

The Youth Endowment Fund

Senior Research Manager (SRM) – Youth Justice

Reports to: Head of Guidance and Policy

Salary: £54,320

Contract: 13-month maternity cover (fixed term contract)

Location: Central London, hybrid* (see p.6)

Closing date for applications: 9pm Monday 6th July

Interview dates: 22nd and 23rd July

About the Youth Endowment Fund

We're here to prevent children and young people becoming involved in violence. We do this by finding out what works and building a movement to put this knowledge into practice.

Violence continues to shape the lives of too many teenage children. In the past year, nearly one in five said they had been a victim, one in eight admitted to carrying out violence themselves, and half told us they had witnessed violence being committed against someone else. This violence takes many forms— from physical and sexual assault to robbery and threats with weapons. And the consequences are often severe. Nearly three in ten victims, equivalent to 5% of all teenage children in England and Wales, needed medical treatment from a doctor or a hospital.

At the Youth Endowment Fund, we work to prevent this violence. To do this, we aim to build the evidence base on what works, and then use this to change policy and practice.

In the first instance, this means producing strong, relevant evidence through research, data analysis and insights into young people's lives. But evidence on its own isn't enough. We must use this evidence to promote real change in day-to-day practice and ambitious system reform to better protect children.

About the role

This role is a hugely exciting opportunity to change practice and policy in the Youth Justice sector. Using the vast body of evidence YEF has compiled (including four new research projects that are currently underway), the Senior Research Manager (SRM) for Youth Justice will spend the year writing two reports:

1. A Practice Guidance Report (publishing in May 2027).
2. A System Guidance Report (publishing in September 2027).

Practice Guidance Report

The Practice Guidance Report will provide 5–8 evidence-based recommendations on how individual Youth Justice Services can prevent children’s involvement in violence. It will be similar in style and approach to previous YEF Practice Guidance in other sectors (such as the [education practice guidance](#), and [youth sector practice guidance report](#)). It will likely recommend a range of evidence-based strategies including:

- The importance of commissioning evidence-based interventions (detailed in the YEF Toolkit).
- How to meet the health needs of children in the Youth Justice System.
- How to respond to serious violence and weapons carrying.
- How to support the sentencing process.
- How to support children in and after custody.
- How to ensure effective diversion takes place.

The SRM for Youth Justice will lead the development and writing of these recommendations.

System Guidance Report

Targeted at policy makers and system leaders (including national government and the inspectorate) this guidance report will make 5–8 policy recommendations on how the Youth Justice sector can be reformed to better protect children from involvement in violence. While the practice guidance will focus on day-to-day changes that Youth Justice services can make, the system guidance will focus on how the system itself should be changed to make it easier for Youth Justice services to do ‘what works’. It will be similar in style to the [education system guidance](#). It will likely recommend a range of evidence-based reforms, including:

- How to use funding, training and inspection to improve the provision of evidence-based interventions in the Youth Justice System.
- How to ensure that other agencies and sectors (such as health and education) effectively collaborate with Youth Justice Services.

- How to improve responses to the most vulnerable children and young people, and how to improve sentencing, custody and resettlement.

The SRM for Youth Justice will also lead the development and writing of these recommendations.

Both guidance reports will include as a priority recommendations that will reduce the racial disproportionality currently evident in the Youth Justice System, and you will work closely with a Race Equity Advisor who will play a vital role as a critical friend.

You will also be supported by a brilliant internal YEF Youth Justice Change Team (former Youth Justice practitioners who work within YEF to change practice and policy across the sector), in addition to external expert input from *the* leading sector experts. This will include liaising closely with the Ministry of Justice in producing both reports. You will also be able to draw from the [practice](#) and [system](#) guidance reports that YEF has already produced on diversion.

This role is a unique opportunity to change the Youth Justice System and YEF will invest significant resource in making the recommendations that you write happen. For instance, we published our Education System Guidance Report in May 2025. Three of the eight recommendations included in it have already been enacted. We intend to push for practice and system change at pace and will use the work you produce to do so.

The Senior Research Manager will be part of YEF's Research team. The Research team is at the heart of our efforts to learn what works and put it into practice. We do this by developing the YEF's funding strategy and creating free, highly accessible research summaries and actionable recommendations for policy makers, commissioners and practitioners. We're a high-performing team which values intellectual rigour and getting to the truth, compassion for children, ambition about what we can achieve and humility about what we know. We love to discuss the latest developments in research methods, but we're not just interested in research for its own sake. We want research to lead to actual changes in outcomes for children.

Key responsibilities

You'll...

- **Write a practice guidance report for the Youth Justice Sector.** This will use the best available evidence (including a range of research that YEF has funded, commissioned, and synthesised) to provide evidence-based recommendations to Youth Justice Services on how to prevent children's involvement in violence. You will work closely with the internal YEF Youth Justice Change Team, an external expert panel and the Ministry of Justice to produce high quality guidance.
- **Write a system guidance report for the Youth Justice Sector.** This will use the best available evidence (including a range of research that YEF has funded, commissioned, and synthesised) to provide evidence-based recommendations to Youth Justice policy makers and system leaders on how the sector can best protect children from involvement in violence. You will work closely with the internal YEF Youth Justice Change Team, an external expert panel and the Ministry of Justice to produce high quality guidance.
- **Become the YEF's expert on Youth Justice.** You'll make sure we understand the key issues, stay on top of the latest research and are connected to the right people.
- **Read, comment on, and support the publication of four research projects focused on the Youth Justice system concluding in late 2026.** These projects, which are currently underway, are reviews of current practice that focus on: Youth Justice responses to serious violence, VAWG and weapons; a review of how community sentences and court orders are used for children involved in violence; a review of custody aftercare and resettlement programmes for children and young adults; and a review of whether the youth justice system is currently meeting the health needs of children within it. Alongside YEF's existing research (particularly the YEF Toolkit), these reviews will support the development of guidance.
- **Develop great relationships with experts and represent YEF in external meetings and events.** You'll promote evidence-based policy and practice by speaking at conferences and events.
- **Work with our Change Team** to produce resources and accessible summaries for Youth Justice colleagues on the evidence. This will also include supporting the Youth Justice change team in producing a self-assessment tool based on your practice guidance report.

About you

You are this sort of person:

- **You want to play a significant part in reducing the level of violence affecting children and young people.** You care about having an impact. This might mean you've worked directly with young people at risk of becoming involved in crime, for organisations that fund or deliver relevant programmes, or have conducted research on this topic.
- **You share our belief that an evidence-based approach is our best hope of preventing violence.** You're fascinated by research, but you're not just interested in research for its own sake. You want to achieve actual changes in outcomes for children.
- **You know a lot about Youth Justice.** You know the key ideas and debates, recent policy developments and key people. You're comfortable talking about Youth Justice with experts. There are many ways to acquire this knowledge. You might have worked in Youth Justice, in associated organisations, or learnt about it during a degree.
- **You take ownership of your work.** You demonstrate ownership and agency and can take the leading role on a project. You can take broad objectives and deliver a concrete workplan to make them happen.
- **You're a confident reader of research and have strong critical appraisal skills.** You know when research can be trusted and when it can't and can confidently articulate your views on the strength of research. You might have gained this expertise through your academic studies, research or professional experience.
- **You have at least three years' experience working in a role that required you to think about research.** This could include a range of roles in policy, academia, funding or practice.
- **You write in a way that people easily understand.** You have that rare skill of writing in plain English. You have experience of translating complex research findings into plain writing that everyone can understand.
- **You have excellent project and time management skills.** You can work independently, quickly and to a high standard.
- **You are good with people.** You're comfortable working with a wide range of people, including senior academics and other research experts, children and their families, practitioners and policy makers. You're able to provide constructive challenge when required. You care more that good things happen than who gets the credit. You support your colleagues to produce excellent work.

- **You learn fast but remain humble.** You like learning. You're very good at synthesising information. You know how much you don't know and that you can always learn more.
- **You're committed to equality, diversity and inclusion.** You believe and act in a way that celebrates and encourages a range of experiences, views and values.

While it's not a criterion, we're especially interested to hear from applicants who have lived experience of youth violence.

It's also important to us that the people we hire do not discriminate. We believe in being inclusive and giving everyone an equal chance to succeed. Applications are welcome from all regardless of age, sex, gender identity, disability, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, race, sexual orientation, transgender status or socio-economic background.

Additional benefits include

£1,000 professional development budget annually, 28 days annual leave plus Bank Holidays, four half days for volunteering activities.

Hybrid working details

The office is based in Central London. Those living in and around London are expected to be in the office a minimum of 2 days per week. If you live outside of London and work remotely, you'll be expected to work from the London office 2 days per month.

To apply:

To apply, please send a CV, cover letter and the monitoring form via our [application page](#) by **9:00 pm Monday 6th July**.

When applying for this role, ensure you complete our Monitoring Form and attach your CV. Additionally, please submit a supporting statement that answers the following questions. Your response to each question should be no longer than 400 words:

1. Why do you want the job?

- 2. Can you give an example where you've had to summarise evidence on a specific topic that was highly contested? How did you manage the process and communicate the result?**

- 3. Please provide an overview of your experience in relation to Youth Justice and explain why this experience makes you a good fit for this role.**

You will also be required to provide proof of your eligibility to work in the UK. As part of our commitment to flexible working, we will consider a range of options for the successful applicant. All options can be discussed at interview stage.

Interview process

Interviews will take place on 22nd and 23rd of July.

There will be a task to prepare for in advance.

Personal data

Your personal data will be shared for the purposes of the recruitment exercise. This includes our HR team, interviewers (who may include other partners in the project and independent advisors), relevant team managers and our IT service provider if access to the data is necessary for performance of their roles. We do not share your data with other third parties, unless your application for employment is successful and we make you an offer of employment. We will then share your data with former employers to obtain references for you. We do not transfer your data outside the European Economic Area.