were the lead partners in the development of four local pilots (Birmingham, Ryedale, Suffolk and Wolverhampton) within a framework of inter-agency working involving a wide range of partners within the statutory and voluntary sector.

The Safe Moves pilots were designed to deliver a package of services to young people in the local areas. Drawing on the experience of Safe in the City, the pilots aimed to develop diagnostic tools to enable the identification and assessment of young people at risk of homelessness. The Safe Moves model involved the delivery of the following services to young people, and where appropriate their families:

- Life-skills training;
- Family/ inter-generational mediation and support;
- Peer mentoring;
- Appropriate support to move into supported or independent accommodation, where needed.

It was anticipated that each local project would support approximately 40-45 young people over the course of the pilot project. Local inter-agency steering groups were established, as well as a national steering group, to oversee the development of the initiative. Although the aim of the project was to develop a programme of broadly similar interventions, it was acknowledged that the quality of existing services for young people in each area might have a substantial impact on the detailed delivery process of the Safe Moves pilots at a local level.

The funding for the pilot initiative was secured from a variety of charitable and national statutory sector sources including the Freemasons Grand Charity, Connexions, the ODPM, Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and the Youth Justice Board/ National Probation Service. The total funding available for the 18 month project was just under £300,000 with between £40-50,000 available to each pilot at a local level.

Evaluating Safe Moves

The independent evaluation was conducted by the University of York over a 21 month period to June 2004. The overall aim of the evaluation was to assess the extent to which the Safe Moves pilot project met its aims and objectives. In more detail, the evaluation attempted to:

- consider the nature of the service offered by the pilot projects;
- assess the quantifiable outcomes for the young people involved;
- gather information on the experience of the pilot project from the perspective of young people, families and referral agencies; and,
- draw good practice lessons from the pilot and consider its cost-effectiveness.

A multi-method approach to the evaluation was taken, including the following aspects:

- The collection of monitoring information on the young people referred to Safe Moves, the activities they undertook, and the outcomes of the service interventions. CareerVision working with the University of York developed a project specific web-based database. Safe Moves project staff completed the records on-line. The evaluation team analysed the full database at the end of the pilot project using SPSS;
- Interviews with the Safe Moves coordinators at a local level, and the National Coordinator, at the beginning and end of the initiative;
- Interviews with eight representatives from the leading agencies developing the project in the first six months of the project, and the local Steering Groups at the end of the pilot period;
- Thirty five detailed qualitative interviews were conducted with young people using the project in two rounds of interviews: 12 interviews in 2003 and 23 in 2004. Nine of the 12 young people interviewed in 2003 were re-interviewed in 2004 to provide a longitudinal perspective on the progress of the project³;
- In addition, interviews were conducted with six peer mentors, and two parents.
- Data was also collected through attendance at key national and local meetings.
- A separate cost exercise was carried out by a cost expert⁴, both examining project costs across projects and cost-effectiveness issues.

The evaluation began at the same time as the pilot period in order that the whole pilot period, including the setting up phase, could be recorded. This is unlike many evaluations where research begins after a 'settling-in' period of a new service. It was therefore possible for the evaluation to consider the challenges involved in setting up a project from day one.

It should be noted that the pilot period was a relatively short one at eighteen months – after a setting up period, most of the pilot projects were only fully operational for a little over 12 months. All projects were ongoing in the summer of 2004, and development and consolidation continued despite the end of the formal pilot period.

The report structure

The report is presented in six chapters. Chapter 2 provides an overview of the development of the pilot projects, examining how services were established. Chapter 3 examines the referrals to Safe Moves, presenting a profile of the young people utilising the pilot projects and assessing the referral procedures. Chapter 4 considers the day to day delivery of the service, presenting the views of both key staff and young people. Chapter 5 focuses on the overall outcomes and costs of the pilot initiative. Chapter 6 presents the conclusions of the evaluation.

³ The University of York will track the progress of the young people interviewed for a further 18 months after the end of the pilot.

⁴ Diana Sanderson, formerly of York Health Economics Consortium, University of York, now Mill Mount Consulting Services.

2 Development of the Safe Moves Initiative

This chapter describes the key aspects of the development of the Safe Moves Initiative. The core elements needed to set up a service of this nature are examined, with reflections from key agencies on the successes and difficulties involved in establishing these structures. The chapter begins by describing the national coordination of the project before moving onto consider local developments, including partner agencies, staffing and logistics. The key service interventions are outlined, as well as the role of the Project Coordinator.

National coordination

National level coordination was important on a number of levels to the development of the initiative. Whilst the Safe Moves pilot initiative was developed jointly by the Foyer Federation and Connexions Service National Unit, early on a national steering group was also established to facilitate the development process and oversee the life of the initiative. Representatives on the national steering group included the then Children and Young People's Unit (CYPU), Department for Education and Skills (DfES), Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM), Safe in the City (in the early development phase), Government Office Connexions Managers, as well as the Foyer Federation. This national body provided ongoing advice from Government policy and research experts in the area of young people and homelessness.

The four pilot areas were selected at a national level. Foyers in England were asked to express an interest in the pilot project and support of Connexions at a local level was also investigated. Two urban (Birmingham and Wolverhampton) and two rural areas (Ryedale and Suffolk Coastal) were purposefully chosen to pilot the model in different types of local authority areas where youth homelessness was a significant concern.

Key agencies however observed that the pilot timetable had not allowed local needs analysis to be undertaken. Whilst this did not necessarily lead to problems, one area did experience particular difficulties in gaining inter-agency support for the project and the lack of prior research and consultation was believed to be one of the reasons for this. It is clear that any future developments should be proposed within an authority wide needs analysis as part of the local homelessness strategy. This would not only establish a need for the service but also engender feelings of ownership among local agencies for such a scheme. As one representative stated:

Critically it felt like it was being imposed, rather than it had grown up out of an organically identified need... it was top down rather than bottom up. And at times it felt like we were all around the table because people somewhere else had decided that that was the right thing, rather than this being a fantastic opportunity to try something new because 'gosh, we needed it'.

(Agency representative)

A National Coordinator was appointed to support the pilot projects. Employed by the Foyer Federation, the National Coordinator had one day per week (which increased to two days in 2003) for the duration of the pilot initiative. This role included coordinating activities of the pilots, ensuring that they benefited from existing knowledge by organising training and skills

sharing meetings, as well as generally providing support and encouragement to the pilots, and information to the national steering committee.

The support provided by the Coordinator played a key role in the direction of the projects. However, national coordination resources were limited and a number of staff commented that they would have welcomed greater input at a national level. Project staff particularly valued opportunities to meet each other and discuss developments. Project staff did feel under pressure to be seen to be 'doing well', and would have welcomed more time to discuss developments and problems, without a feeling that they were competing against each other. A couple of agency representatives felt that too much attention generally had been placed on the branding of the initiative at a national level and felt that projects should have been given room to develop within their local contexts, and possibly under different names and organisations. Nonetheless, if Safe Moves is developed in other areas, an appropriate level of national coordination is likely to remain pivotal to establishing effective and consistent services.

Establishing local partners

At a local level, it was anticipated that one agency, usually the local foyer, would take the lead in developing the initiative (in terms of employing staff and so on), working with the local Connexions service as the key partner agency.

The local foyers, which originally had expressed an interest in the project, became the lead agency in three of the four areas (See Table 2.1). In Ryedale, the local foyer was not in a position to take this lead due to staff illness; here a local detached youth work project offered a home to the project. Further in Birmingham, the lead partner changed from a local foyer to the leading youth homelessness agency, St Basil's, after one year, following staffing problems at the local foyer. St Basil's was already delivering a homeless prevention initiative working in schools and youth work settings and therefore appeared to be a natural partner. The pilot experience indicated that whilst a local foyer could be the lead agency for a Safe Moves project, this was not an essential element of the project and other relevant key agencies at a local level might also be appropriate lead agencies.

As the partner agency, Connexions services in each area allocated at least one Connexions PA to the project. In Birmingham and Wolverhampton, one or two days per week of a specific worker's time were allocated to Safe Moves (Table 2.1). This was not possible in the rural projects as there were so few PA workers in the local authority, however one worker was linked to Safe Moves to provide referrals and general support and assistance to the project. The ability of Connexions to allocate workers to Safe Moves also reflected the fact that local Connexions services were at different stages of development and working according to different models, around the UK.

The working relationships between the lead agency and the Connexions service proved much easier to establish in the two rural areas. Excellent day-to-day communication was established between the Safe Moves workers and the identified Connexions PA, and respective roles were clear and transparent. Positive working relationships were also established between individual workers on the ground in Birmingham and Wolverhampton, however overall the two organisations found it difficult to identify and agree their respective input into the projects. To some extent, this reflected the different working cultures of the

two agencies. This did not mean that the two organisations could not work to deliver the project together, rather that this was a much more complex exercise.

... there is a cultural difference, there's a cultural gap between any large statutory agency like Connexions and a voluntary sector organisation like a foyer... Connexions are going to be more process orientated, more systems orientated, and more formal in terms of how everything is done... And although a foyer to be accredited has to have systems in place, and they have to be quality assured, it's more used to working in a flexible way....

(Agency representative)

**Table 2.1:
Key structures at a local level**

	Birmingham	Wolverhampton	Ryedale	Suffolk
Start date	October 2002	January 2003	March 2003 (Coordinator from May 19 th 2003)	May 2003
Leading agency	Trident HA for first year, then St Basil's from October 2003	Wolverhampton YMCA	Ryedale Detached Youth Work Project	HEART Foyers (Flagship Housing)
Staffing	Safe Moves Coordinator; Connexions PA (2 days)	Safe Moves Coordinator; Connexions PA (1.5 day per wk); local youth agency staff (0.5 day a week)	Safe Moves Coordinator; second youth worker (25 hrs); family worker (12 hrs); link with a local PA	Safe Moves Coordinator; link with local PA
Office base	Ravenhurst Cottages Foyer; St Basil's offices from October 2003	Badger Court Foyer	School-based Connexions office	Felixstowe foyer
Working base	Foyer; then St Basil's and local community venues (e.g. cafés)	Local community venues; then foyer.	Connexions office; Ryedale YMCA Foyer; office in Pickering; community venues	Local youth club; foyer; community venues

A local steering group was also established in each area, bringing together key agencies with responsibility and interest in the prevention of youth homelessness. The steering groups were involved in establishing a local action plan, and responsible for the shape of the project including identifying staffing requirements, local premises and inter-agency links in terms of generating referrals and so on.

The steering groups that worked most effectively in the support of Safe Moves had agreed a common agenda for the project. A clear vision of the role of the project at a local level was crucial, in particular how the project fitted in with existing local homelessness and young people's services. Good inter-agency working in the steering group was achieved more easily in the rural areas due to the limited number of other key agencies working in the area. In the urban areas, it was more difficult to identify the most appropriate personnel to support the project and there was a problem of representatives changing over time.

I do feel that the steering group is very much involved in a good example of good practice, of mutual and shared involvement and everyone taking a task and working it, and that's good, makes a refreshing change...it's quite clear that all the parties on that group are committed to providing a better way forward for young people... one of the issues for me is always about there has to be a common agenda...which there is.

(Agency representative)

Staffing structures

It was envisaged that each pilot Safe Moves project would employ one full-time Coordinator to coordinate the delivery of the programme of services. Birmingham was the first project to appoint a Coordinator who started in post in October 2002 (see Table 2.1). Wolverhampton followed with the employment of a Coordinator in January 2003. The Coordinators for Suffolk and North Yorkshire both started work in May 2003 (with the Ryedale project undertaking some preliminary work with an interim worker from mid-March 2003).

Three of the areas found it difficult to appoint appropriately qualified staff. One area had to advertise the post twice before a suitable candidate came forward and in all areas only a few people applied for the post. The project that was able to appoint early seconded a worker from within the organisation. As one agency representative explained, the difficulties with recruitment probably reflected national trends:

I think its par for the course, its not an exceptional thing for us, Safe Moves, there is, and everyone knows this, there is a staffing problem within care, there's a staffing problem within housing, there is a staffing problem within basic skills, and if you cover all those three then its not surprising its been difficult to recruit, not difficult but its taken a while to recruit, in Safe Moves.

(Agency representative)

Problems were also experienced with retention of staff in two areas. In one area, the Coordinator was on sick leave for three months and left the post on their return. In another area, the Coordinator moved on after a year of the pilot to alternative employment. This inevitably led to delays in the progress of these two projects. In both these areas, a full-time post was then replaced by, in effect, a part-time worker, further limiting the resources of the project. In Birmingham, this was less of a problem as the worker was full-time working on both Safe Moves and a second youth prevention project, STAMP (Schools Training and Mentoring Project). All staff however spoke about the need for more than one worker to deliver the Safe Moves service, to enable sharing of practice and mutual support, the avoidance of the project being reliant on 'one personality' and rather to be process driven, as well as to provide staff cover during absences. This had been incorporated into future business plans for the service.

I think the other thing to notice that is really important for the quality of the service that it is not a one person operation because I was actually quite ill a couple of weeks ago and I had some time off sick...but that means that I was out of commission so there is no-one. I mean, what happens if I break my leg? There needs to be more flexibility....

(Safe Moves worker)

I think that each pilot should be really thinking about its system, it should be a really strong systemI don't think it should rely on a person, people can bring their own flair and attributes to a post but I think there has to be some continuity, some cohesion...

(Agency representative)

As identified above, two areas did have access to additional staffing through Connexions PA workers allocated to work alongside the Coordinator, however this was not seen as replacing the need for a second Safe Moves assistant. The Ryedale project employed a part-time (25 hours a week) worker to assist the Coordinator in her work, and from December 2003 a third part-time worker (12 hours work) to undertake some family support work (this was due to difficulties accessing family mediation services, see below). In Wolverhampton, a youth work agency was also scheduled to provide a worker for one day a week for the project however this proved difficult to arrange and was not available for most of the pilot period.

Effective line management for the Safe Moves Coordinator was particularly important due to the complexity of the project and the lack of other team members. This was not always possible, partly because funding was not explicitly available for supervision of the project. This was again identified as an important component for the future.

Establishing and working from a base

Three of the four projects had their main office base in the local foyer, with the fourth project being based with the local Connexions PA in a school-based education services office (Table 2.1). However, projects did not tend to work from these offices exclusively on a day-to-day basis. In Suffolk, the project had a second base in a local youth project; in Ryedale, the local foyer acted as a second base; and in all areas at some point in the pilot, staff worked within the community, meeting young people in normal meeting places such as cafés.

Working in a variety of settings proved important to the success of the project for a number of reasons. In two cases, the foyers were based outside of the city centre making them less easily accessible for many young people; here it was important to meet young people in easier to reach venues. In addition, a few agency representatives felt that a foyer was not the most appropriate place to meet young people who were at risk of homelessness but had limited experience of foyer and hostel provision.

...it is a much needed service in this area but I think it needs to be away from here [the foyer], I think it needs to be more central so that people can walk in off the street, its very isolated here... like the Connexions centres, so you can walk in with all the issues of homelessness and be supported.

(Agency representative)

I think locating it in reactive services was the flaw... I think they are as much in danger of drawing young people into some sense of glamour about homelessness...let's say you are fifteen, coming up to your sixteenth birthday, you've never been in a homelessness facility at all, you've got all sorts of preconceptions about them, then you slip into the Safe Moves project... and suddenly you are going to foyers, you are meeting with people who are living in them, you're seeing that it may be much more preferable than living at home with

mum and dad. Actually I think there is a point at which that it could have quite the opposite impact, it certainly desensitises young people to it.

(Agency representative)

Developing the pilot services

One of the chief roles of the Coordinator was to develop and broker a number of key services for young people. The first task of the Coordinator, working with the local advisory group, was therefore to identify and/or develop the core Safe Moves services - peer mentoring, family mediation, life-skills (and housing support). The establishment of these services was an important part of the pilot project experience and is reported here; the delivery of services is considered in chapter four.

Peer mentoring

The intention of the Safe Moves brief was that the Coordinator would recruit up to 20 peer mentors, access or deliver peer mentoring training and then support young people in delivering the peer mentoring.

In the two urban pilots, peer mentoring was the first arm of the service to be developed, in large part because Safe Moves was able to access peer mentoring training from other local agencies (including NACRO in Wolverhampton; and the Mentor Access Point and later St Basil's STAMP project in Birmingham). In contrast, peer mentoring was difficult, and took time, to establish in the rural areas as specialist peer mentor providers had to be accessed outside of the local authority area (from a Norfolk school based service for the Suffolk service; and from UK Youth in North Yorkshire). Here, peer mentors were not trained until the second half of the pilot.

Young people who were interested in becoming peer mentors were identified in all areas relatively easily. In three areas, the primary route for recruiting peer mentors was via the local foyer where both present and former residents were recruited. In one area, a number of peer mentors were recruited via other youth work projects in the area. In the second half of the pilot, St Basil's also played an important role in recruiting peer mentors via its STAMP project that trained young people to be peer educators (that is, to talk to groups of young people rather than undertake one-to-one work). A peer educator approach was also adopted latterly in North Yorkshire, where sixth formers in one school were recruited to work with groups of younger children. Overall, the projects adopted a flexible approach to the recruitment of peer mentors: potential peer mentors could not be in crisis themselves, but those who had experience of housing difficulties were encouraged to apply, although other young people without direct experience of homelessness were also trained on occasions.

The process of matching peer mentors to peer mentees was experienced as a difficult process by the Safe Moves projects. Overall, all Coordinators felt it was important to deliver peer mentoring well, and this involved not only appropriate training but also sensitive matching and close supervision of this relationship. None of the original Coordinators were trained in this area and were therefore cautious about introducing young people to each other before adequate systems were in place. Agency representatives agreed that poor peer mentoring could be damaging to both parties and had to be approached professionally.

It has been very slow, the mentoring, I think because of the workload and the level of actual face to face work that I've been doing I don't think I've necessarily pushed the peer mentoring aspect of the project because in its initial stages that was even more work because they need such a high level of support to begin with and I never thought it appropriate to just dump some mentors with some mentees and say 'get on with it'.

(Safe moves worker)

It became clear that the original aim of recruiting 20 mentors was unrealistic. Rather, most projects succeeded in training between five and ten mentors, and the end of the pilot had matched a number of these peer mentors, but not all, to peer mentees. The key success of peer mentoring during the pilot phase was felt by all parties to be the training of young people to become peer mentors.

Family mediation

The Safe Moves Coordinator was responsible for identifying appropriate family mediation services in the local area that would accept referrals from, and work alongside, the Safe Moves service.

Similarly to the experience of peer mentoring, the urban areas were in a better position to identify the services of well-established mediation services. In Birmingham, a specialist provider (St Basils) was offering family mediation services to young homeless people and was therefore a natural partner for Safe Moves. In the second urban area, an experienced mediation service (Wolverhampton Mediation Service) was willing to take referrals from the Safe Moves project. The former service was particularly suited to the needs of Safe Moves as St Basils were already offering co-mediation services to young homeless people aged 16 or over living in their hostels; it was therefore a natural and welcome extension to the service to offer mediation services to young people aged 13-15, as well as to young people still living in the family home. In both these areas, the project paid the services of the family mediator from the project budget.

The two rural areas however both found it extremely difficult to identify family mediation providers at a local level. In one area, there had been an expectation that social care agencies would have been able to offer a service but this did not prove possible. Here, the project eventually employed the services of an independent family mediator and counsellor (from July 2003), contracting them to provide at first four hours per week, then eight and finally 12 hours per week. In the second rural area, Safe Moves was unable to secure access to an appropriate family mediation service, and eventually recruited a family worker onto the Safe Moves team to undertake work with young people and their families, however this person was not recruited until the end of 2003.

All projects also offered 'early intervention' support to young people who were having difficulty getting on with their families. Here, formal family mediation services were not employed but the Safe Moves workers discussed the immediate situation with young people, and also sometimes with their parents (with the young person's consent).

Life-skills

The lack of an agreed definition and understanding of 'life-skills training' has been demonstrated in previous research (Jones et al, 2001). The Safe Moves project was concerned to develop two related but qualitatively different types of training: firstly, the

delivery of formal programmes of life-skills that could be accredited at a national level; and secondly, the delivery of day-to-day life skills to young people.

A number of approaches were examined for the delivery of accredited life-skills training, including the internet based House Mate package developed by Shelter, however most projects did not tend to adopt these as an integral part of the Safe Moves programme as they were not adequately tailored to the needs of the young people. In particular, the lack of an appropriate life-skills package for those under the age of 16 was identified at the national level. Funding was secured from O2 in autumn 2003 to adapt an existing school-based programme 'Make a Connection', developed by the Children's and Youth Partnership Foundation, for use in an informal and one-to-one setting. 'Make a Connection' was being piloted in a number of Connexions locations in 2004 but was not available for use by Safe Moves during the pilot period.

Day-to-day life skills, however, was provided to young people in all projects through a number of sources. Most of the local foyers were already delivering life-skills, broadly defined, for those aged 16 or over (with the possible exception of one foyer with staff shortages), and here the Coordinator liaised with the foyer workers as to the needs of young people. However, more generally, the Coordinator and associated Safe Moves staff also provided support with life-skills to young people. This included support with filling out forms, managing relationships and assistance with independent living. This form of support again was mainly delivered to those young people who had moved out of the family home and therefore usually those aged 16 or over.

In addition, peer mentors were engaged with young people, also provided support with life-skills broadly defined – both in terms of developing social skills as well as help with accessing services, and planning and coping with life in general. Finally, conceptually it could be argued that family mediation also incorporated life-skills as part of their work. Here, managing relationships were obviously the focus of attention, but some mediators (particularly the Suffolk based counsellor) also purposively included activities such as going out to lunch to increase both life-skills and self-confidence.

Appropriate support to move into supported or independent accommodation

Part of the role of the Coordinator, as well as the peer mentors, was to assist young people to move into supported or independent accommodation where this was needed. This relied on good inter-agency links with housing providers in the local area, as well as being able to refer young people to the local foyer where appropriate. Whilst the first aim of Safe Moves was to help keep young people at home, an important part of the role of the project was to assist young people to move safely to suitable supported or independent accommodation where the home situation was no longer appropriate to their needs. Latterly in Birmingham, Safe Moves worked alongside a Housing Options prevention project, which was able to refer to other team members for specific assistance with finding independent housing.

Other services

Whilst the above interventions were the core services developed by Safe Moves, the project attempted to be flexible in terms of responding to young people's needs. In particular, where young people needed help with other key aspects of their lives such as health, Safe Moves would refer them to an appropriate source of support (for example, drug or alcohol services). Safe Moves would also liaise with social services and youth offending teams where this was possible.

Further, most pilots also tried to respond to young people's immediate needs wherever possible, for example in terms of providing practical and financial support, for example, helping young people to buy clothes for an interview, helping fund-raise for essential items (e.g. one young person was supported in holding a car boot sale to raise funds for course equipment), taking a young person to a solicitor's appointment and so on. Much practical support represented 'life-skills' without the direct attempt to instruct a young person in how to undertake an activity (for example, the distinction between giving someone a lift or helping them to identify and travel by public transport).

Additionally, some Safe Moves projects organised regular social group activities for the young people, such as trips to the theatre or barbecues. Young people were also supported to access opportunities to travel to conferences or take part in residential courses, including peer mentoring courses.

In one area, a parents' support network was established with the assistance of the Safe Moves project. The group met regularly in the first six months and later operated as a telephone support group. More generally, although the primary service was for young people, projects were in contact with some parents with the young people's consent and inevitably provided support to other family members at times.

Conclusion

This chapter has described the development of the Safe Moves initiative. By the end of the pilot period the four projects were well established in the local area and were providing flexible and valued support services to young people. However, a number of key lessons can be drawn from the pilots, these include the need:

- To allow time and adequate resources for consultation and research in order to establish the need for a new service and to encourage a feeling of local ownership among all relevant agencies.
- To ensure that all relevant agencies have a clear understanding of the initiative's aims and objectives from the outset.
- For adequate staffing levels to ensure continuity of provision, mutual support and skill sharing
- For staff training and skills sharing meetings between projects and sufficient input from a National Coordinator to facilitate these.
- To adopt a flexible approach to service development and delivery within different local contexts.

3 Referrals to Safe Moves

This third chapter presents an overview of the referrals to the Safe Moves pilot projects during the full pilot period. The chapter starts by outlining the referral and assessment framework for the project, before presenting a profile of the young people referred, and then returning to a discussion of the referral and assessment procedures for the Safe Moves projects from the perspective of staff, other agencies and young people.

The referral and assessment framework

The target client group for the Safe Moves project was young people between the ages of 13 and 19 who were at risk of homelessness in their local areas. The initiative did not formally define situations in which a young person would be assessed as being potentially homeless; rather it relied on the key agencies to operate a common sense definition of homelessness, to encompass situations that included sleeping rough, living in hostel accommodation and/or staying with friends and relatives. There was an implicit assumption that Safe Moves would assist young people who were presently living in a parental/ guardian home from becoming homeless, rather than those young people who were already living independently. It was acknowledged that some work might take place with 'looked after' young people although this was not the primary target user group.

It was anticipated that Connexions would be the main referrer to the project given their contact with the target age group of young people, although other key local agencies might also be expected to refer as the project became established. The aim was for Connexions and other referral agencies, working with Safe Moves, to identify young people who whilst not homeless at the time of referral might become so in the future without assistance from an external agency.

It is obviously a difficult task to assess someone's risk of homelessness unless they have already been given notice to leave their accommodation. Because of this difficulty, the projects were informed by the Safe in the City model of the risk factors for homelessness amongst young people (Bruegal and Smith, 1999). An index of the risk of homelessness for individual young people was extrapolated by Bruegal and Smith from a comparison between the backgrounds of a sample of homeless young people and housed young people living in deprived areas. Table 3.1 shows that young people living in certain circumstances are more likely to experience homelessness and might therefore be likely to benefit from a preventative project such as Safe Moves.

A two tier assessment procedure was envisaged to the extent that the referral agency would assess the young person for risk of homelessness and then the Safe Moves project workers would meet with the young person, discuss their detailed needs and undertake an assessment as to how Safe Moves might be able to assist them.

**Table 3.1:
Index of risk of youth homeless by individual (Score 1 or more points)**

Moved house twice or more from age 11 years (2)
Young mother – aged under 25 at birth of first child (1)
Lives with step-parent (1)
Lives with foster parent or with relative (2)
Shared room at 12 years (1)
Lives in rented accommodation (1)
No car in household (1)
Excluded from school (1)
Household known to be violent (2)
Young person staying away from home before age 16 years (2)

Source: Breugal and Smith (1999), Box 2, page 5.

Referrals and acceptances

Referrals

A total of 170 referrals were made to the four Safe Moves pilot projects between the start of the projects and 31st March 2004⁵. Almost all of these referrals were offered and took up the Safe Moves service, a total of 152 young people, representing nearly 90 per cent of referrals. Table 3.2 summarises the distribution and outcome of these referrals across the four projects.

**Table 3.2:
Referral outcomes to 31st March 2004⁶**

	Recorded referrals	Of which received service
Birmingham	32	31
Wolverhampton	77	64
Ryedale	34	30
Suffolk	27	27
All Projects	170	152

Source: Project monitoring database (1st March 2003 to 31st March 2004)

As Table 2.1 shows, most of the referrals to Safe Moves resulted in a young person being offered the Safe Moves service. Most of the 11 per cent of referrals who did not receive the service were young people who chose not to take up the service when it was offered. Only a very small number of the recorded referrals were assessed as inappropriate by the projects.

Young people who received the Safe Moves service

The Wolverhampton project accounted for more than one third of the young people who received the service (42 per cent), whilst the other three projects had very similar acceptances levels, each accounting for around one fifth of the total (Table 3.3).

⁵ Table 2.1 shows the start dates for each pilot. The first six months were however mainly setting up time and all the recorded referrals date from the 1st March 2003 (until the end of the pilot period, 31st March 2004).

⁶ **Note:** The data used in these tables cover the entire monitoring period from 1st March 2003 to 31st March 2004, a total of **13 months**. Some graphics and tables refer to the projects over one calendar year, from 1st March 2003 to 29th February 2004 and are labelled accordingly.

**Table 3.3:
Young people who received the Safe Moves service to 31st March 2004)**

	Number of acceptances	As percentage of all Save Moves acceptances
Birmingham	31	20%
Wolverhampton	64	42%
Ryedale	30	20%
Suffolk	27	18%
Total	152	100%

Source: Project monitoring database

Referral sources

The single largest source of referrals was the Connexions service, representing nearly one third of all referrals (28 per cent, Table 3.4). The next most prominent source of referral was social services departments, followed closely by the housing sections of the four local authorities within whose boundaries the four pilot projects were working. The other main sources of referral were local foyers and services with a broad educational welfare remit, sometimes located in local colleges. Referrals from the Wolverhampton Multi-Agency Panel (shown as MAP in Table 3.4) and self-referral were relatively unusual, as were referrals from youth advice or day services. The other sources of accepted referrals (shown as other agencies) were diverse, ranging from the Police to the grandparent of one young person.

**Table 3.4:
Referral sources (accepted referrals who received the Safe Moves service)**

Referring organisation	Number of Young People	Percentage
Connexions	43	28%
Social Services	22	15%
LA housing section	21	13%
Foyer	20	13%
Other education/welfare service	14	9%
MAP*	10	6%
Self referral	6	4%
Youth advice/day services	6	4%
Family mediation	4	3%
Other agencies	6	4%
Total	152	100.0

Source: Project monitoring database * Multi-Agency Panel (1st March 2003 to 31st March 2004)

There were significant variations in the sources of referrals reported by the four pilot projects. Connexions was a major source of referrals in Suffolk, accounting for three-quarters of all the young people that the Safe Moves pilot accepted in that area. Connexions was a much less important source of referrals in Birmingham (23 per cent of all acceptances), Wolverhampton (17 per cent) and Ryedale (17 per cent).

Ryedale received a quite high proportion of its referrals from educational welfare workers or teachers in local schools and colleges (nine young people, 30 per cent of accepted referrals), this source of referrals accounted for less than 10 per cent of acceptances in the other areas. One quarter of accepted referrals in Wolverhampton came from social services, compared to less than 10 per cent in Birmingham and Ryedale (social services made no referrals in Suffolk).

Local foyers accounted for less than 10 per cent of referrals in Ryedale and Wolverhampton, but one third of the accepted referrals in Birmingham were from the associated foyer (11 young people, 35 per cent). Both Ryedale and Wolverhampton also reported that one fifth of

their referrals came from the homelessness sections of their local authority, these were not the source of many referrals in the other areas.

The distribution of referral sources had changed over time. In September 2003, Connexions had also been the main source of referrals, but the homelessness sections of local authorities and social services were not playing as prominent a role as would later be the case. The Wolverhampton Multi-Agency Panel had also ceased to be a significant source of referral by March 2004.

Reasons for referral

Figure 3.1 summarises the broad reasons for referral across the four pilot projects. As can be seen, almost half the young people were experiencing difficulties in their relationship with their parent or parents, this was generally placing their accommodation in the family home at risk or increasing the possibility of the young person running away (48 per cent shown as “parent/yp relations” in Figure 3.1). In a minority of cases (10 per cent shown as ‘poor parenting’) a young person was in a living situation in which parental behaviour was proving disruptive and creating a risk of homelessness, for example if a parent was alcohol or drug dependent.

Around one fifth of accepted referrals (20 per cent) could be described as presenting an ‘unplanned move risk’, in essence this was a situation in which a young person was the prime mover in seeking to live independently and was not yet at an age or a stage where this was likely to be successfully sustained. In such circumstances, Safe Moves might play a role in ensuring a young person stayed at home until they were old enough to be granted a tenancy and were likely to sustain it or seek to arrange a move into supported housing if a young person could not be kept at home. Smaller numbers were referred to Safe Moves because they were already homeless, or had health or support needs that created a need for low intensity support to sustain or access suitable housing.

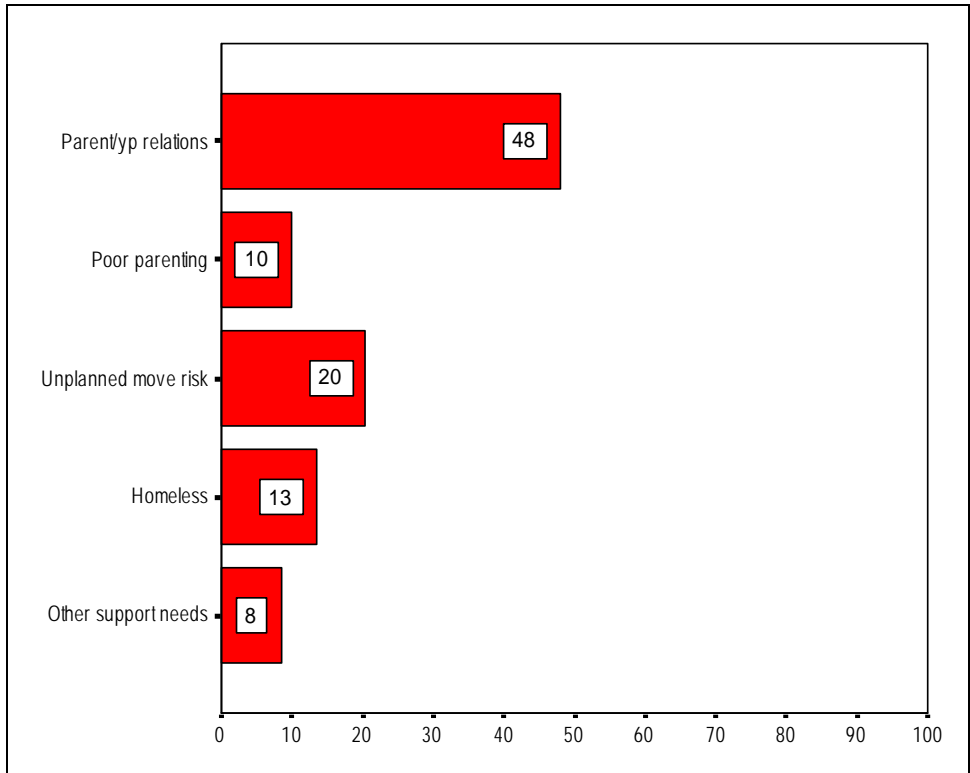


Figure 3.1: Broad reason for referral by percentage of accepted young people
Source: Project monitoring database. **Base:** 152 young people (1st March 2003 to 31st March 2004)

Figure 3.2 summarises the broad reasons for referral for accepted young people by the four pilot projects.

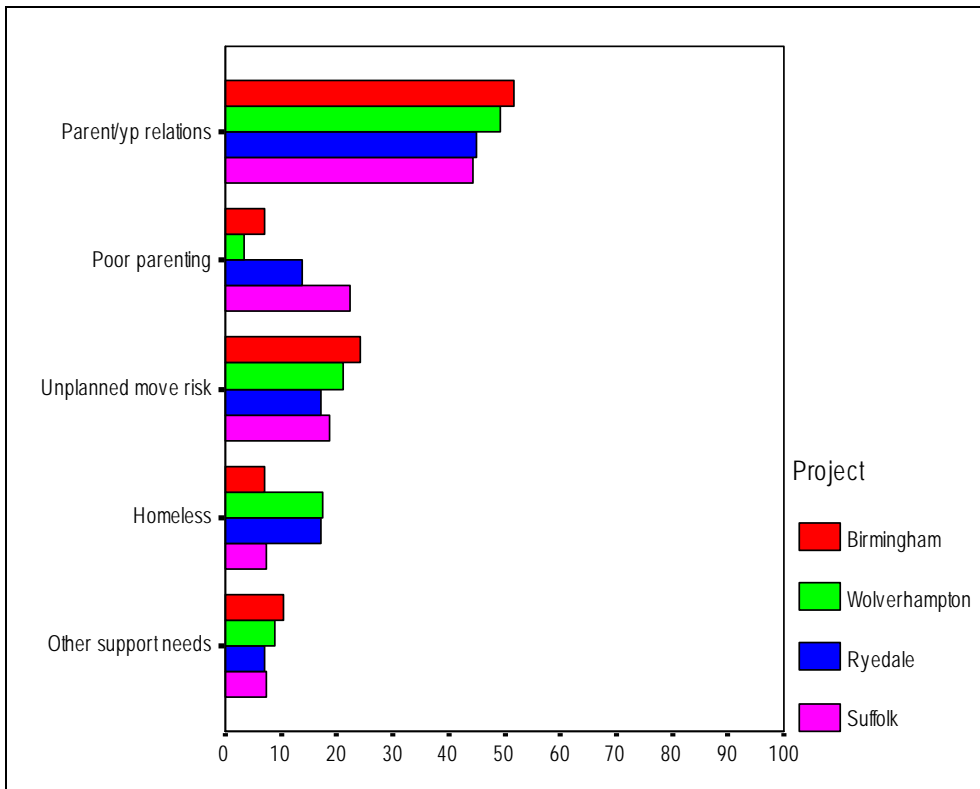


Figure 3.2: Broad reason for referral for accepted young people by percentage of young people in each project
Source: Project monitoring database. **Base:** 152 young people (1st March 2003 to 31st March 2004)

As can be seen in Figure 3.2, the broad reasons for referral were similar across the four pilots. In all cases, a majority of referrals were as a result of deteriorating relationships between young people and their parent or parents. Actual homelessness was slightly more common in Ryedale and Wolverhampton. Suffolk, perhaps as a result of more of its referrals coming from the local Connexions service, seemed more likely to be picking up cases where parental behaviour was making home life difficult for a young person.

Characteristics of the young people

The target age range for Safe Moves was 13-19. At the time of their referral, 98 per cent of accepted referrals were within this age range (Table 3.5). Those aged 16-17 were the largest single group, representing two-thirds of accepted referrals, with the next largest group being made up of those aged 13-15 (one fifth of accepted referrals). A smaller number of young people were aged 18-19. Only a handful of accepted referrals fell outside the intended age range for Safe Moves at the time they were referred to the four pilot projects.

Table 3.5:
Age of young people at time of referral (all projects)

	Number of Young People	As Percentage
13-15	31	20%
16-17	96	64%
18-19	21	14%
20+	3	2%
Total	151	100%

Source: Project monitoring database (percentages are rounded). Base: 151 (DoB missing for one young person)(1st March 2003 to 31st March 2004)

As is shown in Table 3.6, Suffolk was the ‘youngest’ project of the four pilots in terms of the proportion of 13-15 year-olds that it had worked with up until 31st March 2004. The average age at referral in Suffolk was 15.9, rising to 16.7 in Birmingham, 17.1 in Wolverhampton and 17.2 in Ryedale. The average across all projects was 16.8.

Table 3.6:
Age of young people at time of referral by project

	Birmingham	Wolverhampton	Ryedale	Suffolk
13-15	7 (23%)	6 (9%)	5 (17%)	13 (48%)
16-17	19 (61%)	47 (73%)	17 (59%)	13 (48%)
18-19	5 (16%)	11 (17%)	4 (14%)	1 (4%)
20+	0	0	3 (10%)	0
Total	31 (100%)	64 (100%)	29 (100%)	27 (100%)

Source: Project monitoring database (percentages are rounded). Base: 151 (DoB missing for one young person) (1st March 2003 to 31st March 2004)

The projects worked with more young women than young men. Just over half the young people were women in Birmingham (55 per cent), rising to 60 per cent in both Suffolk and Ryedale and 67 per cent in Wolverhampton. Table 3.7 shows the gender distribution by age of accepted referrals across the four projects.

Table 3.7:
Gender and age at referral of young people (all projects)

Age	Female	Male	All
13 – 15	23 (74%)	8 (26%)	31 (100%)
16 –17	56 (58%)	40 (42%)	96 (100%)
18 –19	14 (67%)	7 (33%)	21 (100%)
20 or over	1 (33%)	2 (67%)	6 (100%)
Total	94 (62%)	57 (37%)	152 (100%)

Source: Project monitoring database (percentages are rounded). Base: 151 (DoB missing for one young person) (1st March 2003 to 31st March 2004)

Young women had an average age of 16.7 on referral to Safe Moves and young men had an average age of 16.9. When the average age of young people referred to Safe Moves is examined over one calendar year (from 1st March 2003 to 29th February 2004), it can be seen that the average age of referrals during any given month varied. However, the average age was falling somewhat towards the end of the monitoring period (Figure 3.3), showing more young people in the lower end of the age range were being referred. These increased referrals from the lower age range can be seen as a positive development, given that a higher proportion of young people in the higher end of the age range were initially being referred.

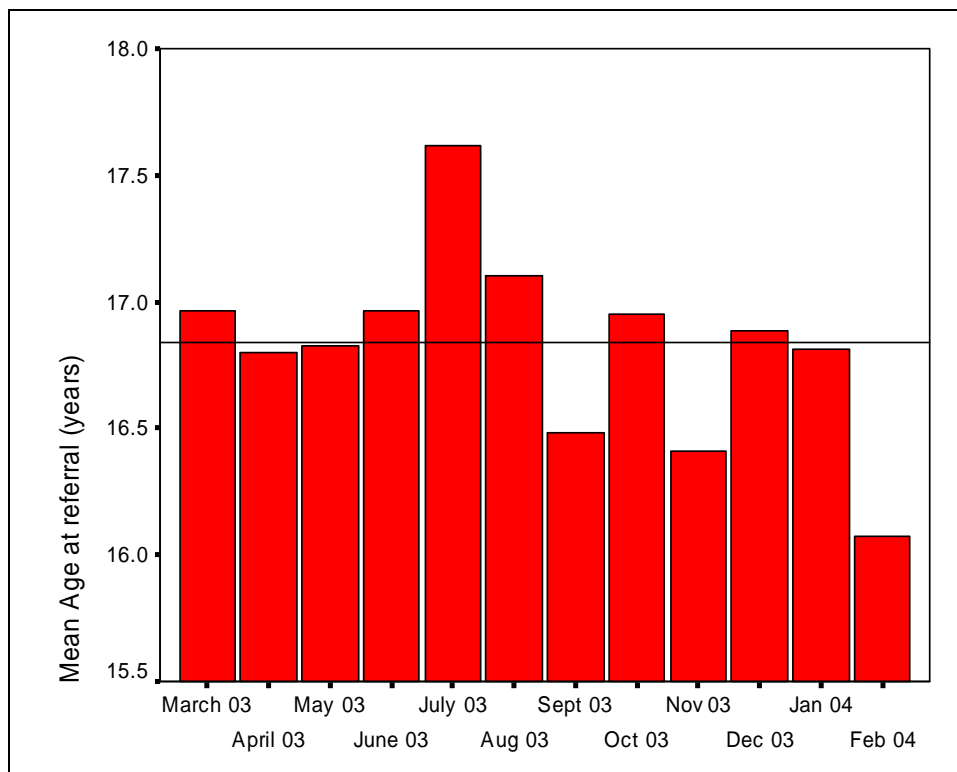


Figure 3.3: Average age of young people at referral to Safe Moves from March 2003 to February 2004

Note: Line denotes average age at referral across all projects during this period.

Source: Project monitoring database. **Base:** 133 young people (1st March 2003 to 31st March 2004)

Table 3.8 shows that almost seven in ten young people (67 per cent) were from a White ethnic background, with one third describing themselves as from a Black or Minority Ethnic (BME) group.

**Table 3.8:
Ethnic background of young people by project**

	Birmingham	Wolverhampton	Ryedale	Suffolk	Total
White European	14 (47%)	27 (48%)	29 (97%)	26 (96%)	96 (67%)
Black*	5 (17%)	18 (32%)	0	1 (4%)	24 (17%)
Asian**	3 (10%)	5 (9%)	0	0	8 (6%)
Other***	8 (27%)	6 (11%)	1 (3%)	0	15 (11%)
Total	30 (100%)	56 (100%)	30 (100%)	27 (100%)	143 (100%)

Source: Project monitoring database (percentages are rounded) *Black British and Afro-Caribbean, ** Indian subcontinent, *** including Far Eastern, Irish and other groups (no data were available in nine cases) (1st March 2003 to 31st March 2004).

The considerable ethnic diversity among the young people in Birmingham and Wolverhampton reflected the diversity of those cities' populations. In Ryedale and Suffolk, the predominately White European populations were reflected by the ethnic origins of the young people receiving the Safe Moves service.

The data available in the project monitoring database on pregnancy are incomplete, which means that the figures on pregnancy that are available need to be treated with caution. These data suggest that five young women were pregnant at the time of their referral and that a further 10 young women had their own infants with them at the time of their referral. One young woman had an infant child in care.

Only four young men reported that they had a partner at the time of their referral (93 per cent were single) and while most of the young women were single (73 per cent), a higher proportion were either living with a partner (14 per cent, 11 young women) or reported having a partner with whom they were not currently living (14 per cent, 11 young women).

Housing situation

Just under half of the young people were living with a parent or parents at the time of their referral (45 per cent were with a parent or parents, or with a parent and step parent, Table 3.9). It was fairly common for young people to be living in a foyer or other supported accommodation at the point of referral with 14 per cent reporting this housing situation. Less than ten per cent of referrals had been found to be statutorily homeless although a significant proportion were staying with friends or other relatives. The housing status of a further ten per cent was recorded as 'other'. Table 3.9 shows the variety of housing situations reported by the young people.

**Table 3.9:
Housing status at referral (all projects)**

Housing situation	Number (%) of young people
Parent or parents	53 (36%)
Foyer or other supported housing	21 (14%)
Staying with friends	16 (13%)
Parent and step parent	14 (9%)
Homeless	13 (9%)
Grandparents or other relatives	11 (7%)
In foster care	3 (2%)
In care (looked after child)	3 (2%)
Other	15 (10%)
Total (base)	148 (100%)

Source: Project monitoring database (percentages are rounded) No data were available in four cases (1st March 2003 to 31st March 2004).

Young people were most likely to be living in the family home (with a parent or step parent) in Suffolk (63 per cent, Table 3.10) and least likely to be in the family home at referral in Ryedale (33 per cent, Table 3.10). This pattern reflected the main sources of referral in the two areas (Table 3.3), with Suffolk receiving many referrals from Connexions of young people in the lower part of the Safe Moves age range, a group who were more likely to still be living at home.

With the exception of the Suffolk project, all of the Safe Moves projects had, in overall terms, provided a service to more young people who were living away from the parental home than to those still living within the parental home, at the end of March 2004. Again, this reflected the routes by which referrals to the projects were received, with quite a high proportion of referrals coming from agencies that were dealing with the aftermath of homelessness, rather than services like Connexions which were in a position to detect risks of homelessness among young people still living at home. However, this pattern began to change during the later part of the period for which the Safe Moves projects were monitored.

**Table 3.10:
Housing situation of young people at referral by project**

	Birmingham	Wolverhampton	Ryedale	Suffolk	Total
Family Home	13 (45%)	26 (42%)	10 (33%)	17 (63%)	66 (45%)
Homeless or insecurely accommodated	9 (31%)	19 (31%)	14 (47%)	8 (30%)	50 (34%)
With relatives	2 (7%)	8 (13%)	1 (3%)	0	11 (7%)
Care or foster care	4 (14%)	2 (3%)	0	0	6 (4%)
Other	1 (3%)	7 (11%)	5 (17%)	2 (7%)	15 (10%)
Total	29 (100%)	62 (100%)	30 (100%)	27 (100%)	148 (100%)

Source: Project monitoring database (percentages are rounded). No data were available in four cases (1st March 2003 to 31st March 2004).

The proportion of young people who were living at home when referred to Safe Moves *increased* towards the end of the monitoring period. During the six months from 1st March 2003 to 30th August 2003, 30 of the 83 young people (34 per cent), who were referred to Safe Moves and received a service, were living in the parental home. This proportion rose to 60 per cent (28 of 46 young people living in the parental home at referral) during the period from 1st October 2003 to 29th February 2004. This pattern is shown graphically in Figure 3.4.

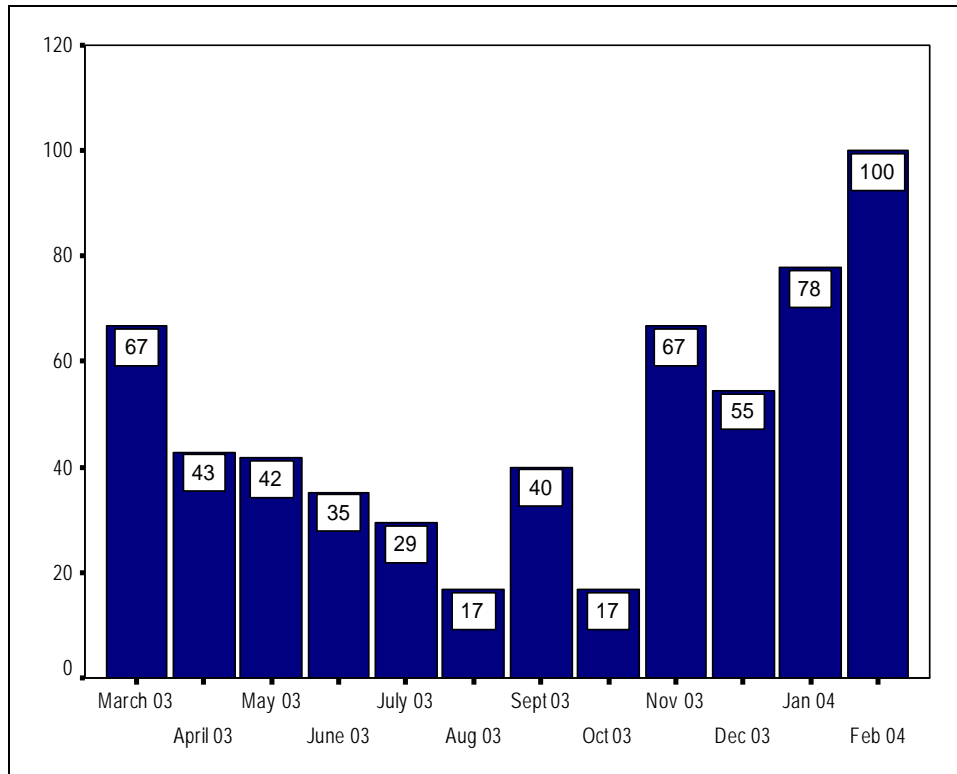


Figure 3.4: Proportion of young people who were living at home at referral from March 2003 to February 2004 (as percentage of all young people accepted by Safe Moves during each month)
Source: Project monitoring database. **Base:** 133 young people

By the end of August 2003, Birmingham, Wolverhampton and Ryedale had all accepted more young people who were homeless or insecurely accommodated than they had young people who were still living in the parental home. However, during the period October 2003 to February 2004, Birmingham and Ryedale joined Suffolk in accepting more young people living in the parental home than homeless or insecurely accommodated young people. Wolverhampton was also moving towards accepting a higher proportion of young people living in the parental home. These data indicate that the Safe Moves pilots, after initially having some difficulties in securing the intended proportion of referrals of young people living in the parental home who were at *risk* of homelessness, had successfully begun to re-orientate themselves towards recruiting more of their intended client group.

It must also be noted that the housing situation of some of the young people who were referred to Safe Moves could be precarious, in that they could quite easily move from the parental home into an insecure setting or homelessness very quickly. This could mean that a young person might have been living with a parent or parents when referred, but was homeless by the time a Safe Moves service engaged with them a few days later.

Housing tenure at referral

Data were collected on the housing tenure of young people who were living in the parental home at the time of referral. Young people using the Birmingham project who were living in the parental home were more likely than those elsewhere to be in the social rented sector. Those in Ryedale were the least likely (although a lower overall proportion of young people in this area were living at home when referred to the project). Half the referrals of young people living in the parental home in Suffolk and Ryedale were from the owner occupied sector (Table 3.11).

Table 3.11:
Housing tenure of young people living in the parental home at referral

Tenure	Birmingham	Wolverhampton	Ryedale	Suffolk	Total
Social Rented	9 (64%)	17 (47%)	7 (44%)	9 (50%)	42 (50%)
Private rented	1 (7%)	5 (14%)	1 (6%)	0	7 (8%)
Owner occupied	4 (28%)	14 (39%)	8 (50%)	9 (50%)	35 (42%)
Base	14 (100%)	36 (100%)	16 (100%)	18 (100%)	84 (100%)

Source: Project monitoring database (percentages are rounded). (1st March 2003 to 31st March 2004).

These data suggest referrals were disproportionately coming from young people from social rented households. Social rented housing is a minority tenure in all the areas where the projects were operating, particularly in Ryedale and Suffolk. Previous research has drawn associations between relative socio-economic disadvantage and the tendency of young people to experience youth homelessness (Fitzpatrick, 2000).

Support needs and characteristics at referral

Figure 3.5 summarises the characteristics of the young people who received a service from Safe Moves at the point of their referral. As can be seen, more than half the young people reported having run away from home at least once at the point of referral (56 per cent, Figure 3.5). One quarter reported a drug dependency or drug problem at referral and one fifth reported physical health problems. One fifth also reported mental health problems at referral. A minority of young people were known to social services or on the child protection register⁷, had a learning difficulty or were disabled. As is shown in Figure 3.5, just over one tenth of young people were current offenders at the point at which they were referred to Safe Moves

⁷ Whilst only a small proportion of young people were known to be on the child protection register, one project reported in particular that this was a under-representation of the number of protection issues facing their clients. In Suffolk, the project recorded separately that 9 of 27 young people were on the child protection register but that 22 had some protection issues.

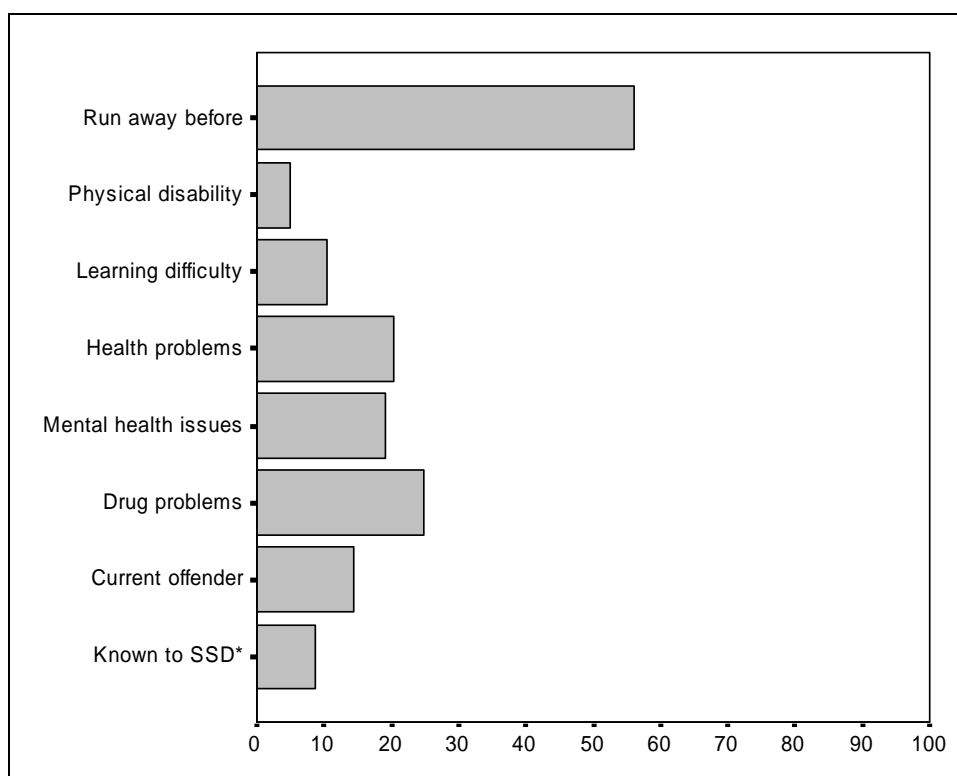


Figure 3.5: Support needs and characteristics of young people at referral (by percentage of young people) **Source:** Project monitoring database (1st March 2003 to 31st March 2004). **Note:** Base varies between 132 and 152 for different factors shown as some data were missing from the project monitoring database * Known to social services department or on child protection register.

Running away and homelessness

The proportion of young people who had run away prior to their referral to a Safe Moves project was similar across the four pilot projects, although Wolverhampton and Suffolk reported slightly higher proportions of young people having run away than the other two projects (Table 3.12). However, data on having run away from home were not available for 20 of the young people.

Table 3.12:
Number of young people who reported having run away from home prior to referral

Tenure	Birmingham	Wolverhampton	Ryedale	Suffolk	Total
Run away from home	13 (46%)	32 (65%)	14 (47%)	15 (60%)	74 (56%)
Not run away before	15 (54%)	17 (35%)	16 (53%)	10 (40%)	58 (44%)
Base	28 (100%)	49 (100%)	30 (100%)	25 (100%)	132 (100%)

Source: Project monitoring database (percentages are rounded). (1st March 2003 to 31st March 2004). Data were missing from the project monitoring database for 20 cases.

Forty per cent of young people reported an experience of homelessness at the point at which they were referred to the projects (Table 3.13). Again, the data on this experience were not quite complete within the project monitoring database (being available on 137 young people), but they were sufficiently complete to again demonstrate the highly insecure housing situation of many of the young people working with the Safe Moves pilots. As is shown in Table 3.13, the young people working with the Birmingham project were the least likely to

report a previous experience of homelessness, while those working with the Suffolk project were the most likely.

Table 3.13:
Number of young people who reported having experienced homelessness prior to referral

Tenure	Birmingham	Wolverhampton	Ryedale	Suffolk	Total
Experienced homelessness	5 (18%)	23 (41%)	12 (41%)	15 (58%)	55 (40%)
Not experienced homelessness	22 (82%)	33 (59%)	16 (55%)	11 (42%)	82 (59%)
Base	27 (100%)	56 (100%)	29 (100%)	26 (100%)	137 (100%)

Source: Project monitoring database (percentages are rounded). (1st March 2003 to 31st March 2004). Data were missing from the project monitoring database for 15 cases.

To some extent, because ‘homelessness’ was self-defined by the young people and the workers, the differences between projects may reflect differing perceptions of what constituted homelessness. However, this must be balanced against the evidence of actual homelessness among some of the young people with whom the projects were working (Table 3.9).

As might be anticipated, given the results of existing research on youth homelessness (Fitzpatrick, 2000), there was an association between having run away from home and having been homeless. Over three-quarters of the young people who reported having been homeless also reported having run away from home (77 per cent).

There are longstanding concerns about the tendency of young people with experience of the care system to join the young homeless population (Sinclair and Gibbs, 2002). The proportion of young people who had been looked after by social services or were in a foster care placement when they were referred to Safe Moves was low. In many senses this may be encouraging news, as it would be hoped that new arrangements in England under the Leaving Care Act would circumvent the need for contact between care leavers and a project like Safe Moves. Nevertheless, six young people with experience of the care system and fostering were referred to the Birmingham and Wolverhampton projects.

Crime and antisocial behaviour

At the point of their referral, 14 per cent of young people reported that they were current offenders to the four projects. The proportion of referrals to the projects with some history of offending was rather greater, however, as nearly one quarter of the young people with whom Safe Moves worked had committed an offence (24 per cent, Table 3.14), although only 11 (7 per cent) had been the subject of a successful criminal prosecution.

The 37 young people who were current or past offenders reported 42 offences between them, while the 11 young people who had been found guilty by a court had reported 13 offences. Three young people reported having been remanded in custody or imprisoned for three offences.

**Table 3.14:
Experience of crime and antisocial behaviour prior to referral**

Experience	Number (%) of young people
Victim of bullying	41 (27%)
Victim of crime	19 (13%)
Current or past offender	37 (24%)
Been found guilty by a court	11 (7%)
Remanded in custody or imprisoned	3 (2%)
Subject of an Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO)	1 (1%)

Source: Project monitoring database (percentages are rounded) (1st March 2003 to 31st March 2004).

The young people working with the Safe Moves projects were unlikely to have been remanded in custody or imprisoned. This suggests the offences that they had committed may often have been relatively minor. Although some were too young to be prosecuted as adults, someone who is legally a child committing a serious offence is likely to enter local authority care at the least, a situation from which only a handful of young people were referred to Safe Moves. The young people were very unlikely to be the subject of an ASBO.

Young women were less likely to have been involved in criminal activity than young men. Forty per cent of young men reported having committed one or more offences, compared to 15 per cent of young women. Only 2 per cent of young women had been found guilty by a court and none had been remanded in custody or imprisoned, compared to the 15 per cent of young men who had been found guilty by a court and 3 per cent who had been remanded in custody or imprisoned (Table 3.15).

**Table 3.15:
Reported offending behaviour at referral by gender**

Criminal activity	Female	Male
Committed offence(s)	14 (15%)	23 (40%)
Found guilty by a court	2 (2%)	9 (15%)
Remanded or imprisoned	3 (3%)	0
Base	94 (100%)	58 (100%)

Source: Project monitoring database (percentages are rounded). (1st March 2003 to 31st March 2004).

In overall terms, 85 per cent of young women reported no involvement in criminal activity in comparison with 60 per cent of young men. These findings might have been anticipated to some extent, as young men are more likely, according to current statistics on crime, to be involved in criminal activity than young women. Those involved in criminal activity also tended to be slightly older (average age of 17) than those who were not (average age of 16.7).

The pilot Safe Moves projects were not designed to play a direct role in counteracting youth crime, instead being focused on promoting housing stability and helping create opportunities for young people. At the same time, the role of Safe Moves in improving risks to the young people and improving their life chances might reasonably be expected to play a role in counteracting youth crime, which is strongly associated with socio-economic marginalisation

among young people. The project monitoring database showed some associations between housing instability, homelessness and experience of criminal activity.

Young people who reported having run away at referral (Table 3.12) were more likely to have committed crimes or to have been the victims of crimes (Table 3.16).

Table 3.16:
Reported involvement and experience of crime at referral by whether run away from home at referral

Criminal activity	Run away	Not run away
Committed offence(s)	22 (30%)	13 (22%)
Found guilty by a court	10 (14%)	1 (2%)
Remanded or imprisoned	3 (4%)	0
Been a victim of crime	12 (16%)	5 (9%)
Base	74 (100%)	58 (100%)

Source: Project monitoring database (percentages are rounded). (1st March 2003 to 31st March 2004).

Thirty per cent of young people who had run away prior to referral had committed one or more offences, compared to just over one fifth of those who had not run away (22 per cent, Table 3.15). Almost all those found guilty by a court had run away from home (14 per cent of those who had run away, 91 per cent of those found guilty by a court) and all of those who had been remanded in custody or imprisoned had also run away. Those who reported having run away were also more likely to report having been the victim of crime (16 per cent compared to 9 per cent of those who had not run away). A very similar pattern existed in respect of experience of homelessness, which was strongly associated with running away. These data do suggest something of an association between homelessness, running away and youth crime.

It is important to remember that the majority of the young people with whom Safe Moves worked had no involvement in crime. Only one quarter reported any criminal activity and only 14 per cent were current offenders at the point they were referred to the projects. Experience of prosecution and imprisonment were unusual. Nevertheless, among those young people who had become involved in criminal activity and who had been the victims of crime, experience of housing instability and homelessness was widespread.

There were no associations between health and support needs, including reported drug dependency, and involvement in criminal activity by the young people who were working with the Safe Moves projects. Some associations might have been anticipated, particularly with drug use, but these were not present among this group of young people.

Health and support needs

Figure 3.6 breaks down some of the key support needs reported by the young people with whom the projects were working by the four pilot areas. As can be seen, some variations existed, with Suffolk being more likely than the other projects to be working with young people with mental health problems and drug problems (52 per cent and 57 per cent of young people in Suffolk, Figure 3.6).

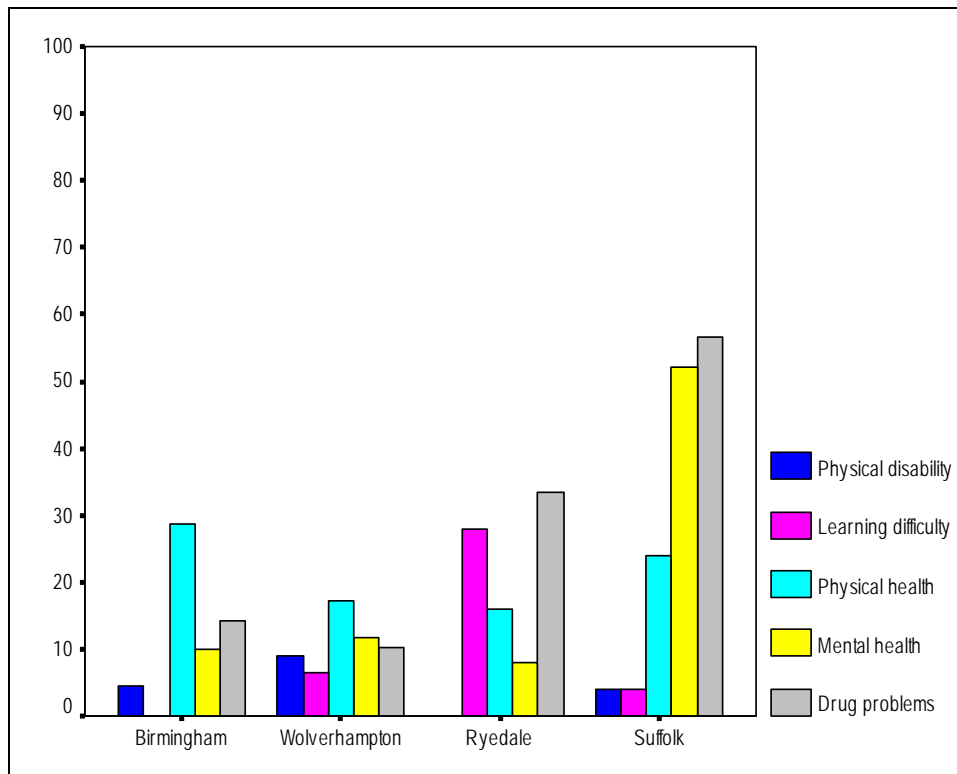


Figure 3.6: Support needs of young people at referral by percentage of young people for each project. **Source:** Project monitoring database (1st March 2003 to 31st March 2004) Base varies according to available data.

Birmingham and Suffolk were also more likely than the other projects to be working with young people who reported physical health problems (29 per cent and 24 per cent). Ryedale worked with a much higher proportion of young people with learning difficulties, mainly dyslexia, than the other projects (28 per cent of young people working with the Ryedale project), while also having the second highest proportion of young people who were drug users (33 per cent). Three of the projects were quite unlikely to be working with young people with mental health problems. The projects tended not to be working with disabled young people.

Figure 3.7 summarises the distribution of the same support needs among young people by gender. As can be seen, there were some variations, with young men being slightly more likely to report drug problems and learning difficulties and young women being slightly more likely to report mental health problems (mainly depression).

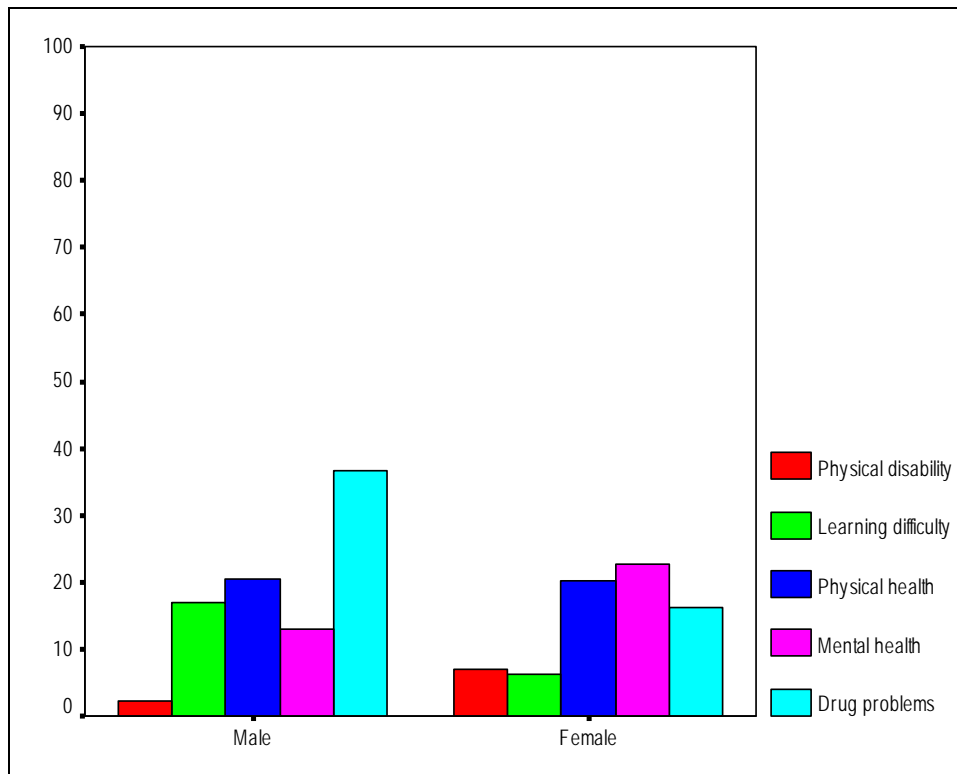


Figure 3.7: Support needs of young people at referral by percentage for each gender. **Source:** Project monitoring database (1st March 2003 to 31st March 2004) Base varies according to available data.

Young people were quite unlikely to be working with statutory services at the point they were referred to Safe Moves (Figure 3.8). Less than a fifth had social work involvement at referral in any area with the exception of Suffolk (where the total was just over one fifth), while engagement with youth justice/probation was also low. Involvement with Educational Welfare Officers was also unusual, with the exception of Suffolk. Housing support worker involvement was unusual outside Ryedale.

The project monitoring database also included a variable that recorded services other than those shown in Figure 3.8, grouping all such services under the description ‘other’ and not allowing differentiation between them. The proportion of young people receiving these ‘other’ services was quite high. Just under one third of young people in Birmingham and Ryedale were receiving support services, which could not be classified by the project monitoring database, at the time of their referral. In Wolverhampton, the figure was rather lower, at 14 per cent. In Suffolk, however, the figure for ‘other services’ was much higher, at 78 per cent. The Suffolk figure is almost certainly explained by the close working relationship between the project and the local Connexions service, with which many of the young people were working at the time of their referral and with which they often continued to work while in contact with Safe Moves.

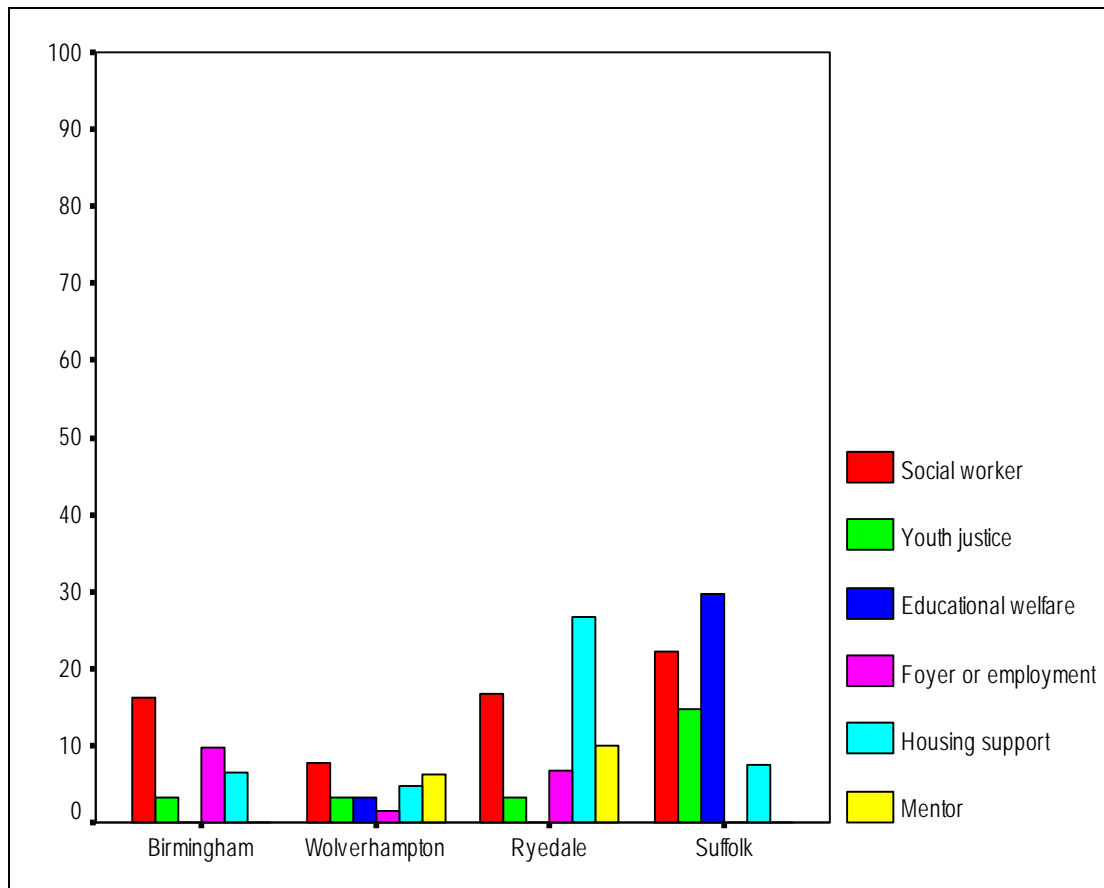


Figure 3.8: Contact with other services at referral by percentage of young people for each project **Source:** Project monitoring database (1st March 2003 to 31st March 2004)
Base varies according to available data.

In overall terms, at the point of referral, young people in Birmingham and Wolverhampton were quite *unlikely* to be receiving support from another agency when they approached Safe Moves. In Ryedale and Suffolk, young people were quite likely to be working with one or more other agencies prior to contact with Safe Moves. This pattern may reflect the close working relationships between the foyer in Ryedale and Connexions in Suffolk, with the respective Safe Moves projects.

Educational and economic status

All but one of the young people aged 13-15 (97 per cent) and just over half (51 per cent) of the 16-17 age group reported that they were still in full time education or undertaking some form of training at the point of their referral to the project. A smaller number were engaged in voluntary work or employed (11 per cent), while a handful were engaged in other meaningful activity (4 per cent). Almost one third of the young people with whom Safe Moves worked were in a situation described as 'Not in Education, Employment or Training', which is sometimes referred to using the acronym 'NEET'.

Figure 3.9 summarises the differences between the projects in terms of the educational and employment status of the young people with whom they worked at the point of referral. Birmingham had the highest proportion of young people who were in education and training (79 per cent), followed by Suffolk (67 per cent). Wolverhampton and Ryedale had the

highest proportion of young people who were in a 'NEET' situation at the point of referral (39 per cent and 28 per cent respectively).

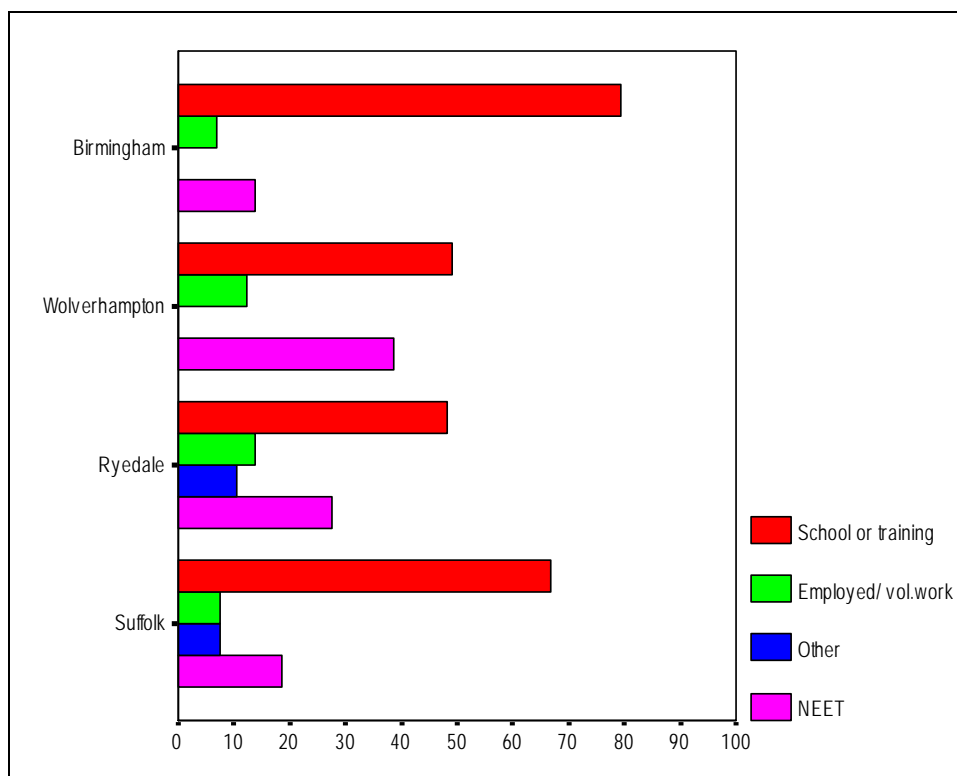


Figure 3.9: Status of accepted young people at referral by percentage of young people for each project. **Source:** Project monitoring database. **Base:** 147 young people (12 missing cases). * In education or training ** Volunteering or in part or full time employed NEET = Not in Education, Employment or Training.

There was no significant difference between young women and young men in terms of the likelihood of their being in education, employment or voluntary work or in a 'NEET' situation. As Table 3.17 shows, almost a third of those aged 16-17 already had 'NEET' status. Most disturbingly, more than half the young people with whom Safe Moves was working who were aged 18-19 were reported as having 'NEET' status at referral.

Table 3.17:
Educational and employment status at referral by age (all projects)

Age	At school or in training	In employment or vol. work	Other meaningful activity	NEET	Base
13-15	30 (97%)	0	0	1 (3%)	31 (100%)
16-17	44 (51%)	13 (15%)	4 (5%)	25 (29%)	86 (100%)
18-19	8 (38%)	1 (5%)	0	12 (57%)	21 (100%)
20+	0	1	1	1	3 (100%)
Total	82 (58%)	15 (11%)	5 (4%)	39 (28%)	141 (100%)

Source: Project monitoring database (percentages are rounded), Base: 141 Data missing for 14 cases. (1st March 2003 to 31st March 2004).

Referral and assessment procedures: Views of staff, agencies and young people

This final section reviews the referral and assessment arrangements for Safe Moves and outlines lessons learnt from this part of the pilot experience.

Referral procedures: Getting the preventative message across to agencies

As outlined earlier, the target age group for the Safe Moves initiative was young people aged 13-19 at risk of homelessness. Ensuring that this group of young people were identified and referred to the project proved a challenge in all four pilot areas. As the data shows (see Figure 3.4 and 3.5) a high proportion of referrals in the first half of the pilot were for support to young people aged 16 or over who had already left the parental home. Whilst the project might have been able to help prevent further homelessness and/or prevent rooflessness, in these cases it was clear that they were unable to prevent homelessness at the point of referral. The data did however show that, over time, the proportion of younger people and those living at home increased, that is the actual client group began to better reflect the target client group.

In all areas, it was clear that agencies found it difficult to identify young people 'at risk' of homelessness, and a number of reasons contributed to this. Firstly, in some areas, there was a problem in terms of generating referrals from the Connexions service. Some local Connexions offices appeared to be in a better position to identify and refer young people to the project. In one area in particular, despite dedicated Connexions support to Safe Moves, Personal Advisors (PAs) failed to refer young people. The main reason for this appeared to be the very early development of the Connexions service at a local level and inability to extend themselves to work with a new project.

The referral process did not work as I thought it was going to work at all, in terms of, I was pretty sure when we started that all the referrals were going to come via Connexions PAs and that has not come about at all... I felt the 45 was quite a small number to work with, and I felt that we would be inundated with young people.... The referrals have been quite disappointing....

(Agency representative)

I think we needed to give Connexions time to bed down and find out what they were doing before just dumping this on them as well, I don't think that was fair.

(Agency representative)

In the only project where the majority of referrals were from Connexions, referrals were of a slightly younger age group, with more people living at home, from the outset. However, the type of young people being referred did change over time without Connexions becoming a more prominent referrer. Rather the referral base tended to become more diverse, away from housing agencies towards other agencies working with the younger age groups such as social services, schools and youth clubs.

Many of the referral agencies, particularly in the early stages of the pilot, were responsible for working with older age groups of young people and/or young homeless people, this being particularly true for housing agencies and foyers. A high level of housing need in the 16-19 age group meant that the project was easily seized to meet a gap in provision for this group:

I think to be fair there is not much provision for that age group [16-19], so that is why they are referred...when you're 16, not even social services, its like you are on your own now – we're here to provide support in a very sort of relief emergency, crisis intervention, but you're really on your own at 16. I think that is possibly the issue...

(Agency representative)

I think often when you do set up a project like this, you set it up and people see that it is something that is going to help the housing issue with kids, so you end up fire-fighting to start with, I think with any new project like this you end up fire-fighting before you can actually get to the point when you are doing what you really want to do, and that is actually the preventative stuff – but you have to fight all of those fires that are already starting to burn.

(Agency representative)

However, the biggest change that accounted for a better targeting of referrals was one of overall orientation and increased understanding amongst agencies about the aims of the project. At the project's outset, it was a challenge for local project steering group members, and in some cases Safe Moves Coordinators themselves, to grasp the concept of Safe Moves as a 'preventative' scheme. In effect, the project, after educating themselves, had to educate other agencies and potential referrers as to the potential of working in a preventative way.

It is incredibly difficult when people are not used to thinking about prevention in the way that we are – for one or two people in a small pilot scheme to get that message into large statutory agencies...

(Agency representative)

Then we also need the training element of the project as a core whereby many workers have been working for years with young people but are only used to dealing with crises, there has to be a changing culture from crisis to prevention, to actually seeing when things are beginning to go wrong... Prevention doesn't sink in. I've done presentations, I've done this and I've done that.... But there is only so far that one can go, you can only really go by the work that has actually been done, that is the best promotion, your case studies and your reputation with other workers...

(Safe Moves worker)

A couple of people also questioned whether the name 'Safe Moves' helped market the project as a preventative intervention, and it was clear that some young people and parents had thought Safe Moves was targeted at the older age groups:

I: In one sense, I think the name was perhaps wrong, cos if you say 'Safe Moves: The Homelessness Project', that is just going to encourage people to send young people who don't have any accommodation to you, and that is obviously what has been happening. The issue, for many organisations, is the lack of accommodation for young people...I don't know whether we look at changing the name, I don't know, but I think there is something in that in terms of what do you call yourself and then what do people associate with your core nature and your core business'.

2:I thought that Safe Moves was about helping young people into independent living... I think it is a misnomer.

1:Its called Safe Moves, and yet the primary focus is to stop you from moving...

(Agency representatives)

If you look at Safe Moves leaflets the majority of it is about moving safely, progressing away from the family. It doesn't actually say too much about we will sit and talk and help you stop at home and compromise and things...if you look at the material in the leaflet, it is about moving away and most young people of 12, 13, or 14 don't want to move away they just want to get things sorted...I think Safe Moves is for young adults or young people who are in family situations and want to move out and they are there to help them move onto independent living and getting on in society...

(Parent)

Over time, Safe Moves also simply built up good working relationships with referrers, which helped inform agencies of its role. In the two rural areas in particular, the Safe Moves workers worked very closely with Connexions PAs on a day to day basis. Birmingham and Ryedale also built up excellent relationships with local schools that became prominent referrers in the last six months of the project.

[The Connexions worker] is very good at knowing, she now knows Safe Moves pretty much inside out. So she knows whether or not they are suitable for us to take on now whether that be a very low level of intervention or a very high need case...

(Safe Moves worker)

Whilst a better understanding of the referral criteria was mainly achieved through networking, projects also felt it was crucial that a referral protocol was in place that explained the target group clearly to referrers. In some areas, this was only being developed at the end of the project and ideally should have been in place from the outset.

All projects however believed that the referral procedures should remain flexible for the future. Some projects felt that as long it represents a minority of cases, Safe Moves could offer an appropriate service to a young person who may have recently left home, and may in some cases, be supported to move back home or, if this is not suitable, onto appropriate supported or independent housing.

Assessment procedures

The assessment procedures differed across the projects to some extent although the Safe in the City risk criteria informed them all. However, in practice, a common sense operation of these factors was utilised rather than a formal checklist of criteria, although these risk indicators were being developed in some areas. A number of the risk factors were no longer relevant due to the age of the young person (e.g., whether excluded from school) or because they had already left home and were homeless.

...the eight risk factors but its just a rough guide, like for instance, she's got one like if they don't get on with their mother, one referral that we have got doesn't

get on with her father so the referee crossed out mother and just put father, what some of us have done is put a tick by the ones that are tickable....

(Safe Moves worker)

There have been no 'tools' except myself and my colleagues saying what do we think... its pretty much assumed that if we get the referral we would take it... and that we would sign post on if we couldn't accept the referral, if I felt there wasn't a housing need.

(Safe Moves worker)

One project had developed a detailed assessment procedure to be undertaken by Connexions, whilst the other three projects were utilising simpler purpose-made referral forms and/or trying to tie in with existing Connexions assessment procedures. Whilst the detailed assessment procedure was comprehensive, this was the one project that experienced the greatest problem with generating referrals. Different agencies had different levels of confidence in the assessment procedures being utilised.

Safe Moves are using an interactive assessment process, which I think is called fit for life or fit to live and it is absolute rubbish, and there is no way that I can support its use....

(Agency representative)

A couple of agencies raised the issue of how the assessment process fitted in with social service-led assessments. It was felt that the latter were crucial for the younger age group, and that this aspect of the project required further development.

One of the things that perhaps has come out has been the difficulty, and again I can understand it, that I think has been had in getting some young people a child in need assessment – just wanting to have a closer look at that...It has to go back to a thorough, multi-agency assessment of need and at the end the day social services have a responsibility to young people under 18 who appear to be in need for whatever reason, so that's got to come first, and then dependent on that we look at what the appropriate service is...

(Agency representative)

Overall, the assessment procedures required some development, particularly should any further Safe Moves projects be established. In addition, the procedures for contacting young people for assessment, following a referral, also needed careful attention. One project in particular had difficulties in following up referrals and had instituted a joint meeting with the young person, referrer and Safe Moves. All the projects stressed that Safe Moves needed to be extremely responsive and proactive in contacting young people referred to the project – usually by phoning the young people and then meeting as soon as possible following referral to assess their situation and to maximise the chances of engaging with them.

We have to be responsive. You have to go and see the them as soon as possible, it has to be responsive if it's going to work otherwise it will get to the point, like a couple of hours have gone and they are getting desperate and sometimes a quick chat about their housing options might solve the problem or sometimes it can be a case of finding out what is going on, was it an argument within the family or was it just a one off and they said, 'that's it, I'm leaving' or is it safe for them to go back....

(Safe Moves worker)

The experience of referral: young people's perspective

The young people interviewed were referred to Safe Moves by a range of agencies. Most were referred by agencies working specifically with young people although one person was referred directly to Safe Moves by the local housing department. Many of the respondents described the process of referral as being relatively informal. Users did not appear to find the process either difficult or complicated. Only a couple of young people, in one project, felt the referral process was slow and over dominated by paperwork. For most respondents the process was person-centred, involving talking to people rather being dominated by forms and paperwork.

Me mum and me had a falling out and I was staying with one of my friends for two weeks. I applied for housing but I was only 17 and I couldn't get housing with the council so they put me in touch with [another agency] and they put me in touch with Safe Moves.

(Young person)

I was talking to [youth worker] in [café] a few weeks ago and I told her I had nowhere to live and was staying with mates and she 'phoned [Safe Moves worker] then we met up.

(Young person)

Not all the young people interviewed were sure of the reasons for referral to Safe Moves or the detailed role of the project. Whilst most young people remembered being told a little about the service by the referring agency, and hearing more about the service from the Safe Moves worker when they met, it was clear that a small number of respondents either did not remember or did not fully understand what Safe Moves could do for them at the time of the interview.

I remember being told about Safe Moves and that they could help young people find accommodation and that it was about preventing homelessness – I'm not sure why I was referred because I had somewhere to live...I didn't really think about it

(Young person)

I could do with properly understanding what it is about because even though I was told I have a really short memory span and the only way I would remember about this [Safe Moves] is if I saw the logo or the name again

(Young person)

They [referral agency] didn't tell me much about Safe Moves, they gave me a leaflet about it and I got a 'phone call about three days later from [Safe Moves worker] and she told me about Safe Moves and what they did...we arranged to meet the next day and we started talking about what had happened with my mum and she told me what they could do for me and we talked about what I wanted to do.

(Young person)

The first meetings between Safe Moves and the young person often took place in informal and/or familiar settings such as local cafés, youth projects or the young person's home and in places that were convenient for the young person (although it should be said that not all the

young people could remember the first meeting). Most of the respondents who could remember the first meeting, said that someone from Safe Moves had contacted them by mobile telephone and that their first meeting with a project worker had taken place a few days after they were first told about the project.

...it was when I was in school...they arranged me to meet me at dinner time so that no-one would know

(Young person)

...the (Safe Moves] worker came to my flat with someone from the hostel and we had an interview and went through the forms and that...it was more comfortable doing it in my own flat...

(Young person)

Some of the young people were a little apprehensive about meeting with Safe Moves but said that they felt reassured following the appointment with the worker.

At first I was a bit wary because the situation was a bit personal – everything that happened but...well she made me feel more comfortable when I first went to speak to her because she has been in similar situations so I felt a lot easier around her. I would rather speak to her than someone who has never been through what I was going through. We met at a café – it was very informal, I was really upset and she was really good.

(Young person)

Conclusion

This chapter has presented an overview of the characteristics of the young people referred to Safe Moves and the referral process. It has been seen that Connexions remained an important source of referrals, as originally envisaged, but as projects became established and built up good working relations with other local agencies the sources of referrals became more diverse. Safe Moves continued to work with young people with a range of housing and support needs but had more success in gaining referrals from the younger age group (13-15 years old) and were working with more young people who were still living at home than in the earlier stages of the pilot. Nevertheless, in overall terms, Safe Moves predominantly worked with young people who had already left home. These findings suggest:

- There is a need to establish the aims and objectives of the service i.e. the prevention of homelessness, to devise clear referral and assessment criteria and to ensure that all relevant local organisations, including those working with the younger age group, are aware of these.
- That young people appreciated the relaxed approach of the Safe Moves workers and the informal nature of their first meeting, they also felt more comfortable meeting in familiar surroundings and all these factors appeared to encourage young people to engage with the project. However, it was seen that workers have to be proactive both in initiating and sustaining contact with young people.

4 Delivery of the Safe Moves service

This chapter presents the findings on the delivery of the Safe Moves services to young people. The chapter draws on the monitoring information, views of project staff and other key players as well as the young people themselves. The chapter begins by providing an overview of the services delivered using the project monitoring information. The perspective of key players and service users on the role of these services is then examined. The approach to delivering services and inter-agency working is also discussed.

The services delivered by Safe Moves Projects

Chapter Two outlined the key service interventions that Safe Moves was intended to deliver to young people, as well as identifying how services were developed and extended. The project monitoring collected data on every service, by type and length of intervention, that were delivered to a young person during their time with the project.

Table 4.1 shows the proportion of young people who received the key types of support/ services provided by the Safe Moves projects. Just over half of young people (54 per cent) received practical support at some point during their time with Safe Moves; this was particularly prominent in Wolverhampton where 82 per cent of young people were provided with this type of support.

Nearly three in ten young people received family mediation (and/or early intervention assistance). A much higher proportion of young people received family mediation in Suffolk (65 per cent) and Birmingham (43 per cent), than Ryedale (25 per cent) and Wolverhampton (8 per cent). As explained in Chapter Two, Birmingham had access to a specialist mediation service for young people and this proved able to accept and respond to referrals in this area. Whilst Suffolk was unable to access a formal service, they recruited a specialist mediator/ counsellor consultant to provide 12 hours of sessions per week – this service was used to capacity. In contrast, the family mediation service in Wolverhampton was a more generalist service and no provision was available in Ryedale until the last few months of the pilot.

Nearly three in ten young people also received some form of life-skills training from the projects – this was particularly significant in the two rural projects with over four in ten young people being provided with life-skills support. Only one in seven (13 per cent) of the young people received peer mentoring (this figure did not include the numbers of young people who were trained as mentors). Wolverhampton was the most active in terms of matching peer mentors to peer mentees.

Job seeking/ helping young people access training or education was provided to 17 per cent of young people, however this rose to 39 per cent in Ryedale. A higher proportion of young people received housing related support (27 per cent) – with similar proportions of young people in all projects accessing this type of support.

Table 4.1:
Number of young people receiving different types of service by project (all cases)

	Birmingham	Wolverhampton	Ryedale	Suffolk	All
Life skills	1 (3%)	16 (26%)	12 (43%)	10 (44%)	39 (28%)
Peer Mentoring	3 (10%)	9 (15%)	3 (11%)	3 (13%)	18 (13%)
Family Mediation	13 (43%)	5 (8%)	7 (25%)	15 (65%)	40 (28%)
Early Intervention	17 (57%)	10 (16%)	5 (18%)	7 (30%)	39 (28%)
Job Seeking Training	3 (10%)	9 (15%)	11 (39%)	1 (4%)	24 (17%)
Housing related support	6 (20%)	16 (26%)	9 (32%)	7 (30%)	38 (27%)
Practical Support	3 (10%)	50 (82%)	16 (57%)	8 (35%)	77 (54%)
Base	30 (100%)	61 (100%)	28 (100%)	23 (100%)	142 (100%)

Source: Project monitoring database (percentages are rounded) Totals may exceed base because young people could receive more than one service (1st March 2003 to 31st March 2004)

Figure 4.1 summarises the activities of the four projects in terms of the proportion of the different types of recorded services delivered by the project. The three core elements of the service – peer mentoring, family mediation, and life-skills – only represented a third of the total number of services delivered by the project (Figure 4.1). Of these, family mediation was the largest component, representing 18 per cent of services delivered. Life-skills represented 10 per cent of all activities and peer mentoring, 7 per cent. The largest single component of service delivery undertaken by the four projects was the provision of practical support (29 per cent of recorded episodes of service delivery). The other recorded elements of service delivery all accounted for between 6-10 per cent of recorded activity between 1st March 2003 and 31st March 2004.

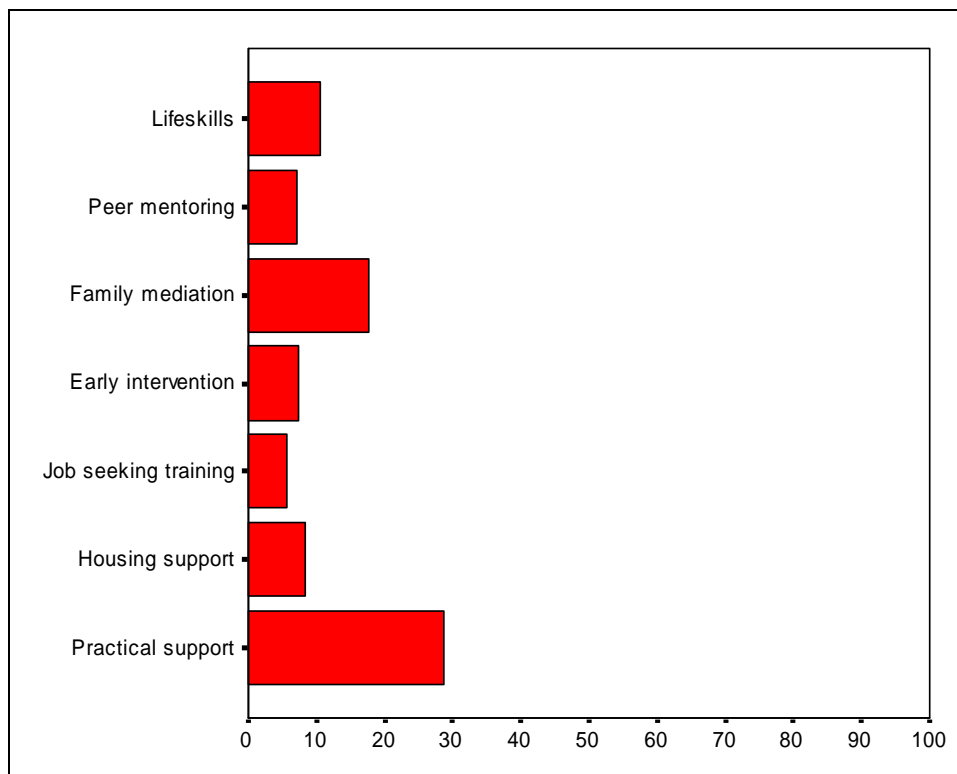


Figure 4.1: Percentage of recorded service delivery devoted to specific tasks
Source: Project monitoring database **Base:** 561 recorded episodes of service delivery between 1st March 2003 and 31st March 2004.

As is shown in Figure 4.2, the pattern of service delivery varied considerably across the four pilot projects.

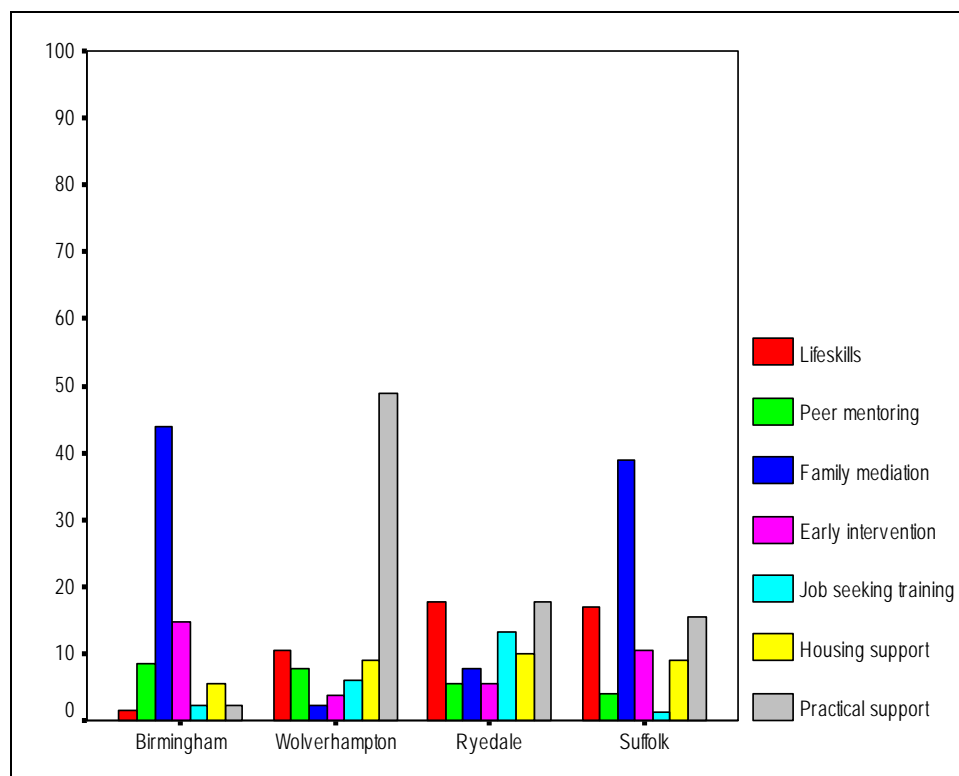


Figure 4.2: Percentage of recorded service delivery devoted to specific tasks by project **Source:** Project monitoring database **Base:** 561 recorded episodes of service delivery between 1st March 2003 and 31st March 2004.

The projects had both to adapt to their local circumstances and respond to the needs that young people presented with, and it is likely that both of these factors in part explain the variations in patterns shown in Table 4.1 and Figure 4.2. As Table 4.1 would predict, family mediation was accounted for a significant proportion of activity in both Birmingham and Suffolk (44 per cent and 39 per cent of service provision), while neither Wolverhampton nor Ryedale were particularly active in this field. The amount of service provision focused on peer mentoring (which was largely the training of potential peer mentors) was not dissimilar across the four projects. Ryedale was, by some measure, the most active provider of job seeking training, with both this project and Suffolk also being relatively active in the provision of life-skills training. Wolverhampton accounted for a significant amount of the practical support (49 per cent of recorded service delivery for that project), although both Ryedale and Suffolk were to some degree also delivering practical support (18 per cent and 16 per cent of recorded service delivery). By contrast, Birmingham hardly provided any practical support. Housing support was provided as a minority activity in all areas.

It is also possible to utilise the project monitoring database to provide information on the typical intensity of service provision by the four projects. Table 4.2 summarises the duration of service delivery by episodes of service delivery.

**Table 4.2:
Duration of service delivery by episodes of service delivery**

Duration of service delivery	Recorded episodes (%)
Up to 1 day	190 (34%)
Up to 1-2 months	69 (12%)
1-3 months	89 (16%)
3 months plus	213 (38%)
Base	561 (100%)

Source: Project monitoring database

Table 4.2 shows that the projects tended to provide either very short episodes of service delivery (a day or less, 34 per cent) or quite long episodes of service delivery lasting three months or more (38 per cent). Activity of up to one to two months was quite unusual as was activity of one to three months in duration. As is illustrated in Figure 4.3, this pattern of service delivery was found across all four projects.

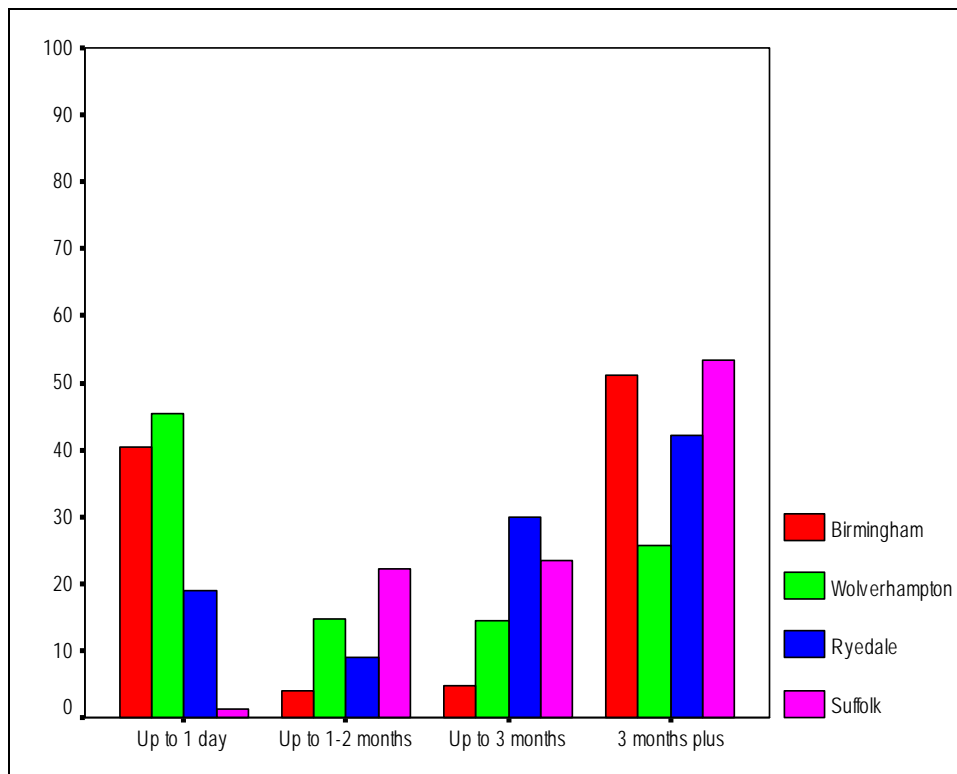


Figure 4.3: Percentage of episodes of service delivery by duration and project

Source: Project monitoring database **Base:** 190 episodes of service delivery of up to 1 day in duration, 69 episodes of 1-2 months duration, 89 episodes of 1-3 months and 213 episodes of three months or more (1st March 2003 and 31st March 2004).

Figure 4.4 shows the number of service episodes devoted to specific activities by the projects. As can be seen, practical support predominated in the provision of services of up to one day's duration, but remained a significant part of recorded activities of more than three months duration. Family mediation tended to figure more heavily in sustained episodes of service delivery, but this is something that would be anticipated, although the projects still recorded quite high numbers of one day long episodes of service delivery focused on this activity. It is

known however that this is partly explained by inconsistency in data entry – some projects recorded every family mediation session typically when the overall duration of the contact was short, compared to recording family mediation as one activity where it regularly occurred each week.

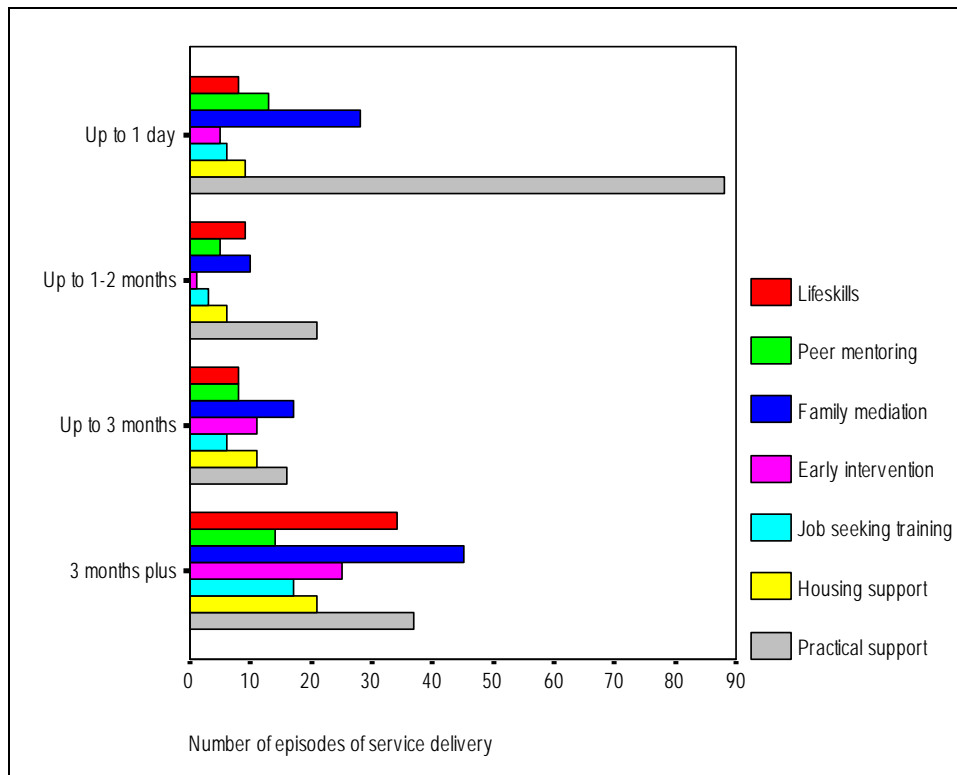


Figure 4.4: Number of recorded episodes of service delivery devoted to specific tasks by duration of service **Source:** Project monitoring database **Base:** 190 episodes of service delivery of up to 1 day in duration, 69 episodes of 1-2 months duration, 89 episodes of 1-3 months and 213 episodes of three months or more (1st March 2003 and 31st March 2004).

Staff, agency and young people’s perspective on the key services

A broker and direct provider service

Safe Moves was developed in part by drawing upon the ‘Safe in the City’ model of providing housing related support to potentially vulnerable young people at risk of homelessness. This model was developed in London and was based on the notion of workers adopting a ‘service brokerage’ role for the young people with whom they engaged. Rather than delivering extensive support to young people themselves, they negotiated and worked with whatever range of agencies were necessary to meet a young person’s housing and support needs. This model however had to be adapted to non-London local contexts that were not necessarily rich in service provision. This was particularly the case in the two rural areas, but also to an extent in the urban areas. Considerable effort was required to develop the Safe Moves core services at a local level (see Chapter Two) and therefore the Safe Moves projects quite quickly began to undertake elements of direct service provision themselves, at the same time as working to facilitate the development of services.

Whilst Safe Moves projects explained that the three core Safe Moves services were peer mentoring, family mediation and life-skills training, as the project monitoring above

demonstrates, the projects were offering a wide range of services, both in response to the needs of young people whilst also utilising the existing skills of Safe Moves staff.

The Coordinator should be able to dip into various things, we like to think of our service as starting with the young person presented to us, we then think about what that young person's needs are and what they want, then we decide from there how we tailor the service to meet their needs...

(Safe Moves worker)

Therefore, whilst the intended role of the Safe Moves Coordinator was to organise the delivery of the core services and coordinate this provision working with other agencies, throughout the pilot, to differing extents between pilot locations, Coordinators occupied a much more 'hands-on' role, working directly to support young people as well as referring them onto other appropriate services. The Safe Moves projects tended to be acting as a generalist support service for young people, based on a housing support or youth work model. This model had become particularly well established in one rural area, and for the first half of the pilot in one of the urban locations. Latterly, Safe Moves workers in the two urban areas were not offering such a hands-on service, however at this point both workers were only part-time and did not have the time to undertake intensive work with young people.

...if you go back to what most of us would consider a co-ordinator to be - it is literally receive the referral, analyse and work out what's best – given the knowledge you have at the time – work out what might be the best service for that young person then make the next referral stage and then monitor that from a distance...but no. Because we are not in a service rich environment that is not possible is it?

(Agency representative)

Safe Moves for us is support for young people with housing needs, you might get some life-skills, some mediation if appropriate and if you really didn't want to open up to one of us, you could have a peer mentor.... They do not go off on one of those three things, they are assigned to a support worker and then they are given a package and that's intensive to begin then it slows down... We can offer those services (family mediation, life-skills training and peer mentoring] but it's a support service for young people with housing needs.

(Safe Moves worker)

You are hands on obviously when you are meeting the young people, they are talking to you about your problems, you know, you put your counselling hat on then because sometimes they need that help and support and encouragement so then I wear that hat... the Coordinator needs to be an all-rounder.

(Safe Moves worker)

Young people also described a service offering a broad range of support, help and advice. The service was seen as being able to offer general support with helping sort out problems in their life. The types of help mentioned included: help with finding accommodation, with removals and storage; advice on education, training and employment; help with paying bills, budgeting, managing debts; arranging or providing transport to interviews and to work; accompanying them to interviews, appointments and court/ advocacy; practical support; peer mentoring training and residential courses; counselling; social activities; providing someone

who would listen to them. Below, the core services are considered from the perspective of agencies, staff and young people.

Peer mentoring

Only a small number of mentors had been matched with a mentee by the end of the evaluation. The need for careful matching of mentor and mentee was acknowledged by all Safe Moves projects and there appeared to be examples of more and less successful matching. In a rural community context, it was pointed out that the process had to take account of the fact that young people were more likely to know other young people in the area. Projects also highlighted the need for a high degree of support and supervision for the mentors; early mentors felt that more support would have been useful and this was now being offered by all projects.

Agencies and staff all felt that the most positive outcome of the peer mentoring during the pilot phase had been the impact of the training process on young people. Almost all the young people interviewed who had been involved in peer mentoring training had found the experience useful and rewarding and some had gained qualifications such as ONC Level 3 in mentoring. They all felt that they could help other young people avoid some of the problems that they had experienced.

That peer mentoring course I was doing – I liked that. It was just like team building together, trying to train us how to talk to young people with other problems...I think the idea is okay, I think I could talk to someone. It already happens in the foyer, we all talk to each other.

(Peer mentor)

The training is about procedures, how we'd handle certain situations and explaining what we can do, what we as peer mentors should have to be a mentor...we are more listeners, we don't give our opinions and tell them what to do, they were just training us about what sort of advice we should offer. I think it is a good idea, if I had had a peer mentor it would have been better...

(Peer mentor)

One peer mentor did however suggest that some young people might find the peer mentoring training difficult if they were still experiencing problems in their own lives.

The training was all right... but I know a lot of people on the course had their own problems, homelessness and that so they couldn't always make it...

(Peer mentor)

Some of the trainee mentors had attended conferences and events to promote peer mentoring and the Safe Moves project and had found these interesting and rewarding experiences.

I went to Wolverhampton – there was... all the managers and everything and we...had to do a play of what Safe Moves taught us about peer mentoring...to show what peer mentoring is in our point of view...I could relate to it because I have been there and got the T-shirt...

(Peer mentor)

A number of the young people who had become involved in peer mentoring said that they were interested in working with young people and/or in support work themselves and saw peer mentoring as a good way of both gaining experience and of helping others.

...I thought if I could help someone younger than me going through what I've been through then why not? I haven't peer mentored anyone though

(Peer mentor)

I'm doing this mentoring training. I'll hopefully be able to help somebody else...I can get something out of it, qualification wise, and they can get something out of it like having somebody to talk to – it's good.

(Peer mentor)

Only four of the interviewees had experience of mentoring a young person and only one of them had mentored for any length of time. Both mentors and mentees felt that the process was likely to be a valuable one.

Certainly in my experience they [Safe Moves users] benefit a great deal from speaking to someone who is actually nearer their age and have been in that situation as well. I think it is really encouraging for them to think 'well, you're only a couple of years older than me, you've been where I was but you are doing all right now' it gives them hope.

(Peer mentor)

I found it quite emotional to think that a young girl what four or five years younger than me has the same problems that I am struggling with and I thought 'she's only young, she shouldn't be going through all this'...I felt quite tearful afterwards but I can speak to [Safe Moves worker] I was a bit wary about that at first because of confidentiality but because it is within the agency I can actually talk to [Safe Moves] about what was discussed and ask their advice...If there was a problem and I thought it best if other people knew I would try to persuade her to tell someone – but I can break confidentiality if the young person or someone else is at risk...I think she [mentee] found it quite easy to talk to me because there was not too much of an age difference...it's not that long since I left school. I started talking about Eastenders to break the ice and then once she felt comfortable she started talking about her problems – she told me more in an hour than she had told the others...

(Peer mentor)

I have got two peer mentors but I've only met them once so I haven't really got to know them, but it seems good, they are a couple of years older than me. It is good to have someone to talk to about my own age.

(Young person)

While many young people thought mentoring was a good idea some did not feel that mentoring would be appropriate for them.

It has been mentioned again...but I didn't fancy it although it might help other people and it is nice to be offered. It just doesn't seem right to me because it is like being given a friend and they might not want to be there much, they are just

doing their job and I would much rather go and talk to my own friends about things – but I know why they do it, it is to give you someone neutral in case you can't talk to your friends about the problem – or the problem is your friend...

(Young person)

A peer mentor? They probably did offer me one but I can't remember – but at the time I wasn't in the right mind for one. I can see that it might help some people to have someone to talk to.

(Young person)

Family mediation

It appeared particularly important that family mediation services adopted a flexible and integrated approach to working with young people and their families. The closer the working relationship between mediators and the Safe Moves Coordinator, the better the service appeared to work overall. For example, in Suffolk, the work of an independent mediator/counsellor had been integrated into the Safe Moves service to the extent that the Safe Moves Coordinator had day-to-day contact with the mediator. In Birmingham, family mediation was part of the same preventative service team at St Basils making the referral process straightforward and feedback possible. In addition, the approach to family mediation was also important – whilst adopting a very professional approach, both of the above services were not 'formal' in approach, rather a bespoke service had been developed in response to young people's needs:

We see our project having another arm and that is a counselling arm... when [Family mediation service] and I started working around the mediation process... because of the age group we were working with it was too much, they couldn't cope with the idea of mediation, you know parents sitting there and someone in the middle because they didn't want to get their parents into trouble....

(Safe Moves worker)

...some of its so alien to what I do as a counsellor...sitting in a little café, talking about really heavy stuff and obviously we need to make sure we are not overheard, but usually we manage to find some quiet little place, but I've asked them all why does it work, what is it you get from it, but they've all said to me in different ways that it wouldn't work just sitting in a room and I know with children you have to do something...I think its having something to do while you're talking, a coffee or a bun or whatever, just a little bit of emotional safety.

(Mediator)

Across the projects, most young people mentioned that they had been offered a family mediation service, or more general assistance with trying to repair relationships at home. Some young people however did not feel that this service was appropriate to their present circumstances – often relationships with family had broken down to a level whereby the young person had already made the decision to move out of the family home or had already done so. In some cases, young people thought attempts at mediation might even make relationships at home worse. The family mediation service was obviously much more important for the younger age group where keeping them in the home, wherever this was possible and safe, was crucial.

[The Safe Moves] worker told me that if I wasn't happy living at home they could help me find accommodation but she also offered to try to sort things out with my father so that I could stay at home but I thought that would make things worse. I knew they [Safe Moves] wouldn't do anything without my consent.

(Young person)

Safe moves went to see my grandparents and explained everything to them about how it would be for me living down here [in foyer] and how I would get support from them if I needed it...just explained things really. There is no chance of me going back – I don't want to and I didn't want Safe Moves to try to help me move back to my grandparents or my mum's...but I see my family now and we are all getting on better now that I have moved...

(Young person)

They have already gone past the point of mediation, you know, we might be able to try mediation later on, when we have actually removed them from the situation, to bring them back into contact with the family and to support them in building that relationship back up again, but at the time usually when we get them the last place they want to be is home, the last person they want to speak to is a parent or carer....

(Family mediator)

In a number of cases the young people felt that their relationships with their parents and family had improved since they had moved out and they saw no need for mediation. In other cases young people could not move back despite enjoying improved relations with their parents because circumstances had changed.

No. It's sort of interfering with something that doesn't need interfering with because I am all right with my mum and my stepdad and my real dad now so I don't think it is needed...I think they [Safe Moves] did ask me but I said no...

(Young person)

I can't really go and live with my mother because although I get on all right with her now she is not very well and the bungalow is too small for me and the baby.

(Young person)

The young people who were receiving family mediation/counselling however explained how much they valued this service. Mediation was seen as helping improve relationships with parents, often through increasing young people's own understanding of the circumstances, helping them to think through strategies to cope at home and thereby increasing their feelings of confidence and control over their lives. One young person who had had counselling in the past commented on the approach of the mediator and the friendly relationship they enjoyed and compared this with the approach of other agencies she had worked with.

They just help you talk and listen to each other...get your way round arguing by talking and hearing each other, and that works really well rather than just being told to stop arguing... Its solving the problem before it starts really ...She [family mediator] took me to her house and helped me make Christmas presents for people – I found that good because counsellor type people would make you sit somewhere like this [office] and ask very straight to the point questions and they

don't really come across like they care...but she took me to her own house and gave me lunch and we just sat there...making things and having a giggle and that's what I like about it, it is not too impersonal. I think she genuinely tries to be a friend as well as a kind of mediator but without getting too involved because she can't.

(Young person)

It's made quite a difference actually. I thought it was really good because I has a lot of problems with people not really listening you know. People don't want to listen and it was like someone was listening and it's just been great.

(Young person)

More generally, some people who did not want formal family mediation appreciated the emotional and moral support that the project worker offered to them when they were going through difficulties at home and/or more informal help with speaking to parents.

I think what I appreciated most was when me and my mum had arguments and fights that I could 'phone her straight away and she would drop everything and come and see me. I thought that was amazing...

(Young person)

They [Safe Moves] spoke to my dad and to my mum...really what they did was come up with ideas of things that I could try like talking to my dad about things that are bugging me and asking him to cut down on the drinking and things like that – just giving me an action plan to sort things out ... they offered counselling to help me and my dad but I wanted to sort things out first... My father is all right about Safe Moves – I go home and tell him what we've talked about at meetings, about my action plan etc and he thinks it is good.

(Young person)

Life-skills

The delivery of life-skills to young people was an integral part of the role of the support offered by both Safe Moves workers, other key workers (mainly Connexions PAs) and peer mentors. With only one or two exceptions, Safe Moves staff were delivering life-skills as part of their general support to young people, rather than organising accredited life-skills training course. This did however require time for working with young people: one project Coordinator working part-time felt that there was not enough time to deliver enough life-skills and that formal programmes were in need of development.

I have struggled with life skills actually, the element in this programme because I don't see it as a separate thing, I don't see it as this prescriptive thing that everyone troops in sits in a circle, you know, shares a bit of themselves and then learns budgeting...I have never known that to work. It is much better to get them involved doing an activity and you slip it in without them realising it and all of a sudden they have learned that skill – later on you can alert them to the fact that they've learned it....

(Safe Moves worker)

That is probably what we are doing most of, albeit not from a formalised programme, that's definitely what we do...just really being able to cope, budgeting, where to go for things, where to go to access help, just very, very basic things.

(Connexions PA)

In particular, those young people who were no longer living at home were given assistance with managing a household, including how to pay bills, budget, eat healthily and so on. The young people themselves did not always see the support they had received from Safe Moves as 'life-skills training' but many said that they had received support with a range of 'life-skills'.

Managing money – no chance! Safe Moves sort of like – if I tell them I have my Giro coming tomorrow and is there any chance of you coming shopping with me so that I know what I'm buying – so that I don't spend it all on fags and beer, stupid things...so yeah, they help me manage my money and there are people in the foyer who help me manage my money...

(Young person)

They helped me cope, they supported me...they told me what to eat – well advised me what to eat and not to have microwave meals all the time...they would come and see me and ask me how I was managing with bills, water, electricity and everything

(Young person)

Some young people living in Foyers or other supported accommodation said that they received this type of support from their key workers and therefore did not require additional life-skills training from Safe Moves.

I didn't need help with budgeting or cooking – I have a key worker.

(Young person)

All pilot projects were investigating ways of offering more formal packages of training and in two areas this had been tried for one or two young people however a full programme was not in operation in any area. The development of national level resources in this area would be important for future work. A couple of staff and key agency representatives also pointed out that other agencies in the area already offered formal life-skills training to young people (for example, via the local Pupil Referral Unit). In one area in particular, it was thought that it was quite difficult to offer a distinctive life-skills package:

There is a raft of life-skills training available to young people in [pilot area], social services put it on, all sorts of employers do it, there are some voluntary agencies that do it... so it was difficult I think to see what else this was going to add really...But again, where it could have added value would have been for the under 16s aspect of it...

(Agency representative)

However, within their general support role, pilot projects placed a high emphasis on helping young people develop practical and also social skills. Young people also talked about how Safe Moves had helped them develop skills in other ways such as through peer mentoring

training, providing social activities and by encouraging young people to become involved in activities such as youth clubs, sports, the Millennium Volunteers, the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme and the Prince's Trust (see other services below). One project had organised a social activity once a month to help team building and lift people's spirits; this was also an opportunity for young people to relate to each other and improve inter-personal skills.

For me that is the most integral part of it, that is what is needed. We just feel that this is what we do, the support package is about those day to day life-skills and whatever is needed, and that is what our project is based around...now I would argue that all of the work that has been done with them is life-skills, because for each and everyone of them it was different each time we met with them.

(Safe Moves worker)

Help with finding and moving into accommodation

A number of young people had received assistance with accessing more appropriate accommodation. Where young people were homeless, the first priority for Safe Moves staff was to find them safe accommodation. This often involved providing expert advice, practical support with making applications but also importantly an advocacy role for the young person in terms of liaising with the council and other housing providers. At one stage in the pilot, the Safe Moves workers were carrying out considerable pre-tenancy work with young people before they moved into one of the foyers – the foyer manager explained that they would not have been unable to accept them without this support. In other cases, Safe Moves workers were working with young people who were at risk of eviction from the foyer – at least two evictions had been prevented because of the support offered.

They arranged a meeting with the council as I was homeless at the time – and the council put me somewhere just like that. It was good because they've never done it like that before, normally I have to wait weeks before they put me somewhere, they say, 'stay with friends, stay here, there and everywhere'... Cos [the project coordinator] was there, because she is part of a different project, and because she is an adult I suppose, they listen to me more when she was there...

(Young person)

Other types of help

As the monitoring information demonstrated (see earlier in chapter), delivering other services to young people represented a considerable proportion of activity of the Safe Moves projects. Much of this activity represented widely defined life-skills work, including social activities, accompanying young people to appointments and so on. The young people explained that Safe Moves had helped them in a wide variety of other ways: accessing employment, training and education; accessing, and encouraging the pursuit of, leisure interests, hobbies and activities; confidence building; general emotional support and practical support.

Safe Moves projects explained that occasionally they had to provide young people with money, clothes and/or food at times of crisis, as well as making sure that they were eating properly (for example, accompanying the young person when shopping for food). Hands on

practical support was really appreciated by young people, in one of the examples below practical help made all the difference between a young person getting a job or not.

When she said that she would do anything I wanted I didn't realise that was exactly what she meant...once it was early in the morning, about 7am and she was there...she came in someone else's car, she had to get a lift. I had an interview that day and she took me somewhere to freshen up...I got to the interview on time because of her – and I got the job.

(Young person)

I think she [Safe Moves worker) took me to court or she arranged for someone to take me...she stopped me from getting arrested as well – I couldn't pay my fine and she helped with the appeal – so she has helped me out there as well...

(Young person)

... they helped me with my flat. I didn't have anything...little things you know really helped...they have lots of connections who can help out...she bought me a present – some pyjamas and she got me a duvet and pillow cases...

(Young person)

A number of young people explained that Safe Moves had supported them quite considerably in terms of accessing education, training or employment. Young people explained that the workers tried to find out what really interested them, and tried to support them with their choices. Much of this work appeared to help young people believe in themselves, help support them in finding a direction, as well as literally helping them to access relevant information, fill out college and job applications etc. Projects usually liased with Connexions/ Careers in these tasks, although still took a very active role in helping young people make decisions.

I think she [Safe Moves worker) was quite useful...like anything I said she'd like say 'what would you like to do?' and I said 'I don't know' so she goes 'alright then, what are you interested in?' so I was telling her what I was interested in and everything I said I was interested in, she looked into it for me....she's probably the person who made me realise that I wanted to go back to college...she's done me a favour like that...

(Young person)

They [Safe Moves worker and family mediator] helped me get the waitressing job – looking in the paper and on the Internet and the Job Centre website

(Young person)

An essential element of providing support was seen as offering emotional literacy in terms of developing young people's self esteem and interest in life.

If they feel better about themselves they are then more able to deal with the crap that is thrown at them, and that is the crux of our project, if we can help that young person, help them feel that they are worth something, that they are valuable, and that they have a right to be valued, then they are more capable of

dealing with a lot of the issues, we can't change all of the issues, and it's about recognising that we can't do that, but what we can do is help them to feel better about themselves...

(Safe Moves worker)

She took an interest and she told me about all sorts of things going on that I could get into...Through Safe Moves you get to meet a lot of...a lot of doorways open. She [Safe Moves worker] has brought us to a lot of productions and things...and she like brings us to places that we probably wouldn't even know about or get to go to...it opens your eyes a bit too...Safe Moves has got me something else to do with my spare time – something constructive.

(Young person)

Approach to delivering the support

As Chapter Two explained, most projects worked from a number of different formal settings (foyers, youth centres etc) and also met with young people in community facilities and/or cafés as well as sometimes the home of the young person. Whilst there was not a consistent approach, it appeared that a flexible and proactive approach to meeting with young people was most successful. One project had based itself exclusively at the local foyer for the first half of the pilot and this appeared to be a reason for their relatively lower level of engagement with young people at this stage.

Geographically, I think its also been difficult... people have to have a reason to come here...So when we have got a referral through, engaging with the young person, giving the young a reason to come into the project has also been difficult.

(Safe Moves worker)

A flexible approach to using different means of communication to keep in touch with young people was also important. Speaking on the telephone or mobile, and text messaging appeared to be an effective way of maintaining contact with young people. For young people, it also meant that they had more or less immediate access to their Safe Moves worker. Contact by letter was a less successful method of communication with young people sometimes ignoring paperwork and potential appointments.

She always used to say 'don't 'phone me, text me and I'll 'phone you back' because she didn't want me to use up all my credit...

(Young person)

In the letter they [Safe Moves] said that they had accepted me and asked me to 'phone to arrange an appointment and if there was no-one there to leave a message and they would get back to me...that is all I can remember the letter saying. They haven't done anything...I think it would have been better if they had 'phoned me or come to see me.

(Young person)

It is nice to be able to speak to someone even if it is 9 pm and you have had an argument with your mum or something and you are really angry and just need to speak to someone about it. She [family mediator] is a person that you can ring and she wouldn't be rude with me because it is 9 pm. She would be understanding

and she would want to speak about it because obviously I am upset and she is going to be concerned about it and will want to make sure I am all right. It is a nice feeling to know that someone cares...

(Young person)

It was also important that Safe Moves workers were proactive in being the ones to initiate and sustain contact levels with young people. Some Safe Moves users recognised they were not very good at keeping appointments or staying in touch, whilst others explained that they only tended to contact the worker when they were having problems. Whilst some young people seemed happy with this approach, there was an implication that the projects may have been able to help at an earlier stage in some cases. Early on, it was recognised by two projects that the service needed to be more proactive to ensure the continuity of service.

I like them [Safe Moves workers] they are all right and I get on with them...they told me what they could help me with and offered help but I screwed it up by not keeping appointments because I forget everything...

(Young person)

We need some sort of framework... that is just regularly keeping in touch with that young person, saying, 'how is it going', 'do you still need that support?'... I think we've had a lot of young people go through..., but I think our impact on them could be greater. Because when I look at the issues that they present with, they are complex and multiple, and its going to need a consistent, proactive approach, and I'm not saying that they haven't had an input, I'm saying that we need to make it more consistent, and possibly more proactive.

(Agency Representative)

One project had, by contrast, adopted a very proactive approach to working with young people, including daily contact with some young people at crisis points, and often also made sure people were up in the morning, attending activities much as a parent might do. The young people mainly appreciated this.

I was seeing her near enough every day, different times but near enough every day...sometimes I felt low and I needed five minutes to get more positive...she helped me all the way through, she was there at the other end of the 'phone. She would ring at weekends 'how has the weekend gone? Has anybody kicked off? Anything happened?' If there had we would chat and then she would come to see me in the morning.

(Young person)

Overall, regular weekly or sometimes fortnightly contact with young people appeared to represent the most reasonable approach, although occasionally more intensive contact was required during periods of crisis. Support often became less intense over time.

I don't see [Safe Moves worker] – I saw her a lot at the beginning but now it is mainly [family mediator]. I generally see her once a fortnight, I think that is good because it gives us a chance to work on what was said between meetings and actually use what was said.

(Young person)

All the young people appeared to like the Safe Moves workers as people, finding them friendly and approachable.

...it has been more of a friendship really...I really only talk to her when I need help, she has always been there when I have been having trouble

(Young person)

...they are so nice and down to earth and they understand things and you don't feel like you have to hide things from them, you can say what you want and they won't feel any different about you...

(Young person)

Inter-agency working

Effective links between Safe Moves and other agencies were crucial in order to deliver a holistic service to young people.

The most important relationship for Safe Moves was the one with Connexions. As Chapter Two mentioned, there were some difficulties in establishing effective working methods in the early days in two of the pilot areas, chiefly due to differences in organisational culture as well as Connexions having only recently been established. However, as the project developed, all four projects established good working relations with their Connexions counterparts. This took different forms in different areas. For example, in Ryedale the Connexions PA referred on all cases where young people had a housing need and ceased working with the young people themselves. In other areas, Connexions and Safe Moves staff supported young people at the same time (although not necessarily continuously) with Safe Moves tending to operate as the 'intensive arm' of Connexions. However, both these models worked well and appeared to fit into different Connexions service structures through the country. The most important part of the relationship relied on a clarity of roles: each worker needed to know when and why they were working with the young person – this sometimes took time to develop and agree. Generally, the relationships seemed to work best when Safe Moves was the main worker with the young person, rather than both workers trying to commit a similar input. The relationship also relied on the respective staff working closely together to ensure that all the young people's needs were met.

This has provided a model that I would like to rolled out across the county because it means that my PAs can happily refer, they recognise the importance of communication, our PA will assess that young person and all that information will be passed on to [the Safe Moves worker] who will engage in support and our PA will come in as and when...when [the Safe Moves worker] decides it is time to exit then the PA will be ongoing...the one thing that Safe Moves has provided for my PAs is some intensive support to bring about real and meaningful change which a PA cannot realistically do because of the complexity of the needs.

(Agency representative)

Relationships with other agencies were less straightforward and sometimes difficult to negotiate. Most areas found it particularly difficult to engage social services and this was a great concern to them given the age group and background of many young people referred to Safe Moves. One project did have a few example of working alongside family workers from social services, but another project described Safe Moves' role as 'running behind social

services' to try and pick up the pieces where the latter were unable to engage properly due to stretched resources. Even where social services were engaged, there were concerns that not enough time was available to work effectively with the family.

...we go to case conferences with families who have 10 and 11 year olds and you just know that 4 or 5 years down the line that that person is going to come to you but because social services are involved and they've got this family support worker or this social worker, social services don't have the time to do the kind of things that Safe Moves can do with young people, but because that agency is there, that's okay, but I actually think they are failing because these people are still coming through at 16.

(Agency representative)

A key issue in some areas, but not others, was confidentiality and sharing of information. This was a particular problem in one of the urban areas where agencies did not feel in a position to share information with each other (in some cases this even extended to Connexions). This was experienced as very frustrating by all parties and often meant that young people were continually re-assessed by new workers. One agency representative commented:

I found it quite difficult to know what was expected of me. Yes, I wanted to be part of the project, and yes I was more than happy to give whatever I could but it was quite difficult to know what did you want me to give you, apart from the information you wanted that my hands were tied and I couldn't give you, so it was very difficult to feel involved as you wanted to be. Trying to figure out where you were trying to go all the while, I got a bit lost.

(Agency representative)

Different roles and links between similar organisations was sometimes confusing to young people – where they had contact with a number of agencies, young people could find it difficult to differentiate between Safe Moves workers and other support workers. For many young people, Safe Moves offered a more intensive service and this differentiated it from other types of support.

It's [Safe Moves] the same really [as support from foyer workers], well it is sort of the same. Like you can tell [Safe Moves] the same as you tell everyone in the office but she'll help me more if I want to go somewhere...say I had to go to court or something, she'd help. Or if I needed money for the bus, she'd give it to you as long as you give her a receipt. Or if you don't have food, she'd help

(Young person)

I think they said that they could help me find work, employment or training...just generally sorting me out really and helping me to understand what I could do in the future. I did wonder how they were different from Connexions but when I met them it was different – I didn't have a relationship with Connexions like I do with them...I think Safe Moves is still working on the same basis but they are working with people about homelessness and that now, and drugs and alcohol, they were doing that with me when I was in a bit of a state. At first I thought Safe Moves was all about training and employment...

(Young person)

However, a small number of respondents were unsure whether Safe Moves was working with them, when the support started and what Safe Moves was for. This was particularly the case where contact with the project had been minimal e.g. where Safe Moves had referred the young person to another agency.

When I moved here I wasn't with Safe Moves, well maybe I was but I didn't know... I am not sure what else Safe Moves has done or if they are doing anything now. I think they helped get my flat

(Young person)

[Safe Moves worker] was never that involved. I am not sure what her place in it all is really. I met her initially but no, not since, she hasn't come to talk to me or anything...I'm not bothered because I don't know what she is there for anyway...

(Young person)

Overall, many young people stated that they preferred Safe Moves to other services that they had contact with as they felt that staff listened to them to a greater extent and treated them as an equal rather than as a child.

It's hard to do anything when you are young because no-one listens to, that's why I was eager like to get into Safe Moves and stuff, as they sounded friendly, which they were, and they seemed to listen a lot more than the council and social services, they listen to young people a lot more...

(Young person)

They are kind of useful to have around, they are the most useful service I've found. I mean there are [other organisations and agencies] but I don't find them very helpful, to me they just want to get paid. I mean their heart is not in it...

(Young person)

Young people had very mixed experiences of other services:

...social services, which I have been involved with, don't do that good a job, I don't feel, even though they are supposed to be like 'big social services', they are kind of a bit too relaxed for my liking about things like that [housing], they don't take it as urgently, whereas if I turned around to [family mediator], 'I really can't stay here anymore', for whatever reason, I have confidence that she will get it sorted like that, she'll do it, she'll do her best... I have all my trust in her.

(Young person)

Social services are always very helpful and I have someone come to visit me every now and again to make sure that things are calm. I think that they are pleased that [family mediator] is involved and sorting things out – it saves them a bit of work I suppose. I see them once every two months or so – whatever they think appropriate I suppose...

(Young person)

Conclusion

This chapter has presented the findings on the delivery of the Safe Moves services to young people. Partly due to the difficulties in establishing the core services, the pilots developed flexibly to meet young people's needs and delivered, or facilitated access to, a wide range of services and support in addition to the three core services. The young people who received the core services generally said that they had benefited from these but it was also clear that many young people found the additional services such as more general advice and practical support helpful. Young people also appreciated the friendly approach of Safe Moves workers. Most of the pilot projects became direct providers of support rather than adhering rigidly to the original model of service broker. A number of key points arise:

- In order to meet young people's needs and to deliver services in different local contexts the pilots demonstrated the importance of developing and delivering services flexibly whilst retaining a commitment to delivering the core services on which the Safe Moves model was based.
- Effective links between Safe Moves and other organisations were essential in delivering the full range of services to young people.
- Young people appeared to benefit from family mediation and from life skills training, but the success of peer mentoring is more difficult to gauge. Whilst peer mentors appeared to have gained benefits from the training there is little evidence available about the impact of mentoring on the young people.
- As noted earlier, project workers had to adopt a proactive approach in order to sustain contact with young people. Telephone or mobile calls and text messaging appeared to be the most effective way of doing this.

5 The Safe Moves initiative: outcomes and costs

This final substantive chapter considers the overall effectiveness of the Safe Moves initiative both in terms of the impact of the project on the lives of young people, other agencies, and the costs of providing the service. The chapter begins by examining the overall outcomes of the project using the project monitoring database to analyse changes in status over time. The chapter then discusses the overall impact of the project from the perspective of young people, staff and key agencies. Finally, the costs of the service are reviewed.

Outcomes of the Safe Moves projects

Open and closed cases at the end of the evaluation period

As already noted (Chapter Three), the projects had worked with 152 young people over the course of the pilot period. Eighty of these young people were still receiving the Safe Moves service on 31st March 2004. Table 5.1 shows the number of open and closed cases for each project during the period of the evaluation.

Table 5.1:
Open and closed cases by project as at 31st March 2004

	Birmingham	Wolverhampton	Ryedale	Suffolk	Total
Open cases	22 (71%)	23 (36%)	21 (70%)	14 (52%)	80 (53%)
Closed cases	9 (29%)	41 (64%)	9 (30%)	13 (48%)	72 (47%)
Base	31 (100%)	64 (100%)	30 (100%)	27 (100%)	152 (100%)

Source: Project monitoring database (percentages are rounded). (1st March 2003 to 31st March 2004). Data were missing from the project monitoring database for 15 cases.

Wolverhampton had experienced the highest number of referrals and worked with the largest number of young people. The majority of the cases that the project had dealt with were closed by 31st March 2004. The four projects were each working with an open caseload of between 14-23 young people during the spring of 2004. The projects had provided a service to a quite large number of young people during 13 months of operation.

Reasons for leaving

The project monitoring database recorded the main reason why contact between a project and a young person had stopped (Table 5.2). Just over a quarter (27 per cent) of leavers left as the service had come to a planned end. This tended to be because the young person was settled in their housing situation and had resolved any key personal crises or issues where the project was able to assist. In just over a third (36 per cent) of cases, young people stopped attending the project. Sometimes this occurred when a young person appeared to be coping quite well but simply did not formally sever contact once their needs had been met. In other cases, young people had never fully engaged with the service and the projects lost contact with the young people. Just under a quarter (23 per cent) of young people left the project as Safe Moves was unable to keep working with that young person. This occurred under a number of different situations, including because a young person was referred onto more appropriate support services or the young person moved geographical location.

**Table 5.2:
Reasons for leaving Safe Moves (closed case as at 31st March 2004)**

Housing status	Number (%) of young people
Service came to planned end	18 (27%)
Young person stopped attending	23 (36%)
Project unable to keep working with young person	15 (23%)
Other	8 (13%)
Base	64 (100%)

Source: Project monitoring database (percentages are rounded) No data were available in eight cases.

Housing situation

The central objective of the Safe Moves pilots was to promote greater housing stability among young people who were at risk of homelessness. The promotion of greater housing stability was anticipated to have a number of other beneficial effects, as the factors that might lead to a situation where a young person was at risk of homelessness might undermine their life chances in other respects. For example, a young person with a disrupted home life might also be a young person who is experiencing difficulties at school and in other aspects of their development and ability to pursue opportunities.

Tables 5.3 and 5.4 show the housing situation for open cases as at 31st March 2004 and closed cases respectively. The tables compare the absolute numbers of young people in given housing situations at different points in time, but they do not show the individual housing pathways of young people. For example, the 38 young people living at home at the point of their referral to the project shown in Table 5.3 were not all represented among the 39 young people who were living at home as at 31st March. The figure of 39 young people included a few who had returned home, while a few of the 38 who had been at home were in alternative accommodation by 31st March 2004. Nevertheless, these tables can be used to give an overview of the success of the projects in helping young people to sustain secure housing.

**Table 5.3:
The housing situations of young people working with Safe Moves for currently open cases as at 31st March 2004**

Housing situation	Number of young people at referral	Number of young people as at 31 st March 2004
In family home*	38 (49%)	39 (50%)
With relatives	4 (5%)	4 (5%)
In care or foster home	2 (2%)	2 (2%)
Hostel or other supported (including foyer)	13 (17%)	16 (21%)
Insecure accommodation**	15 (19%)	11 (14%)
Other situation	6 (8%)	4 (5%)
Resettled into permanent accommodation	Not applicable	2 (4%)
Base	78 (100%)	78 (100%)

Source: Project monitoring database (percentages are rounded). (1st March 2003 to 31st March 2004). Data were missing from the project monitoring database for two cases. * includes lone parent and parent & step-parent ** includes temporary accommodation and living on friends floors etc.

Table 5.4:
The housing situations of young people working with Safe Moves for closed cases as at 31st March 2004

Housing situation	Number of young people at referral	Number of young people at the point of leaving the Safe Moves service
In family home*	28 (40%)	31 (44%)
With relatives	7 (10%)	6 (9%)
In care or foster home	4 (6%)	5 (7%)
Hostel or other supported (including foyer)	8 (11%)	9 (13%)
Insecure accommodation**	14 (20%)	8 (12%)
Other situation	9 (13%)	8 (11%)
Resettled into permanent accommodation	Not applicable	3 (4%)
Base	70 (100%)	70 (100%)

Source: Project monitoring database (percentages are rounded). (1st March 2003 to 31st March 2004). Data were missing from the project monitoring database for two cases. * includes lone parent and parent & step-parent ** includes temporary accommodation and living on friends floors etc.

Young people were clearly remaining in, or returning to, the family home. Half of the open cases were in the family home at the point at which the evaluation came to an end, while 44 per cent of closed cases were in the family home at the point at which they stopped using the Safe Moves service. The projects were also having some successes in helping young people into permanent accommodation, as five young people had been resettled in this way (three closed cases and two open cases, tables 5.3 and 5.4). Young people were also being helped into supported accommodation such as hostels or foyers in some instances.

The projects were succeeding in reducing the overall numbers of young people who were in insecure accommodation. The numbers in this situation, among both open and closed cases, had dropped, with 10 less young people in insecure accommodation than was the case at referral (four open cases and six closed cases, tables 5.3 and 5.4).

When individual cases were examined, there was further evidence that Safe Moves was having a beneficial effect on the housing status of many of the young people with whom it worked. In two-fifths of both open and closed cases, Safe Moves was helping to maintain, or had helped to maintain, a young person in their parental home. Forty-three per cent of open cases had been in their parental home at referral and were still there on 31st March 2004 and 39 per cent of closed cases had been referred to Safe Moves while living in the parental home and were still there when contact with the service ceased. There is evidence in the tables that Safe Moves was working with young people who had returned to the parental home (five young people among open cases and four young people among closed cases) and that young people were moving into supported housing and being resettled while in contact with the Safe Moves projects.

Within a picture of general success in promoting housing stability among young people, the Safe Moves projects were not always instrumental in addressing the housing needs of a few of the young people within whom they worked. Eight young people (11 per cent) among the closed cases remained in insecure accommodation throughout their contact with the project although no-one among the closed cases had become insecurely accommodated when they left a project. There were some young people who were still in insecure accommodation, or who had entered insecure accommodation, among the open cases, however, these young people were still being worked with and their housing situation may have been improved by the time their contact with the projects ceased. Figure 5.1 summarises some of the key findings on housing status by the different projects.

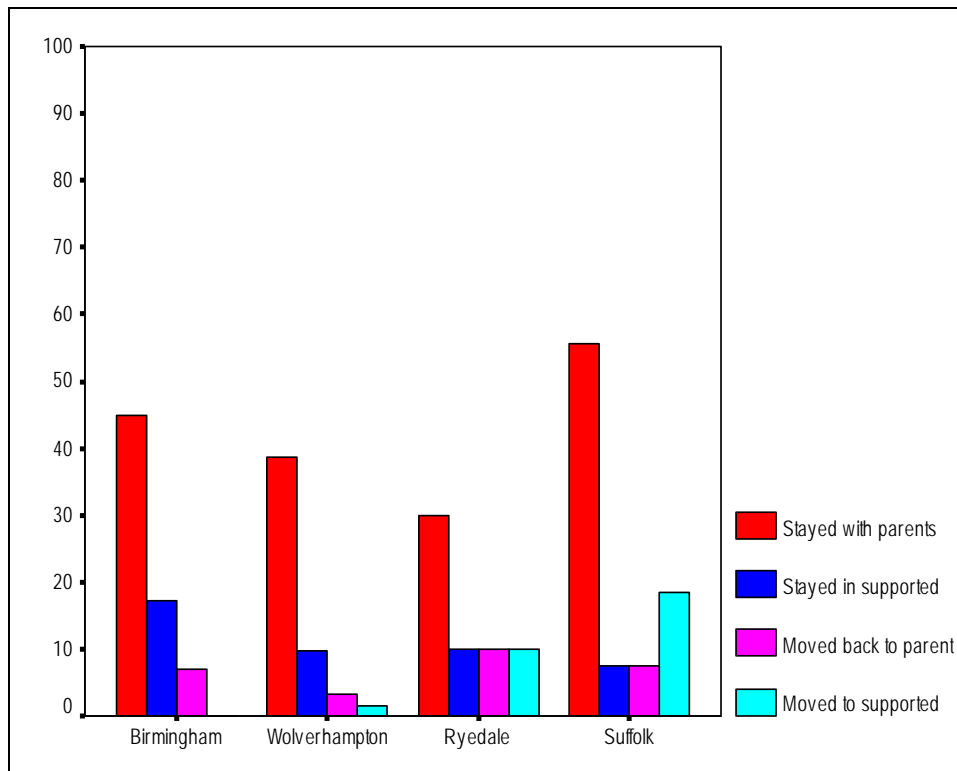


Figure 5.1: Housing moves by young people by project (by percentage of all cases for each project)
Source: Project monitoring database **Base:** 152 young people (12 missing cases)

As Figure 5.1 shows, Suffolk had the highest proportion of young people among its open and closed cases that were or had remained in their parental home (including lone parents and a parent and a step-parent). Young people in Suffolk were also proportionately more likely to make a move to supported housing.

The Safe Moves projects appeared to promote a quite marked fall in the tendency of the young people with whom they worked to run away from their current accommodation. As Figure 5.2 shows, over half the cases that were open on 31st March 2004 had run away from home prior to referral (53 per cent), but this figure had fallen to less than a quarter (23 per cent) since their contact with Safe Moves began. Among closed cases, 60 per cent of young people had reported running away at the point at which they had been referred to Safe Moves, a figure that had fallen to 29 per cent during their time in contact with the project. These data are slightly incomplete, but they do indicate a likely effect on housing stability associated with contact with the Safe Moves projects. This effect was common to all the projects, but was most pronounced for the Ryedale and Suffolk projects (Figure 5.3).

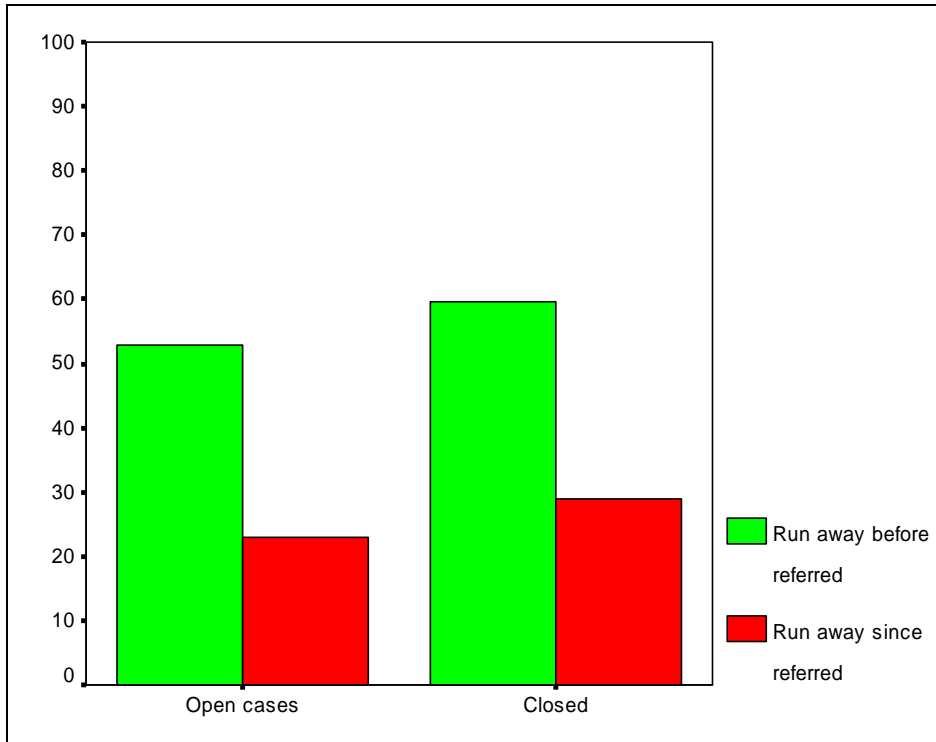


Figure 5.2: Young people running away at referral and running away since referral as percentage of all young people **Source:** Project monitoring database (1st March 2003 to 31st March 2004) Base varies.

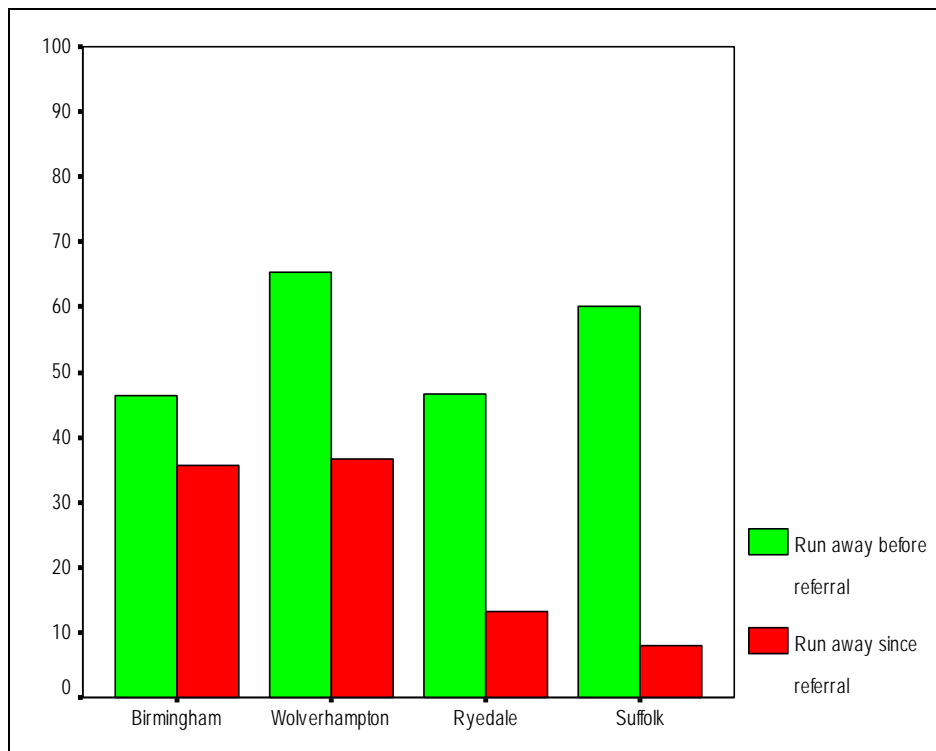


Figure 5.3: Young people running away at referral and running away since referral as percentage of young people in each project (open and closed cases) **Source:** Project monitoring database (1st March 2003 to 31st March 2004) Base varies.

Educational and economic situation

Safe Moves was not designed to specifically support education, training or job seeking. However, it was hoped that by promoting greater housing stability among young people who were at risk of homelessness, which would involve improving parent/child relationships, providing emotional and practical support and so forth, that the projects would contribute towards a better educational and economic situation for the young people with whom they worked. In addition, Chapter Four showed that each project provided a limited amount of support with finding jobs, education and training. However, from the data available, engagement with the Safe Moves projects did not make an impact on the education, training or employment status of young people including those who were in the highly excluded situation of being 'Not in Employment, Education or Training' (NEET).

Health status and support needs

As already noted, Safe Moves was primarily designed to promote housing stability and prevent homelessness among young people who were at risk of homelessness. There is some evidence of success in meeting this objective, as reported above. Although not a specific objective, Safe Moves implicitly worked towards the improvement of the general well-being of the young people with whom it worked.

With the exception of a quite marked fall in the tendency of young people to run away from their current accommodation, as is described above, those young people who had worked with Safe Moves (the closed cases) left the service with a very similar pattern of support needs to those which they had when they arrived. Figure 5.4 shows that patterns of offending, drug use, mental health problems and the rates at which young people were known to social services or on the Child Protection Register did not alter significantly between referral ('ref' in Figure 5.4) and their end of contact with the projects ('left' in Figure 5.4). No alteration was reported in the physical health needs or other support needs reported in Figure 5.4, but which are not displayed here.

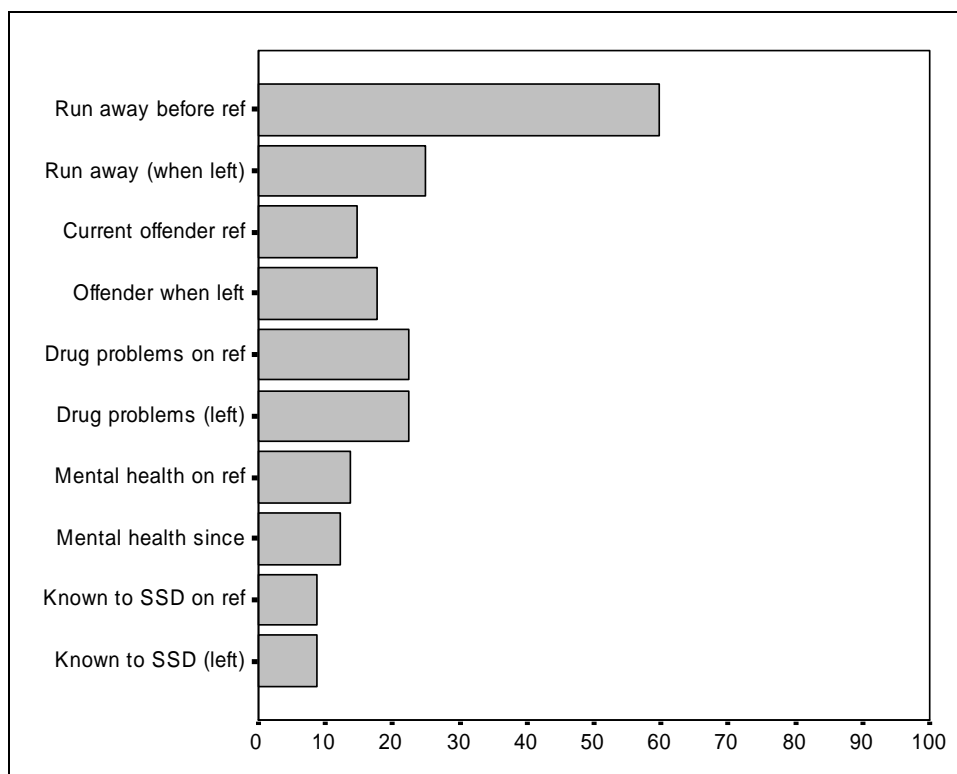


Figure 5.4: Support needs and characteristics of closed cases (by percentage of closed cases) **Source:** Project monitoring database (1st March 2003 to 31st March 2004)
 Note: Base varies for different factors shown as some data were missing from the project monitoring database *
 Known to social services department or on child protection register.

It is very important to note that the data shown in Figure 5.4 do not indicate a specific failure by the Safe Moves projects. These projects were intended to have a beneficial effect on the housing stability of young people at risk of homelessness, an effect that is demonstrable from an analysis of the project monitoring database. It might be anticipated that greater stability and security at home, or securing a home, for the young people with whom Safe Moves worked would produce positive outcomes in respect of other support needs, but at the same time, Safe Moves was a modest project with specific goals in relation to housing stability, not an attempt to produce a holistic service that would address all aspects of young people’s support, personal care and health care needs. Nonetheless the following section does indicate that qualitative measures of well-being had been influenced by the project.

Impact of the project: The perspective of service users and key agencies

Most of the young people interviewed felt that their lives had improved since being involved with Safe Moves, however, it was clear that young people had to co-operate in order to improve their situation and some young people, despite the best efforts of Safe Moves workers, found this difficult. In turn, Safe Moves workers had to be proactive in sustaining contact and in the early days of the pilot where systems were not sufficiently developed. This was not always achieved. Success of the project, in short, relied on engagement, and the relationship between the Safe Moves worker and/ or the family mediator or other workers. Safe Moves could occasionally intervene in a young person’s live on a one-off basis (having a chat with a young person thinking about leaving home and persuading them to stay put) but the majority of their work was based on longer term interventions that helped young people sustain change over time.

A number of young people explained how the service had made the difference between staying and leaving the parental home; here the Safe Moves projects were achieving their key aim of keeping home people in the family home. However, more importantly, the key change for some of the young people was a positive change in how they felt about being at home chiefly because they felt they could communicate to a greater extent with their parent (s) and this gave them a greater sense of control over their lives. In particular, family mediation/ counselling services appeared to be having a significant and positive impact on young people's lives.

...If I hadn't have come across Safe Moves I'd probably be in a lot worse circumstances than I have been in...I'd probably have ended up fighting with my dad all the time and he would have thrown me out and I would have ended up in the Foyer or living with a relative that I can't stand.

(Young person)

Things would probably have got worse at home...I think it would have been a lot worse without Safe Moves...I feel more positive about things now...

(Young person)

Basically, because its got me and my mum talking properly again...

(Young person)

... Young people are staying at home rather than sleeping rough, they are resolving issues of conflict rather than shutting the door and going, they are realising that their housing aspirations, in reality are different....

(Safe Moves worker)

The projects also supported some people with making 'safe moves' into appropriate supported or independent accommodation.

I am much happier living here on my own. I have had a lot of support from people and I have sorted out which way I want to go with my life... ...If I had just decided to leave home I think I'd have done very badly, I wouldn't have known where to turn, I would probably have ended up on the streets...

(Young person)

I think it would have been very difficult without Safe Moves because like when I had to go to the council to sort out benefits and things to move here I wouldn't have known what to do and they helped me...

(Young person)

Irrespective of the young person's housing situation, contact with Safe Moves and related services appeared to impact positively on young people's overall attitudes to life and in particular health and emotional well-being. Some of these changes are unlikely to be observed in the statistical monitoring, but longitudinal work with some young people showed a real change in people's sense of control and levels of contentment with their lives. This appeared to be particularly the case for young women working with the project. Four young women aged 16 and 17 explained:

I used to be a compulsive spender, I used to drink every day but since I've met [Safe Moves worker] and this lot it has all stopped, so it's like helped me a bit...[without their help] I'd have probably done different things and not even bothered with it...I wouldn't have done any of it, I'd have just stayed with my mates, none of it would have clicked in my head...

(Young person)

When I had counselling and when I talked to [Connexions PA] it didn't stop me drinking or doing drugs...but being with [Safe Moves workers] really cheered me up. It does have an impact...my attitude has changed completely. I still have an anger problem...but since I've been talking to [Safe Moves workers] I haven't been in a fight and I haven't been in trouble with the police...my life is so much better now. I've got goals now...

(Young person)

I was learning to live as a proper human being. I was learning how to live without alcohol...without wanting to kill myself, learning how to build friendships because I had lost them all, learning how to get about to someone actually liking me...and she was there to tell me and to help me...basically just how to live, how to have a normal life...

(Young person)

I am totally happy with everything in my life at the moment and I can't say that it has ever been like that before. But no, I am. I've settled down and I am happy with everything that is going on and most of it is down to them [Safe Moves and family mediator] and their help.

(Young person)

However, it was clear that Safe Moves could not transform everyone's lives. In some cases the project was simply helping to maintain young people in a difficult situation but supporting them with this and helping ensure that life did not get worse. For example, Safe moves supported some young people in foyers where young people were finding it difficult to find a direction in life but where Safe Moves was helping them to keep a roof over their heads and attempting to generate interest in training and jobs over a long period of time.

It is just seeing them get up on a morning, get dressed, clean their flats, want to be there, want to be looking for a job, wanting to get themselves sorted, with a smiley face, instead of 'oh'...when our phone rings asking, 'where are you?', that's success, they are going, 'where are you', 'well, we're on our way down now', 'well, you said that...', 'we're coming', 'alright, just reminding you that you've got a meeting with me at 10.45', 'alright, we're coming', I think that's success: 'where are you, are you coming, I want to fill that application form out'...

(Safe Moves worker)

...they've kicked them up the backside and started looking at modern apprenticeships, entry to employment, careers, re-payment programmes for rent arrears...

(Agency representative)

In addition, the projects highlighted the positive impact for the young people who became peer mentors. Many of these young people, whilst in stable housing, were unemployed and trying to find a direction in their lives and the peer training represented an opportunity to build confidence and perhaps go on to more formal training or employment (see Chapter Three for young people's views). In one area, a number of Safe Moves service users had also undertaken the training and here it was also found to be a positive part of the project (here they did not peer mentor other Safe Moves young people but used their skills in welcoming new people at the foyer).

The young people, as peer mentors, we've watched them grow, we've watched them want to go into this line of work, thinking about education, these young people are the NEET group, they are not engaged in education, and we've found a creative way not only to be feel a part of something, you know, develop something, learn and get a qualification that they can take with them...so in terms of young people that we have trained, definitely they have gained and I know that they would say the same.

(Safe Moves worker)

Benefits to other agencies

Key agency representatives involved with the project felt that the project had offered significant benefits to their agencies in terms of working with a group of young people that, prior to the project, were largely unsupported. Safe Moves was able to offer the support that these other agencies would have liked to have been giving but were unable to do so as it was either not their role or they simply did not have the resources to work intensively with young people.

Housing agencies in particular felt that Safe Moves was providing a housing related support service that was invaluable and helped create and sustain an effective homelessness strategy for the area. This appeared to be particularly the case in the two rural areas where there were so few, or no, other housing support services for young people.

I think from our perspective, we are housing officers, we are not support workers and it is nice to have a project like this that you can refer to because we don't have the skills needed for the young people we deal with and of course they cause us major problems when we put them in B&B because of course they have lots of problems, homelessness is not their only problem and the system does fall down, completely fall down ...and up until now in [area] this has been left to the local authority because of the lack of social services...so it has been good to have someone to refer them to when we feel that they have deep problems that are way out of our league.

(Agency representative)

From a local authority point of view, it was a gift, you've got another organisation who is going to try and reduce the number of 16 and 17 year olds that you deal with, so you'd welcome it with open arms wouldn't you...It came at a time when the legislation changed for us as well, because legislation said we had to pick up 16 and 17 year olds....so there is now much more pressure, so we have this arrangement where you can follow it the whole way through, where Safe Moves are involved before that person has left the home, they plan, if they

are going to move, can they stay there, what services are going to go in, and if they do move... now you have somebody supporting them through that whole process...

(Agency representative)

The Connexions Service in some areas felt very similar to the housing agencies, appraising that Safe Moves was able to offer a complimentary service to their organisation. Two Connexions PAs working with the project explained:

From my point of view it's a gift, because I am a lone worker in [area]... that frees me up to work with more clients, because when a young person presents themselves as homeless, that is quite an intensive piece of work. Now I have done that in the past, but now I have Safe Moves, with the young person's permission, I refer them to Safe Moves, and the young people who talk back to me are very, very pleased with what they get.

(Agency representative)

Because in [area] there wasn't anything, I think it was something that was much needed because if young people were experiencing problems, a lot of the time they wouldn't even have anywhere to go, no-one would find out, they'd just go down the route of crime, which I think a lot of them probably end up doing, or just moving out of the area, and who knows? Certainly from my clients, they are all housed somewhere, they are all safe and bar a couple they are all engaging in employment or college or school.

(Agency representative)

Finally, a number of agency representatives commented how the service had acted as a catalyst to bring agencies together in an area and to address homelessness. In particular, the project had helped agencies to examine the issue in a new light – shifting the focus from crisis intervention to a preventative approach. Whilst this had taken time in some areas (see Chapter Two), a re-orientation in thinking had occurred to a greater or lesser extent in all areas.

Better equipped professionals...youth and community workers, learning mentors, social services to a certain degree, Connexions PAs, youth offending workers, different people – they have all been told, 'look at risk', look at identifying risk in young people, early intervention, prevention, they've been told all this, but even to me in the beginning, when you are told all this, it goes over your head, you know it means something. And what Safe Moves has done, its had assessment criteria where you can show something tangible, you know, if a young person is experiencing this, they are likely to experience X...

(Agency representative)

The costs of Safe Moves

Safe Moves was funded for a 19-month pilot period (September 2002 – March 2004). Expenditure data, provided by the Foyer Federation, was examined by the research team, including copies of the monthly expenditure returns sent to the Foyer Federation by each of the pilot sites. According to the summary spreadsheet, total expenditure (including residual funding) to the end of March 2004 was £292,263. Total expenditure for the whole project (including expenditure in April and May 2004 and new funding to date for the 2004/05 financial year) was estimated to be £345,733.

Funding sources and the overall budget

Table 5.5a shows the budgeted income for Safe Moves, Table 5.9b records the actual income and Table 5.5c gives the percentage shares from each of the contributors. The tables show that funding has been raised from a variety of sources, though mainly from several different Government departments and/or programmes, reflecting the fact that youth homelessness is recognised as a problem by several different departments.

**Table 5.5a:
Safe Moves – Budgeted Income**

	Budgeted Income (£)			
	Budgeted 2001/02	Budgeted 2002/03	Budgeted 2003/04	Total Budgeted
Freemasons Grand Charity	50,000	-	-	50,000
Connexions	-	100,000	-	100,000
Department for Education and Skills – Children's' and Young Persons' Unit	-	90,000	-	90,000
Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) Homeless Directorate	-	5,000	-	5,000
ODPM – Evaluation Division	-	14,000	6,426	20,426
Youth Justice Board/National Probation Service	-	-	30,000	30,000
TOTALS	50,000	209,000	36,426	295,426

Source: Foyer Federation

**Table 5.5b:
Safe Moves – Actual Income**

	Actual Income (£)				
	Received 2001/02	Received 2002/03	Received 2003/04	Total to end March 2004	Total due by end Sept 2004
Freemasons Grand Charity	50,000	-	-	50,000	50,000
Connexions SNU	-	100,020	-	100,020	100,020
DfES – CYPU	-	22,500	-	22,500	90,000
ODPM – Homeless Directorate	-	5,000	-	5,000	5,000
ODPM – Evaluation Division	-	20,000	-	20,000	20,713
YJB/Nat Probation Service	-	-	-	-	30,000
TOTALS	50,000	147,520	-	197,520	295,733

Source: Foyer Federation

**Table 5.5c:
Safe Moves – Actual Income – Contributors’ Shares**

	Percentage Share of Actual Income
Freemasons Grand Charity	16.9%
Connexions SNU	33.8%
DfES – CYPUP	30.4%
ODPM – Homeless Directorate	1.7%
ODPM – Evaluation Division	7.0%
YJB/National Probation Service	10.2%
TOTAL	100.0%

Central expenditure

Data provided by the Foyer Federation shows that central expenditure to the end of March 2004 was £114,137. This expenditure has been classified under five budget headings, as shown in Table 5.6. The core costs are those incurred by the Foyer Federation for managing the overall project; almost all of these costs occurred during the early months of the pilot, including a residential launch event. Most of the management costs have been incurred by the overall Pilot Co-ordinator (fees and travel costs), working at a national strategic level to promote and develop the project. Research and evaluation included the costs of the present research and the design and running of a project database. Data provided by the Foyer Federation for 2004/05 show central expenditure of £3,520 during April and May 2004 and extra phase new funding of £10,420.

**Table 5.6:
Expenditure to end March 2004 by Budget Heading**

	Expenditure (£)			
	2002/03	2003/04	Total	% of Total
Core Costs	25,490	828	26,218	23.1%
Management Costs	18,162	12,147	30,309	26.5%
Residential	6,068	141	6,209	5.4%
Publicity & Dissemination	922	4,778	5,700	5.0%
Research & Evaluation	32,200	13,500	45,700	40.0%
Total	82,842	31,394	114,136	100.0%
% of Total	72.6%	27.4%	100.0%	

Source: Foyer Federation

Pilot site expenditure

Total expenditure by the four pilot sites is shown in Table 5.7. The total expenditure to the end of March 2004 of £180,526 includes residual (unspent) funding totalling £21,028; this gives a total expenditure of £294,662 to the end of March 2004 when central expenditure (£114,136) is included. If the residual funding is excluded, total expenditure by the four pilot sites during this period was £159,498. The table also shows the estimated expenditure in 2004/05 during the extra phase for each site (with an overall total of £33,000)⁸; Total expenditure by the pilot sites, according to this table, will therefore be £216,996.

⁸ However, it should be noted that expenditure of £3,470 by Wolverhampton in April 2004, central expenditure of £3,520 during April and May and £10,420 of extra phase new funding for central expenditure are excluded from this total.

**Table 5.7:
Total Expenditure by the Pilot Sites**

	2002/03	2003/04	Residual Funding	Total to end March 2004	Estimates for Extra Phase*
Birmingham	12,237	29,663	5,322	47,222	7,500
Wolverhampton	8,571	27,083	6,081	41,735	7,500
Ryedale	7,000	39,806	1,940	48,746	10,500
Felixstowe	5,673	29,465	7,685	42,823	7,500
TOTAL	33,481	126,017	21,028	180,526	33,000

* This excludes expenditure by Wolverhampton of £3,470 in April 2004

Source: Foyer Federation

Table 5.8 shows the total expenditure by the four pilot sites by budget heading. Total expenditure by the four pilot sites to the end of March 2004, including residual funding of £21,028, was £180,525. Although the project officially started in September 2002, 79 per cent (almost four-fifths) of the expenditure (excluding the residual funding) was incurred in 2003/04 as the pilots took a few months to get up and running.

Staff costs comprised slightly over three-quarters (77.2 per cent) of expenditure by the pilot sites – this heading included staff salaries and (where made) payments for supervision. The programme material heading accounted for the next highest percentage of expenditure (9 per cent) – this includes money spent on purchasing mediation services from local providers by two of the pilot sites. Capital expenditure (5.5 per cent) was mainly incurred during 2002/03 (i.e. when the projects were in their set-up phases). Running costs (3.1 per cent) included some payments made to mentors, though the costs of training mentors are recorded under recruitment and training (2.5 per cent). Finally, staff travel (2.7 per cent) accounted for a similar proportion of overall expenditure as recruitment and training. No specific costs have been recorded for providing life skills training (this may have been provided free of charge to referred clients by local educational establishments or provided by the Pilot Site Managers as part of their activity);

**Table 5.8:
Total expenditure by pilot sites, by budget heading**

	Expenditure (£)			
	2002/03	2003/04	Total	% of Total
Staff Costs	23,334	99,837	123,171	77.2%
Staff Travel	353	4,007	4,360	2.7%
Recruitment & Training	1,550	2,468	4,018	2.5%
Running Costs	1,722	3,151	4,873	3.1%
Capital Costs	6,183	2,528	8,711	5.5%
Programme Material	339	14,026	14,364	9.0%
Total (excl residual funding)	33,481	126,017	159,497	100.0%
% of Total	21.0%	79.0%	100.0%	
Residual funding			21,028	
Total (incl residual funding)			180,525	

Source: Foyer Federation

Table 5.9 summarises the main areas of expenditure by each pilot site. Staff costs varied between 66.3 per cent of total costs (Suffolk) to 83.4 per cent (Wolverhampton). Staff travel varied significantly according to whether the project was urban or rural based. In particular, nearly 6 per cent of the budget in Ryedale consisted of travel costs, here the project was working between two rural bases (Malton and Pickering) accounting for the higher cost than Suffolk where the project worked chiefly from one site in Felixstowe. Recruitment and training again was higher as a proportion of total cost in the rural areas; this also included the training of mentors.

Capital costs varied by project from 2 per cent in Ryedale to 10.5 per cent in Suffolk, and reflected the availability of differing amounts of capital resources to the host agencies, that is, in part the extent of 'in-kind' resources available from partner agencies (for example, the Ryedale project worked from a Community Education office where facilities were provided). Running costs (to cover telephones, mobile phones, ongoing office costs and peer expenses in one project) varied less from project to project, with a low of 1 per cent in Suffolk and high of 5 per cent in Wolverhampton.

Programme material costs represented 13-15 per cent of total costs in Birmingham and Suffolk, compared to 2-6 per cent in Wolverhampton and Ryedale. Expenditure on family mediation was included within this heading, and as shown in Chapter Four, the former two projects purchased more support in this area. For example, a total of £4,500 was spent on family mediation in Birmingham since September 2003 (at a fixed charge of £500 per young person) and £3,780 for mediation services in Suffolk. This compared to an expenditure of £372 on family mediation in Wolverhampton (after an introduction agency fee).

**Table 5.9:
Expenditure by pilot site**

	Expenditure (£ 2002/03 and 2003/4)			
	Birmingham	Wolverhampton	Ryedale	Suffolk
Staff Costs	79.6%	83.4%	78.5%	66.3%
Staff Travel	0.6%	0.2%	5.8%	3.8%
Recruitment & Training	-	1.7%	4.5%	3.7%
Running Costs	2.3%	4.9%	3.7%	1.2%
Capital Costs	3.8%	7.1%	1.9%	10.5%
Programme Material	13.7%	2.6%	5.6%	14.5%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	10.0%	100.0%
Total (£)	41,900	35,654	48,806	35,138
Residual funding (£)	5,322	6,081	1,940	5,673
Extra Phase New Funding (2004/05)	7,500	7,500	10,500	7,685

Source: Foyer Federation

The recorded costs at each pilot excluded values for services provided in kind – obviously costs would be higher and the percentage shares would alter if the market costs of such services were included. Each pilot was asked to estimate in-kind costs for a 12 month period; these included (costs were not available for Suffolk):

Birmingham: A Connexions PA seconded to the project for 2.5 days per week during the pilot period, with an “in kind” value of £15,000 over 12 months. In addition, use of the foyer/ St Basils offices. Staff supervision by Trident HA for the first 12 months.

Wolverhampton: A total of £15,900 including: Connexions Team Leader – supervision (2 days/month): £2,800; Foyer Co-ordinator – project management and supervision (1 day/week): £6,000; Administration (2 days/month): £1,500; Connexions Manager – funding (5 days): £800; Connexions PA (1 day/week): £4,800.

Ryedale: Estimated annual in kind contributions (totalling £4,300) are: Broadband/telephone: £300; Room rent: £1,000; North Yorkshire Community Education: £2,000; Connexions PA support: £1,000.

Costs of continuing and replicating a Safe Moves service

The costs presented above summarise the central and site-specific costs (real and in kind) associated with the pilot period. Although each pilot site had its own characteristics and developed a service to meet local needs and to complement other local related provision, some broad trends can be identified. These will be of interest to the pilot sites, as they seek to continue their service, and to potential new sites. Table 5.10 summarises the pilot phase costs in a format that indicates the likely set-up costs and annual budget needed for a Safe Moves service.

**Table 5.10:
Summary of Key Costs (£) Incurred by Sites during Pilot Phase**

	Birmingham	Wolverhampton	Ryedale	Felixstowe
Capital Costs (Set Up Costs)	1,606	2,527	903	3,675
Staff Costs in 2003/04	23,278	24,705	30,255	21,599
Running Costs in 2003/04	29,663	27,083	38,903	27,840
Estimated (Minimum) Annual In Kind Costs	15,000	15,900	4,300	Not available
Estimated Budget for 2004/05	Not available	42,000	42,000	42,100

Each pilot project has submitted a budget for 2004/5 and it appears that £42,000 seems to be appropriate for established sites. Set-up (capital) costs - computers and related items ranged from £903 - £3,675; a budget of about £2,500 should be sufficient for most new sites. Staff costs generally account for 75 per cent - 80 per cent of annual expenditure. However, this will depend crucially on any in-kind support and the extent to which some services, such as mediation, need to be purchased from external agencies. Sufficient resources need to be allocated to family mediation and peer mentoring to sustain both of these key services. The actual annual costs incurred by a Safe Moves site will depend upon a variety of factors, including:

- Provision of in kind resources (staff and/or office space);
- Local availability of other services focusing on preventing and responding to teenage homelessness (e.g. a local Foyer or YMCA);
- Local availability of other important support services, such as family mediation (one pilot site paid £500 per family for this, which may provide a useful benchmark) and their costs;
- Transport costs (likely to be significantly higher in rural areas).

The value of central input must not be excluded. All of the pilot sites benefited from the central support provided by the Foyer Federation and particularly the National Coordinator. Over the 18-month pilot period, this totalled £68,436 (excluding the funds spent on the external evaluation), or about £3,800 per month on average. This suggests an average monthly central support cost of £950 per pilot site (or £11,400 per year). It is not possible to determine if this average support cost per site will increase or decrease as the number of sites increases.

Unit costs of Safe Moves

Table 3.2 shows the numbers of young people referred to and accepted by the Safe Moves projects between 1 March 2003 and 31 March 2004 (i.e. a period of 13 months). Table 5.11 shows the average cost per accepted client under several cost assumptions.

**Table 5.11:
Estimates of the average cost per accepted client**

	Birmingham	Wolverhampton	Ryedale	Suffolk
Number of Acceptances (13 months)	31	64	30	27
Estimated 13-month running costs (2003/04)	32,135	29,340	42,145	30,160
Average cost per client	1,037	458	1,405	1,117
Estimated 13 month running costs including payments in kind	48,385	46,565	46,803	Not available
Average cost per client	1,561	728	1,560	Not available
Average cost per client based on estimated budget For 2004/05	Not available	711	1,517	1,689
Estimated Budget for 2004/05	Not available	42,000	42,000	42,100

Table 5.11 reveals that the average cost per client in Wolverhampton is about half that for the other sites, as about twice as many clients were seen by this pilot. The average cost per client in Wolverhampton (taking account of payments in kind) during the pilot phase was about £730, this compared to an average cost per client at Birmingham and Ryedale of about £1,560, including in-kind costs. Excluding in-kind costs, average cost per client was approximately £500 in Wolverhampton, 1,000 in Birmingham, £1,100 in Suffolk and £1,400 in Ryedale.

Potential cost consequences without Safe Moves: Does Safe Moves offer value for money?

Due to the innovative nature of Safe Moves, there are no other similar schemes that can be used for cost comparisons. Safe in the City shares some similar characteristics, but had a very specific (and urban) focus; the budget⁹ was of a different scale attracting £12 million over 6 years, with individual cluster schemes costing between £245,000 and £310,000. In short, Safe Moves is a much more modest project in comparison. Below, value for money is considered by identifying some of the potential cost savings that may have been incurred without Safe Moves. These are briefly considered from two perspectives – those relating to young people aged 13 – 15 and those for older teenagers.

i) Alternatives for 13 – 15 year olds:

Where the schemes have helped younger teenagers, they have tended to enable the young person to remain (or return to) living with one or more members of their family (see earlier in this chapter). If such problems cannot be resolved, these children may have to be taken into care, which is very expensive. Fostering may be another outcome.

Cost estimates for local authority community homes for children are drawn from two sources. The highly regarded unit costs published by the PSSRU for 2003 (Netten and Curtis, 2003) estimate £2,255 establishment costs (i.e. capital costs of buildings, land and equipment and salaries and other revenue costs) per resident week or £2,522 care package costs (i.e. also includes costs of social work and other services) per resident week. These equate to annual costs per resident of £117,260 and £131,144 respectively. PSSRU 2003 also includes an

⁹ See www.safeinthecity.org.uk (select research) for more information. Funding for Safe in the City came from a variety of sources including Single Regeneration Budget - London Development Agency, European Social Fund, Neighbourhood Renewal funding and Connexions.

estimated unit cost of local authority foster care of £593 per child per week (or £30,836 over a year). This comprises the following costs per child per week: £305 for boarding out allowances and administration; £136 for social work support and £152 for other services, including health, education and social services.

Furthermore, these are just the annual costs for the residential home or foster family placement; they exclude any longer-term cost consequences arising due being placed in such care. It is well known that living in residential care increases the risk of low educational attainment, which in turn can adversely affect job opportunities and lifetime earnings, possibly resulting in social exclusion. Safe Moves, with an annual budget of about £40,000 per site, offers excellent value for money if only one young teenager is prevented from moving into residential care.

ii) Alternatives for Older Teenagers

Local housing authorities are responsible for accommodating 16-17 year olds who are deemed to be statutorily homeless; they will also require considerable support. Homeless older teenagers may also require help and support, but are not a statutory responsibility unless assessed as ‘vulnerable’ under the homelessness legislation. A recent report from the New Policy Institute for the charity Crisis (Kenway and Palmer, 2003) identifies a range of costs associated with single homelessness. Those directly related to housing and support services are shown in Table 5.12.

**Table 5.12:
Estimated Unit Costs by Category of Selected Costs Associated with Homelessness**

Cost Category	Cost Borne By	Unit Cost (£)		
		Low	Best	High
Temporary Accommodation:				
Hostel (per week)	Local Authority	300	400	450
Refuge (per week)	-		400	
B&B (per week)	Local Authority		150	
Support Services:				
Outreach worker, specialising in multiple needs (per week)	Various	30	60	
Advice/support services at hostel or day centre (per session)	Various	20	30	
Potential Resettlement:				
Interview and processing (per application)	Local Authority	450	650	850
Floating support to help maintain tenancy (per week)	Various	30	60	

Source: Kenway, P. and Palmer, G. (2003). How Many? How Much? Single Homelessness and the Question of Numbers and Cost, Report for Crisis prepared by the New Policy Institute.

The costs in Table 5.12 indicate some of the potential costs, primarily to local authorities, that may occur because a single young person is homeless. For example, an annual cost of a young person living in a hostel rather than in the parental home would be in excess of £20,000. The processing of one application for resettlement for by the local authority costs approximately £650. Failed tenancies also impose costs on landlords: based on other research, the Crisis report includes a “best” estimate of £2,800 per episode. Many of these costs are prevented due to the intervention of Safe Moves.

Furthermore, the above costs exclude any costs that may subsequently be incurred by the NHS or the Criminal Justice System if homeless teenagers become rough sleepers. These can be substantial in both the short term and the longer term. For example, physical and psychological health can suffer, with lifelong consequences, especially if the young person becomes involved in drug abuse and/or criminal activity. These costs also exclude any cost consequences associated with young people not being in education, employment or training (i.e. of being NEET). These too can be substantial over a person's lifetime and being homeless and/or NEET as an older teenager may reduce employment opportunities and earnings and increase the risk of social exclusion. Although the pilot projects do not seem to have had a significant impact on young people who are NEET on referral (see earlier in chapter), by working closely with Connexions and other agencies, the project may have prevented some young people from becoming NEET in the first place.

Overall, when considered alongside some of the potential cost consequences in the absence of Save Moves, an average cost of up to £1,600 per client seems to offer very good value for money for local authorities and central government, as well as helping to reduce the risk of social exclusion, the costs of which fall on many agencies and, indeed, on society as a whole.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined the costs and impacts of the Safe Moves service. Safe Moves was a modest project, both in terms of size and cost but it appeared to be effective in achieving one of its main aims of helping young people at risk of homelessness to remain safely in the parental home at a relatively low cost. The key findings are:

- An effective Safe Moves service can be considered good value for money.
- Supporting young people to stay in the parental home was the key success of the project.
- Safe Moves also appeared to have helped reduce young people's tendency to run away from home.
- The monitoring data suggests that Safe Moves had no impact on education, training or employment outcomes or on the support needs (other than housing) of young people, but these were not the main aims of the project.
- Qualitative data from interviews with young people and key agencies suggest that Safe Moves had a positive impact on young people's confidence, self-esteem, emotional well-being and motivation and it seems likely that, over the longer term, these benefits will have a positive impact on the young people's life chances and attainment.

6 Conclusions

This report has evaluated the development of the Safe Moves initiative over the full pilot period (October 2002 – March 2004). The pilot project enabled the Safe Moves model to be tested and developed in four areas of England – Birmingham, Wolverhampton, Ryedale and Suffolk. By April 2005, all four pilots were still operating and continuing to develop within their local context. This final chapter presents the key conclusions of the independent evaluation of the service.

The Safe Moves model: Developing a local service

The Safe Moves model was established as a preventative project that would assist young people who were at risk of homelessness. The model envisaged that a Coordinator would be appointed to develop and broker three sets of services: peer mentoring, family mediation and life-skills. Assessed by the Coordinator, young people aged between 13 and 19 would be offered one or more of the services to meet their needs.

The first challenge of the project was, however, to establish the Safe Moves services within a local context. The services were all developed outside London in areas (with one exception) where there were few other services for homeless people. Because of this, structures took longer to put into place and core services had to be developed from first principles. Family mediation services proved difficult to identify locally, particularly in the rural areas and it proved necessary to recruit specialist workers to provide this service. Even where family mediation services existed these were not providing services for the younger age group and therefore they had to be adapted to extend their services to this new client group. Peer mentoring proved easier to establish in the two urban areas, but again facilities to train young people as peer mentors were not available in the two rural locations. Projects therefore had to identify out of authority resources to support this aspect of work. Finally, formal life-skills training appropriate for young people living at home was also not available (unless part of a specific service such as a Pupil Referral Unit). Whilst it was possible for foyers to offer some life-skills training for the older age groups, resources had to be developed at a national level to fill the gap in life-skills for the under 16 age group - the resultant package, 'Me, Myself, I', only becoming available in 2004.

Partly due to the difficulties in establishing the core services, the Safe Moves pilots developed flexibly to meet young people's support needs by offering a more diverse set of services than originally envisaged. In effect, a core and cluster model was developed whereby Safe Moves has offered the three key services where possible but supplemented this with other types of support. The pilots became a direct provider of support to young people as well as acting as a service broker as in the original model. Safe Moves coordinators extended their remit to provide a range of assistance to young people including help with finding accommodation, advice on education, training and employment, practical support, advocacy as well as more general life-skills support (although 'formal' life-skills programmes were still being developed). The pilot experience served to demonstrate the considerable lead-in time needed to establish an innovative service of this nature, and as a result of this, as well as in response to need, that a more dynamic Safe Moves model can be delivered along a core and cluster structure.

Delivering services

Over 150 young people used the Safe Moves services over a thirteen month period (March 2003-March 2004), with 80 using the service at the end of the pilot project. Just under half of the young people were living in the parental home at referral, and a high proportion of young people were at risk of homelessness in terms of past experiences of running away, homelessness and health and support needs.

Nearly three in ten young people accessed family mediation services and/or life-skills training. A smaller proportion received a peer mentor service, as the identification of training and provision of ongoing support to mentors meant the service was still in its infancy at the end of the pilot. A significant proportion of young people also received assistance with accessing appropriate accommodation, job and training support and practical support. Although not all young people wanted to access all services (for example, some people did not feel that family mediation was appropriate), those that did use the services usually valued them greatly. Young people spoke particularly highly of the family mediation/ counselling services in helping them cope better with difficult issues at home. A general support service provided by project workers was also experienced as especially helpful to their lives.

Overall, the projects operated most successfully where they adopted a flexible, but integrated, approach. For example, family mediation services appeared to work best where mediators were either recruited as dedicated workers for the project or were delivered by the same agency. This also enabled coordination between the Coordinator and the family mediation service. In addition, services were particularly successful in engaging with young people where a proactive approach was adopted to keeping in touch with young people, where staff worked on an outreach basis rather than expecting young people to visit a particular site to access the service. A number of young people lost contact with the project and this was likely to be a result of a lack of sustained contact with young people.

The effectiveness of Safe Moves was greatly dependent on, and enhanced by, good inter-agency relationships at a local level. Connexions services operated differently across the country and were able to provide differing levels of support, however in most areas they operated as a key referral agency, and the Safe Moves worker worked closely with one or two local Personal Advisors to ensure appropriate services were offered. A range of other referral agencies were also important, from housing agencies to schools and the police. A lack of inter-agency support, however, also impeded the progress of the project – in particular, all projects experienced difficulties in gaining the support of social services, a key gap given the age group of half of the young people. In addition, an absence of data sharing protocols at a local level also hindered progress in some areas.

The prevention of youth homelessness

The Safe Moves model had an overall aim to prevent youth homelessness. By the end of the pilot project, this aim was clearly understood and agreed by key local players in each area. However, early in the pilot process, agencies found it difficult to move from working according to a reactive, crisis approach to homelessness to a more proactive, preventative focus. This was perhaps not surprising given the relative newness of this policy objective and the fact that the key partners, particularly homelessness agencies, were used to responding to housing crisis situations faced by young people. This experience however highlighted the need for considerable attention to referral and assessment procedures in setting up such a

scheme in order to target young people in most need of preventative services. Over the course of the pilot, an increasing proportion of young people were referred who were still living at home and were under the age of 16 age group, whilst fewer already homeless young people were accepted for the service. Nonetheless, the projects did continue to work with some young people who needed re-housing immediately.

The key success of the service in terms of outcomes was in supporting young people to remain in the parental home. The vast majority of young people referred whilst living in the parental home were still living there at the end of the pilot or when their case was closed. A small number of young people also successfully moved back to the parental home from an insecure housing setting. A number of people were also assisted in accessing appropriate accommodation where the family home was unsuitable. The service however did not succeed in achieving positive housing outcomes for all young people – for example, a number of young people remained in insecure housing at the end of the pilot. Qualitative work also showed that some young people were being supported in transitional accommodation, and here Safe Moves was helping young people to maintain rather than move on from this accommodation. In addition, Safe Moves did not appear to have helped young people to exit NEET status although it is possible that they assisted some young people from becoming NEET. Finally, the recorded health status of young people remained unchanged, however qualitative work indicated that some young people reported considerably better emotional well-being following the project's interventions.

The costs of Safe Moves

The eighteen month Safe Moves pilot cost £300,000 (national and local costs). A range of funders supported the pilot programme including Connexions, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, the Department for Employment and Skills, the Home Office and Freemasons Grand Charity. Each pilot cost between £35-47,000 excluding 'in-kind' costs provided by the host and partner agencies. The majority of these funds were spent on employing one or more staff to coordinate and deliver the service, however specific funds were also available to purchase family mediation services and for peer mentoring training.

A calculation of unit costs revealed an average cost per client ranging between £500 and £1,400 across the four projects, with an overall average of approximately £1,000 (excluding 'in-kind' costs). This compares to the average cost of £400 a week for a hostel bed, £650 for processing a local authority homelessness application and £2,800 for a failed tenancy. For the younger age group, foster care costs an average of £593 a week. Given the benefits of Safe Moves in assisting young people at the risk of homelessness to remain safely in the parental home, an effective Safe Moves service can be considered good value for money.

A modest (in both size and cost) preventative project like Safe Moves cannot hope to solve homelessness at a local level, however the pilot experience suggests that it can have a positive impact on the lives of a highly vulnerable group of young people. In turn, this offers benefits and cost savings to other local agencies working with these young people. The pilot demonstrated that a Safe Moves project can have a significant impact at a local level, particularly pronounced in rural areas, in making a contribution to local homelessness strategies.

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