



Freedom from Symbolic Violence? Facilitators and Barriers to Participatory Practices in Youth Justice

Journal:	<i>Youth Justice</i>
Manuscript ID	YJJ-21-0006.R3
Manuscript Type:	Original Article
Keywords:	Symbolic Violence, Child First, Participation, Youth Justice, habitus, Bourdieu, risk
Abstract:	The Child First Participation agenda in England marks a paradigm shift in youth justice. This solidifies a commitment to democratising decision-making processes with children. Drawing on interviews with children and professionals, this paper explores the enablers and constraints to Child First participation in youth justice services, including how risk-oriented practices, managerialism and neoliberal mechanisms constrain positive relationships with children. In this paper, Bourdieu's concept of 'symbolic violence' is used to explore systemic problems when engaging children in co-producing youth justice interventions. The paper suggests how participatory practices can provide freedom from symbolic violence for both children and practitioners.

SCHOLARONE™
Manuscripts

Freedom from Symbolic Violence? Facilitators and Barriers to Participatory Practices in Youth Justice

Abstract

The Child First Participation agenda in England marks a paradigm shift in youth justice. This solidifies a commitment to democratising decision-making processes with children. Drawing on interviews with children and professionals, this paper explores the enablers and constraints to Child First participation in youth justice services, including how risk-oriented practices, managerialism and neoliberal mechanisms constrain positive relationships with children. In this paper, Bourdieu's concept of 'symbolic violence' is used to explore systemic problems when engaging children in co-producing youth justice interventions. The paper suggests how participatory practices can provide freedom from symbolic violence for both children and practitioners.

Introduction

Justice-involved children have legal rights to participate in decisions about their care and supervision needs, which are universal and unconditional under international children's rights legislation (Brown, 2020; Creaney and Case, 2021). In other words, professionals are required to respect children's rights to impart ideas and be listened to throughout contact with the youth justice system (Article 12, UNCRC, 1989). Embracing children's voices is a key theme in the General Comment No.24 on children's rights in the justice system (UNCRC, paras. 45 and 46, 2019), and professionals in England have also been encouraged to implement a participation strategy (YJB 2016). This involves activating a strengths-based approach to service design and delivery, by building relationships which enables the priority of children's voices throughout assessment, planning and supervision (YJB, 2021). However, children's participatory rights are not being fully implemented due to existing 'risk' processes, notably ensuing uncertainty concerning how to manage 'high risk' children (Burns and Creaney, 2023; Peer Power / YJB, 2021). Thus, there remains concern about the relative absence of children's voice and participation in youth justice service decision making processes and professional practice.

A review of the Youth Justice System in 2016 recommended that children under supervision and subject to mandatory appointments need to be viewed and responded to as 'children first' (Taylor, 2016, p. 48). Furthermore, there was a call to transform responses to children and enact system change: from 'justice with some welfare, to a welfare system with justice' (Taylor. 2016:49). Against this backdrop and criticisms levelled at the risk paradigm for marginalising the voice of the child and a chorus of calls to be more rights-focused (Case and Haines, 2009; Haines and Case, 2015), the Youth Justice Board developed and launched the Child First agenda (YJB, 2021). The Child First approach promotes constructive, non-criminalizing and collaborative practices that are socially inclusive and respectful towards children's rights (Case and Browning 2021a; Creaney and Case, 2021).

Indeed, children are better able to exert influence when their knowledge and insights are seen as legitimate and 'of value' (Haines and Case, 2015). If children are encouraged to enter into collaborate partnerships with professionals who strive to connect with the child, positive outcomes are more

1
2
3 likely. Advocates of Child First have drawn on a rich body of empirical research (See Case, 2018;
4 Smithson, et al., 2020; Hampson, 2018; Haines and Case, 2015) to characterise its potential as an
5 antidote, or at least a persuasive alternative, to a deficit-based adult-led system, which has been in
6 existence for two decades as a result of the 'new' youth justice formulated in the late 1990s (Goldson,
7 2000). Child First provides the foundations for the development of participatory practices, where
8 children as 'rights-holders' (Kilkelly, 2019:332) are in positions of power and have influence over
9 processes, respected as 'experts' on their own lives, perceived as capable of meaningfully contributing
10 to discussions on policy and practice matters. Participation (Article 12 of the UNCRC) refers to children
11 'having a say' in decision-making processes and being listened to regarding decisions that affect them
12 (UNCRC, 1989). The nature of their behaviour should not be allowed to override the entitlements to a
13 fair hearing and just treatment which should apply to all children and young people irrespective of
14 their circumstances or characteristics (Creaney and Smith, 2023). Collaborative participatory practice,
15 in the sense of fully involving children in decisions and processes, is where children are viewed as
16 capable co-producers, and we argue that this is a fundamental feature of Child First youth Justice
17 (Burns and Creaney, 2023; Creaney and Smith, 2023).

21
22 Firstly, this paper presents a critical perspective on participatory practices in youth justice,
23 acknowledging the complex challenges involving children in decision making processes. Secondly, an
24 overview of Bourdieu's fundamental analytical tools is provided. Leading on from this, the paper
25 proceeds to critically discuss the aims of the study and methods of data collection, and following this,
26 presents the findings and analysis. It ends by reflecting upon concluding thoughts, including
27 implications for practice. This paper is concerned with the application of the 'collaboration' principle
28 as part of the Child First approach, which proposes to "*Encourage children's active participation,*
29 *engagement, and wider social inclusion. All work is a meaningful collaboration with children and their*
30 *carers*" (YJB 2021:11). This focus on children's participation is presented as a bulwark to exclusionary
31 features of risk-oriented practices within an adult-led system. It can potentially mitigate against the
32 effects of individualised/pathologising neo-liberal discourses, and a 'preoccupation with security'
33 (Saar-Heiman and Gupta, 2019:1). Particularly pertinent is the extent to which the participation
34 principle of the Child First approach can be applied in practice. This paper draws on empirical data
35 that investigated children's involvement in the design and delivery of youth justice services. More
36 specifically, it focuses on the lived experiences and perspectives of key stakeholders who participated
37 in interviews, group projects, feedback forums and supervision meetings. Bourdieu's theory of
38 practice is utilised as a heuristic or practical device to explore the perceived efficacy of participatory
39 practices within youth justice processes. The habitus deployed by those 'in the thick of it', is shaped
40 by external forces / field conditions and embodied dispositions, which direct the thoughts and actions
41 of professionals operating within the field of youth justice (Bourdieu, 1977). For example, bureaucratic
42 systems and dominant risk discourses (Smith and Gray, 2019), both shape and constrain front line
43 professionals' ability to adopt participatory principles and practices.

47
48
49 Habitus can be utilised to expose how frontline professionals navigate classic tensions between public
50 protection, neo-liberal regimes, child welfare, rights-based, and punishment-oriented practices, and
51 more concretely how battles between those who accrue/retain power and those who contest
52 dominant discourses are 'played out'. These battles enshroud forms of 'symbolic violence', which can
53 ultimately become a barrier towards participatory practices in youth justice. Thus, Bourdieu's
54 conceptual instruments are used in this paper to gain deeper insight into the perceptions and
55 experiences of those practising in the risk focused, managerially driven youth justice environment
56 (Case, et al., 2020). It is a system that has in part maintained a precautionary risk management and
57 deficit ethos, which has been reiterated by HM Inspectorate of Probation (2020). At the practice level,
58 'offender management' orthodoxy retains a degree of influence and 'risk' continues to shape
59
60

1
2
3 responses, with decision making underpinned by insights from Risk Factor Prevention Paradigm
4 literature or undergird by the pseudo-science of risk factor analysis (Bateman, 2021; Smith and Gray,
5 2019). This focus on risk can result in children having limited choice, influence, control, or power over
6 processes, which contrasts from a rights-based approach (Article 12, UNCRC). With this in mind, the
7 paper will proceed to explore what 'participation' means in youth justice.
8
9

10 11 12 13 **What Participation Means in Youth Justice**

14
15 Participation is a contested concept where meanings and measurements differ in various contexts.
16 However, it is proposed that to participate is to be involved, consulted on matters that are of
17 importance and to experience a sense of ownership of parts of the decision-making process (Shier et
18 al., 2014). Extending to 'meaningful participation' involves the 'transfer' of power and choice from
19 adults to children (McNeish 1999). Rather than simply transforming individual children's lives,
20 'meaningful participation' offers potential for relational and social transformation as a solution to
21 children's relative powerlessness in an adult-centric society. Elsewhere, Lundy's (2007) model of
22 participation exemplifies how crucial it is to reflect on the influence children's participation has.
23 However, in youth justice, children's participation is often non-voluntary. Those under supervision
24 have been mandated to attend appointments, often questioned about their attitudes to offending,
25 problematic lifestyles, 'pro-criminal' peer relationships, while participating in intervention
26 programmes and engaging in care needs processes (Stephenson, et al., 2007). Therefore, within the
27 youth justice system, it could be argued that the obligation to participate might not be fully in
28 conjunction with their rights, as they have limited power and choice entering this particular context,
29 resulting in difficulty in measuring practices of meaningful participation.
30
31
32
33
34
35

36 However, children's substantive involvement in the design and delivery of services can lead to positive
37 outcomes (e.g., self-esteem/confidence) and reductions in further offending (Haines and Case, 2015;
38 Weaver, et al., 2019). Yet, there are distinct barriers to overcome in order to ensure children's
39 participatory rights are realised in practice, including the 'adult knows best' mentality, and children
40 presenting behavioural, or intellectual difficulties who find it hard to express agency (Forde, 2018; YJB,
41 2016). Professionals may also not have sufficient knowledge and skills, awareness and understanding,
42 alongside limited time or space to meaningfully execute participatory or strengths-based agendas
43 (McNeill, 2006; Peer Power / YJB, 2021). Most notably, youth justice professionals can be more
44 inclined to execute restrictive as opposed to enabling strategies, fuelled by concern that some children
45 present a risk of harm to others (Day, 2022; Tuddenham, 2000 Farrow, et al., 2007). In these instances,
46 children may not be consciously aware of symbolic violence being inflicted upon them and may even
47 persuade 'themselves of the legitimacy of their exclusion' (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977:209) from
48 broader decision-making processes. Consequently, within youth justice practice it is imperative that
49 each stage of the decision-making process involves the degree of possibility to share power with
50 children (Peer Power / YJB, 2021).
51
52
53
54
55
56

57 ***Co-production: Equal Partnerships and Shared Decision Making***

58
59 Across a range of children's services (Brady 2020, Slay and Penny 2014), and more recently in the
60 youth justice field (Smithson et al 2020), co-production as a conceptual framework has been promoted

1
2
3 and adopted in practice to promote participatory ways of working with children. Insights from co-
4 production literature are useful to maximise the voice of the child through viewing children as capable
5 and knowledgeable 'experts by experience' (Brady 2020, Tisdall 2013). This can transform
6 relationships between professionals and children. By being receptive to notions of interdependency
7 and reciprocity, this can help to nurture shared decision making. Shared decision making is
8 characterised by a partnership of equal value, privileging collaborative, non-hierarchical relationship
9 building, and the sharing of forms of power in decision making processes (Martin and Feltham 2020;
10 Peer Power / Youth Justice Board, 2021). Arguably, 'power is everywhere' in the sense that adults and
11 children are submerged within fields of domination (Barnes et al. 2007). Of paramount importance is
12 understanding how youth justice professionals can facilitate shared decision-making and build
13 partnerships to ignite a more transformative mode of children's participation, especially when
14 surveillance is a key part of supervision. Professionals still have authority to exert sanctions for non-
15 compliance or trigger breach proceedings if dissatisfied with the nature of a child's input into
16 processes, resulting in children still being relatively powerless (Creaney, 2020). Thus, there may still
17 be a level of uncertainty regarding whether children feel entitled to a voice and enabled to share their
18 expertise as co-producers with adult professionals.
19
20
21
22

23 Moreover, children in the Youth Justice System - especially those who are severely disadvantaged -
24 may refrain from engaging in participatory practices, unconvinced that positive change to their
25 circumstances is possible (MacDonald and Marsh, 2005). A further issue is children's knowledge being
26 vulnerable to disproportionate scrutiny, their views contested or discredited due to age and emotional
27 development. Indeed, youth justice professionals may deem their expert knowledge more credible,
28 invoking a 'hierarchy of knowledge' mentality (Deakin, et al., 2020). Subsequently, for children's
29 participation to be more transformative, adults must reposition themselves as 'co-constructors of
30 knowledge' (Percy-Smith 2012). By doing so, it enacts a greater possibility of shared decision making
31 and equal partnerships being forged between children and adult professionals. Adopting some ideas
32 of co-production as a conceptual basis for participation in youth justice can support a
33 reconceptualisation of both adults and children's knowledge, capabilities, and expertise. However, it
34 is important to note that, children may not feel entitled or deserving of the opportunity to input into
35 the design and delivery of services they receive (Case et al., 2020). Children may feel they have
36 forfeited participatory rights by being convicted of harm and ordered to repair the harm caused (Hart
37 and Thompson, 2009). Therefore, it is important to approach co-production in youth justice with
38 caution, as these potential barriers to participatory practices in youth justice may still elicit power
39 imbalances and systemic harms to children, which can be subjected to critical examination with
40 Bourdieu's thinking tools.
41
42
43
44
45
46
47

48 **Thinking with Bourdieu**

49 Pierre Bourdieu dismantled the subjective/objective dichotomy through a theory of practice,
50 spotlighting the interplay between intentions and external influences on the ability to think and act
51 (Bourdieu, 1977). In other words, Bourdieu arguably sought to bridge an illogical gap between
52 subjective experiences and social structures (Houston, 1992:149). Although, as Bourdieu observed,
53 'structures never determine behaviour mechanically' (Bourdieu, 2021:206), objective conditions
54 govern or at least impact a person's ability to exercise agency, either constraining or facilitating
55 possibilities to navigate precarity. For example, people are able to take control of their own lives, and
56 in so doing construct their own identities and mediate structural barriers. Crucially, however, there is
57 an important caveat: despite any sense of personal agency, their choices are limited, as people can
58
59
60

1
2
3 often be constrained by wider societal structures, 'regulated and reproduced through relations of
4 power, legitimacy and authority' (Scruton, 2007:7). In the youth justice context, it is vital that there is
5 a focus on assessing the impact of external influences on behaviours, which can limit children's ability
6 to shape decision making processes. Moreover, contemporary criminological studies have made use
7 of Bourdieu's thinking tools to empirically uncover central concerns related to the treatment of adults
8 in the criminal justice system (McNeill, 2009; Bowden, 2014), and to theorise young people's
9 experiences of criminalisation (Barry, 2007), and perspectives on pathways into and out of offending
10 (France, 2015). Despite criminological interest in Bourdieu's work, his thinking tools have been seldom
11 used to investigate the experiences of youth justice professionals implementing participatory
12 practices and children's involvement in decision making processes. Therefore, we apply a
13 Bourdieusian framework to explore this topic, drawing on findings from a study (see Creaney, 2020)
14 that subjected participatory practices to rigorous investigation and analyses through empirical
15 observation and in-depth interviewing.
16
17
18
19

20 *Habitus*

21
22 Habitus is conceptualised as 'embodied history' wherein actions or responses become 'second
23 nature', influenced by 'past experiences' shaping attitudes, beliefs and responses to situations
24 (Bourdieu, 1977: 82–83). Thus, processes of socialisation over time shape lived and learned
25 experiences within a field. 'Field' is a cultural, social or institutional space formed by a network of
26 relations that exists among social positions of either 'domination' or 'subordination' (Segre 2014).
27 Habitus consists of a series of dispositions, which have been formed by, yet also direct the person's
28 unconscious mind and conscious thought. Whilst habitus tends to operate 'below the level of
29 consciousness and language, beyond the reach of introspective scrutiny or control of will', people are
30 still thinking beings, not 'mindless dupes' (Bourdieu, 1984:466). Nevertheless, as a concept, habitus
31 has been criticised for being deterministic, in that agents, constrained by social structures, act in
32 unconscious, uncritical ways to maintain dominance and privilege in the field and reproduce
33 inequalities (Jenkins, 1992). Jenkins (1992: 91) described Bourdieu's theory of practice and thinking
34 tools as ultimately telling a depressing story that revolved around people being unable to 'intervene
35 in their individual and collective destinies'. However, although people possess limited agency or space
36 and awareness to challenge norms, entrenched values, and beliefs, it is not a forgone conclusion that
37 their situation remains the same.
38
39
40
41
42
43

44 There is some 'room for manoeuvre' as social agents have the ability to exercise agency, display a
45 'margin of freedom' and execute a level of discretion over the direction of proceedings (Bourdieu, et
46 al., 1999). In particular, during challenging times, social agents can become hypervigilant and engage
47 in reflexivity or consciousness raising and embark on a progressive project in an effort to overcome
48 their precarious situation or disadvantaged position they find themselves in (Bourdieu and Wacquant,
49 1992). For instance, professionals may experience discomfort or suffering, as a result of expectations
50 to comply with newer ways of working, such as with the implementation of Child First principles within
51 youth justice practice, which in a Bourdieusian sense, can lead to the emergence of a cleft or split
52 habitus (Bourdieu, 1990a). As Houston (2002:157) notes, 'Habitus acts as a very loose set of guidelines
53 to strategise, adapt, improvise or innovate in response to situations as they arise'. Subsequently,
54 whilst there is inevitably a continuation of the status quo in varied shape or form, there is the prospect
55 that transformation of practice can occur in the field. Resistance dispositions consciously activated by
56 agents in the field who are not advantaged by the current system can provoke challenges to the
57 dominant model potentially forcing changes to norms and systems (Bourdieu, 1977). Thus, habitus
58
59
60

1
2
3 can be used to explore how professionals in youth justice systems may be facilitators of participation,
4 using their agency to challenge oppressive norms and practices that appear to be harming children
5 either literally or symbolically.
6
7

8 *Symbolic Violence*

9

10 Symbolic violence is a non-physical, 'gentle invisible form of violence, which is never recognised as
11 such' (Bourdieu, 1977:192). Symbolic violence is a type of harm and concealed form of power,
12 described through 'doxa', that is; 'unquestioned shared beliefs which constitute fields that explains
13 which beliefs, truths, practices and relations are considered 'natural' and appropriate' (Bourdieu and
14 Wacquant 1992, 108). Symbolic violence endures a process of misrecognition whereby domination is
15 unperceived, as there is little challenge to relations of power, resulting in the social order continuing
16 (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). The dominated unwittingly accept their suffering, perceiving their
17 treatment as natural, even at times with respect and fondness for those in authority (Bourdieu,
18 1990b). Those harmed can become desensitised to repeated exposure to unfair or degrading
19 treatment, which often clouds their judgement during the interaction/exchange (Bourdieu and
20 Wacquant, 1992; Jenkins, 1992). Professionals in a youth justice context may feel compelled to think
21 in a certain way about a phenomenon and essentially adhere to orders and fulfil bureaucratic
22 requirements to achieve particular outcomes, the criteria for which is often determined by the
23 dominant or those who occupy seniority (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992; Crossley, 2017:34).
24
25
26
27
28

29 Nonetheless, the dominated are not just 'slaves to rules' (Wolfreys, 2000:5). It is possible agents
30 become aware of their mistreatment and challenge the status quo. They may embark on a project of
31 resistance, challenging the legitimacy of certain claims perpetuated by those who hold superior
32 knowledge and status in the field (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). Those with status in the field have
33 accrued capital and fought to retain symbolic power. Those challenging, often in capital deficit, may
34 act against expectations, and question authority figures (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992:174). In the
35 field of youth justice, this can apply to professionals being reluctant to comply with certain agendas
36 and attempt to resist order by breaking away from the formulaic risk-led bureaucratic system and
37 managerialist discourse (Phoenix, 2016; Robinson, et al., 2014). This may involve not completing
38 copious amounts of paperwork and instead substituting an obsession with 'writing about children' to
39 one that involves spending more time working *with* them as partners for transformation. However,
40 front line practitioners may also be subject to symbolic power deployed by senior authority to secure
41 their compliance. This results in front-line professionals being denied the opportunity to meaningfully
42 shape organisational matters and ways of working that they internalise as being out of their control
43 (Bourdieu, 1998a and 1998b). How professionals act is influenced by structural constraints affecting
44 their ability to be sufficiently innovative, creative, or bespoke with children when supervising them
45 and delivering interventions.
46
47
48
49
50

51 Children perhaps also misrecognise that they are recipients of symbolic violence. They may remain
52 complicit, feeling unable to provide a competent viewpoint, unaware of the implications of being
53 subjectively judged and classified as 'high risk' with forfeited rights to a voice in their service delivery.
54 Children accept this judgemental, ultra-negative focus and 'exclude themselves' from processes and
55 systems that should concern them, feeling their influence is extremely limited (Bourdieu and
56 Wacquant, 1992:74). It is possible children refrain from levelling criticism at authority figures and
57 avoid challenging the legitimacy of knowledge associated with the dominant position operating in a
58
59
60

1
2
3 field that is more favourable to adult perspectives or top-down practitioner-led practices (Bourdieu
4 and Wacquant, 1992). In other words, children may have an acute sense of what 'can' and what
5 'cannot be said' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992:257). These responses by children can be captured as
6 forms of symbolic violence. Freedom from this could entail professionals and children working in
7 partnership to transform their relationship.
8
9

10
11 Bourdieu (1977) recommends undertaking detailed, in-depth investigations, with a focus on capturing
12 direct knowledge of lived and learned experiences to provide rich and insightful accounts of what lies
13 behind the actions or motivations of individuals in the field. This involves detecting or uncovering the
14 habitus that individuals 'play out' in practice. This paper now reports from a 15-month study between
15 2016-2017, informed by a Bourdieusian framework.
16
17
18
19
20

21 Methods

22
23 A critical social analysis of children's participation was conducted across one large youth offending
24 service in the Northwest of England. To explore perceptions and experiences of youth justice
25 supervision and the efficacy of children's involvement in the design and delivery of services, a
26 qualitative approach was adopted. This paper reports on discussions from in-depth interviews. The
27 study was approved by Liverpool John Moores University ethics committee. Ethical principles (see
28 Beauchamp and Childress, 2001) were integral to how the research was undertaken. It was pertinent
29 to treat all participants with respect and sensitivity, demonstrating active listening skills in a non-
30 judgemental manner. In a Bourdieusian sense, the researcher respected the principle of empathic
31 perspective taking, interacting with participants using language free from technical jargon (Bourdieu,
32 et al., 1999).
33
34
35

36 Formal permission and negotiation into the field was sought by writing to a youth offending team
37 (YOT). Access was gained through the YOT's management board and the practitioner forum. A
38 constructive relationship was formed with several gatekeepers (including managers and senior
39 practitioners) who supported the project by actively promoting the study among the workforce and
40 children alike. Participants were recruited for interviews using a blend of purposive, snowball and
41 convenient sampling techniques (Silverman 2013). This enabled a rich contextualised understanding
42 of the facilitators and barriers to children's participation in youth justice. Children interviewed were
43 either subject to a Referral Order, Youth Rehabilitation Order, Intensive Supervision and Surveillance
44 or a Detention and Training Order. Notably, children's case files, including demographic data, were
45 not accessed due to data protection concerns and due to the study being focused on children's *own*
46 *accounts* of participation and involvement in decision making processes. Professionals and managers
47 were from diverse backgrounds, including health, speech language and communication, and social
48 work. The researcher interviewed front-line professionals (n = 14), operational managers (n = 6) and
49 children under youth justice supervision (n = 20). All twenty of the young people (N=17 male and N=3
50 female) interviewed for the study were White British, aged between thirteen and eighteen years old
51 and living in the Northwest of England. The twenty practitioners interviewed were employed within
52 one large youth offending service within the Northwest of England and their experience of working
53 within the youth justice service ranged from two months to thirty years. Interviews, audio recorded
54 and transcribed verbatim, ranged from between 1 to 3 hours in length and were conducted during
55 working hours. Data was gathered/co-constructed with participants through interviews, observations
56 of practice supervision, group work projects and feedback forums.
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 Children were interviewed in a comfortable space with freedom to express deeply held views, without
4 judgement or prejudice. This was made possible through the forging of participative and non-
5 hierarchical relationships; consciously disrupting real and perceived imbalances of power (Bourdieu,
6 et al., 1999). It was explained to participants that participation in the study was voluntary. Children
7 were periodically reassured that non-attendance at interviews was not recorded as non-compliance
8 with their court order requirements (Hampson, 2017). Researchers have a responsibility to protect
9 research participants from harm and exploitation (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). It was explained
10 to children by the researcher and reinforced by their YOT supervisor that they would not be pressured
11 to answer a question, not least due to the perceived risk their response would then incriminate or be
12 upsetting for them. Non-verbal cues were also observed, including body language, accessing
13 participant understanding, expectations and readiness or willingness to engage. These observations
14 formed part of a reflexive practice used throughout fieldwork to determine the influence of the
15 researcher. This practice intends to overcome bias, validate subjectivities, and increase
16 trustworthiness of qualitative research (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, Madden 2010). The researcher
17 maintained a commitment to uncovering how a researcher's presuppositions, prejudices and social
18 world can influence ways of knowing.
19
20
21
22
23
24

25 Braun and Clark's (2006) approach to thematic analysis was drawn upon as guidance for analysing
26 data. An inductive approach involved formulating initial codes to aspects of the data that appeared
27 insightful or significant. Open coding was then utilised to organise data, identifying mundane details
28 including descriptions of the setting. Data was cross checked, and themes were constructed and
29 revised, being immersed in "the depth and breadth of the content" (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p. 1). At
30 this point, Bourdieu's social theory was particularly helpful, allowing the researcher to advance
31 "beyond the data, thinking creatively with the data, asking the data questions and generating theories
32 and frameworks" (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996, p. 30). Using Bourdieu's core concepts of symbolic
33 violence, habitus, capital and field, as heuristic devices or guiding theoretical constructs, the themes
34 were checked and verified by (re) examining the sample and (re) analysing the findings, and this
35 iterative and reflexive process provided deep insight into the realities of youth justice practice and
36 supervision.
37
38
39
40
41

42 In particular, Bourdieu's notion of habitus was useful when seeking to understand what drives a child
43 or professional to act in a certain way or when attempting to detect the micro/macro forces that
44 prevent compliance with a particular agenda in the field. It was a powerful analytical tool, providing
45 insight into how past experiences or memories of events, whether knowingly or otherwise, impacts
46 on present and future practice. Bourdieu's other analytical tools were similarly pivotal when
47 interpreting the data. For instance, symbolic violence and the related concept of misrecognition were
48 drawn upon as a lens to 'think through' forms of soft power in operation. Throughout the open coding
49 phase, this conceptual framework assisted in the search to depict degrees of unfairness or levels of
50 uncertainty in the accounts and narratives of stakeholders. As discussed, symbolic violence, exerted
51 by those who are perceived to hold superior knowledge can be imposed and inflicted on the
52 vulnerable and least advantaged with remarkable agreement due to the subtle nature of harms being
53 imposed (Bourdieu, 1977). From the analysis, this article now presents some of the findings to
54 demonstrate facilitators and barriers to participatory practices in youth justice supervision.
55
56
57
58
59
60

Findings and Analysis

Children's involvement in decision making

Children's participation in decision making has become a feature of recent policy developments (See YJB, 2016, 2019, 2021). Pivotal to this is the acknowledgment that children are equal partners in the process, who have the right and the ability to co-construct knowledge and shape decision making processes (YJB, 2021). Yet this study has raised critical concerns about how children's involvement in decision making can be meaningful in a youth justice service context. During time spent within the local YOT, it was found that some children were invited to share concerns with their worker and shape some of their interventions and activities, as illustrated by Ben:

"Well yeah, I guess you get to choose what you wanna do. What you wanna work around. And you get treated nicely". (Ben, 16, Referral Order)

However, one child shared how opportunities to input into his own intervention plan were limited. He commented on how the service tended to impose their vision, compelling him to adhere to their agenda and its requirements. In an interview with Tommy, his perception was that his participation rights were subordinate to organisational priorities:

"It should be, but what it is and what it isn't is two different things, innit. Like, obviously I'd like to have more of a say in what I'm doing...What meetings I'd go to, and stuff that I think's productive for me. But obviously they've got the way they work" (Tommy, 16, ISS)

Similarly, Callum, subject to a Youth Rehabilitation Order¹, was interested in securing an apprenticeship near to when his order was complete and wanted to be more involved in decisions on matters that affected his life. Specifically, he wanted to have more of a say on how often he was required to attend meetings with his YOT Officer:

"...cos it would give me more of a say, wouldn't it? Like I could say, like, once every two weeks.... But, dunno – they choose innit. Not me who chooses." (Callum, 15, YRO)

Elsewhere, Justin reflected upon his experiences of being on an Intensive Supervision and Surveillance court order². He expressed during an interview how sometimes it would be nice to influence his timetable of activities devised by his worker. Justin felt he provided minimal input into deciding the content of supervision sessions:

"...I get a timetable, like, for a week, and it shows me what I've got to do in the week... Obviously, like, they'd listen to my opinion. But it's not up to me to choose". (Justin, 15, ISS)

When asked about what improvements could be made to policy and practice, Tommy felt unqualified to pass judgement:

¹ A Youth Rehabilitation Order (YRO) is a community sentence. As part of the court order, the child is required to attend appointments with professionals and comply with certain requirements such as unpaid work or a curfew (Sentencing Act 2020 c. 17).

² The Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programme (ISSP) was introduced by the YJB in 2001, as an alternative to custody for children in 'serious' and 'persistent' conflict with the law (Gray et al. 2005). ISS can be a requirement of a YRO, which would include the child participating in various activities or interventions, such as education, training or arts-based programmes.

1
2
3 “I don’t think it’s up to me to say that, is it? I don’t think... I don’t get a say in what the YOT
4 do, do I?”. (Tommy, 16, ISS)
5

6 Tommy appears to accept this form of symbolic violence, associated with the unequal power
7 inherently built into relationships between children and professionals within youth justice services,
8 whereby authority figures wield significant control over decision making processes, which limits
9 opportunities for co-production to occur. Indeed, one professional acknowledged some of these
10 issues:
11

12
13 “I’ve just written a Referral Order³ report today, after an interview with the young person, and
14 he’s in panel tomorrow, and I’ve made suggestions of what should go on his contract, and I’m
15 pretty sure that when I look at the contract on Thursday, after panel, that whatever I’ve put
16 will be on the contract. And the young person won’t have had much input into that, really. But
17 that’s because the panel procedure that’s a bit of a tick box. And I think it needs to be
18 improved so young people can say, “Well no actually, I’d like to do this,” or, “I’d like to do
19 that.” But there isn’t that much opportunity at the moment for them to do that”. (Evelyn, YOT
20 Officer).
21
22

23 Likewise, children also described limited opportunities to feed into discussions during the referral
24 order panel process:
25

26 “They said, “Well you can pick up litter.” And I just didn’t... I just didn’t talk, really. They didn’t
27 ask me to talk. They didn’t say, “Well, what’s your points on this. They didn’t say that”. (Baden,
28 15, Referral Order)
29

30 The quote from Baden is akin to a form of symbolic violence, ‘accepting’ a subordinate position
31 (Bourdieu, 1977; 2019) by not sharing his views in this decision-making process. It is important in non-
32 voluntary participation contexts, that professionals provide explicit opportunities for involvement and
33 views to be voiced and inform children how their perspectives and knowledge are of equal value,
34 ensuring partnerships are built, with the voice of the child prioritised throughout intervention
35 planning and supervision (Duke, et al., 2022). The professionals tended to demonstrate an awareness
36 of this, moving beyond notions of misrecognition (Bourdieu, 2020:145), as they identified barriers
37 within the process of referral order panels, but appeared to also be subject to symbolic power by not
38 being able to transform the Referral Order panel process. Another area where a participatory
39 approach was particularly challenging to practice was during ‘High risk’ panels.
40
41
42

43 ***Professional perspectives on ‘High risk’ panels***

44 High risk management panels are a multi-agency co-ordinated approach to monitor concerns related
45 to behaviour, harm, safety and wellbeing. Specialist workers and senior managers involved in these
46 processes provide guidance and support to those managing cases. This includes identifying the
47 resources needed to manage risk. It also includes monitoring safeguarding concerns, or responding to
48 intelligence received, that, for example, children are judged to be displaying harmful behaviours
49 and/or presenting as a ‘high or very high risk’ of harm to themselves (see Burns and Creaney 2023;
50
51
52
53
54

55
56 ³ Referral Orders (RO) were introduced in the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999 as a statutory
57 community-based order in which the court ‘refers’ the child to a youth offender panel. The panel will agree a
58 contract of work with which the child is expected to comply (YJB 2018).
59
60

1
2
3 see also Peer Power / Youth Justice Board, 2021:61). During fieldwork, one YOT manager explained
4 why children were *not* invited to attend ‘high risk’ panels:
5

6 “Because we might be talking about some, you know, information in relation to the victim.
7 Protective exclusion zones around victims’ houses and all that kind of stuff... it would be quite
8 difficult practically to see how that would work...” (Jackson, YOT Manager)
9

10 Jackson did acknowledge the sensitive and confidential nature of the discussions being a barrier to
11 enabling the child to voice their opinions or perspectives in these processes. Intelligence may be
12 shared between professionals, which may be confidential or sensitive in nature and not appropriate
13 for the child to hear. Nevertheless, there were consequences from this strategy to not allow children
14 to be physically present at the meetings, which resulted in some frontline professionals struggling to
15 secure ‘buy in’ from those under supervision:
16
17

18 “Because, really, you’re making big decisions, particularly around risk and vulnerability on
19 someone, when you’re not really getting any kind of buy-in. The problem with the high-risk
20 meetings is you can make these big decisions – everybody’s like, “Yep. I think that’s the way
21 to go.” It’s down to me then to go and sell that to the young person. And what if they don’t
22 buy it? I’ve got to do it to them, haven’t I, really?... I can tell them “We’ve assessed you as
23 high-risk, for these reasons”, but I don’t think it really means anything to them. But if they’re
24 in a meeting, with maybe a small number of people saying, “Right, we think that, you know,
25 at the moment you’re high-risk because of these reasons.” It might just bring it home to them
26 and help with the interventions as well”. (Scarlett, YOT Officer, England)
27
28
29

30 As Scarlett demonstrates in her explanation of high-risk meetings, it becomes a strategy concerned
31 with forms of surveillance and control, rather than upholding the principal of ‘collaboration’ and
32 having a Child First ethos at the forefront of youth justice practice for these children. Those under
33 youth justice supervision are not able to be physically present at the meetings. Professionals are
34 expected to gather children’s views about perceived risk, harm and safety. In these situations, the
35 child’s case manager or other trusted professional is given responsibility to represent those views at
36 the meeting. There is at least some consideration regarding the inclusivity aspect of participation
37 within these processes given the paucity of the opportunities for children labelled ‘high risk’ to input
38 into this aspect of service delivery:
39
40

41 “I think it’s a bit bizarre actually...I’ve got one upcoming with – social care are coming,
42 management here are coming, I’m coming, obviously. I’ve invited the support worker. So, but
43 the most important person is not there...how can we change anything if that child’s not
44 included and able to give their views? I find it a bit bizarre, that we’re making decisions about
45 the young person, who’s not attending...”. (Esme, YOT Officer)
46
47

48 “I think it’s morally indefensible, actually, to discuss people without them being there for at
49 least part of it”. (Hayley, Health Worker)
50
51

52 This is also a case of symbolic violence in that there are constraints on expressions of agency with
53 children being denied sufficient freedom to express themselves and to co-design or even partially
54 input into the ‘high risk’ panel process. This example highlights symbolic violence of front-line
55 professionals, as they recognise the necessity of children’s participation but are also being denied the
56 opportunity to meaningfully shape high risk meetings with children and internalise this as being out
57 of their control instead of challenging the status quo (Bourdieu, 1998a and 1998b). It is important to
58
59
60

1
2
3 note that the organisation did previously pilot an approach that involved enlisting the help of a
4 professional, who was care and criminal justice experienced, to act as an ‘advocate’ for the child:
5

6 “he... absolutely represented that young person’s views in a fantastic way. And altered the
7 way that the case manager, and me as the chair of the risk meeting, had his risk management
8 plan, intervention plan, you know. In terms of where he was seen, erm... you know”. (Jackson,
9 YOT Manager)
10
11
12

13 Jackson did acknowledge that children are informed of outcomes/judgements concerning ‘risk’ and
14 encouraged to input into and critique professional decision making. It is of note that a study by Peer
15 Power / Youth Justice Board, (2021), problematised the application of the ‘high risk’ term. The authors
16 of the report recommended a re-think concerning language, in the light of forthcoming changes to the
17 participation strategy and the introduction of Child First as a guiding principle (YJB, 2021). It was also
18 argued that, if children are encouraged to enter into collaborate partnerships with professionals who
19 strive to connect with the child, positive outcomes are likely to result. In the present study, several
20 barriers to such partnership building were identified, which will now be discussed.
21
22
23
24
25

26 ***Barriers to partnership building***

27 It is important that professionals project empathy and encourage children to reflect on their feelings
28 and emotions during supervision meetings. A consistent, trusting adult/child relationship,
29 underpinned by an emphasis on listening with care and compassion, is vitally important (Wigzell, 2021;
30 Burns and Creaney, 2023). Mutual respect also plays a pivotal role in bolstering children’s
31 participation, reducing passive compliance and increasing active participation. This type of
32 relationship focused practice is conducive to children’s meaningful participation (Duke, et al., 2022).
33 However, it was found that practice continued to be predominately computer-based, interpreted by
34 practitioners as overly focused on ‘getting everything on the system’ (Esme, YOT Officer). As a result,
35 this negatively impacted ‘professional time and space to form supervision relationships with young
36 people’ (Ugwudike and Morgan, 2018:6). This is exemplified through interviews with professionals:
37
38
39

40 “So what difference are we making to a child’s life if we’re just sitting purely behind a
41 computer? ... there is an over-focus on paperwork”. (Esme, YOT Officer)
42

43 “It’s all the paperwork, yeah. That is why. And I guess it has to be like that. And in most
44 services, it’s like that as well. Even in social care”. (Freya, YOT Officer)
45

46 “We didn’t do this job just to sit around a computer, we did this job because we want to make
47 changes in children’s lives, and families’ lives. And it just feels like we’re not even touching the
48 surface anymore. Which is quite sad”. (Scarlett, YOT Officer)
49

50 One professional discussed how children’s participation rights and principles of co-production may
51 not be in the mind of front-line professionals in their day-to-day decision making:
52

53 “...making anything that is properly participative, just takes a lot more planning, a lot more
54 time. It’s just a lot harder. The truth is...with why participation isn’t at the top and the User
55 Voice isn’t central, is because it slows everything down and makes everything a lot more
56 difficult to do. And when we haven’t got much time and we’ve got a million things to do, the
57 stuff that’s hard to do slips down the list, doesn’t it?”. (Jackson, YOT Manager)
58
59
60

1
2
3 A noticeable barrier to facilitating participatory practices related to practitioners having the ability to
4 spend time with children, be creative in their work and the space to 'think through' how to implement
5 Child First principles into practice. The combination of a risk-focused, managerialist and bureaucratic
6 field is indicative of a habitus that invokes symbolic violence, on both children and youth justice
7 professionals, especially those in subordinate and precarious positions (Bourdieu, 1990a).
8
9

11 ***A risk-focused, managerialist and bureaucratic field as the 'status quo'***

12 Profound changes had been introduced at the fieldwork site during the course of the fieldwork, such
13 as the new assessment tool 'AssetPlus' and information systems, designed to overcome formulaic and
14 bureaucratic processes. AssetPlus is utilised as an assessment-intervention tool that collects
15 information about the child, including personal family and social factors, offending and anti-social
16 behavior, foundations for change, and self-assessment (YJB, 2014). This can be time consuming to
17 complete and limits children's involvement in supervision arrangements. AssetPlus appeared to
18 constrain practitioner expertise, discretion and innovation:
19
20
21

22
23 "[AssetPlus is] the most long-winded, repetitive thing I've ever seen in my life... if a child's got
24 really complex needs, it opens up all sorts of boxes. So, it'll open up speech – is there an issue
25 with speech? Well, if there is, then this whole dropdown comes down. Is there mental health?
26 That comes down. Alcohol? Comes down. If they've ever been detained, that comes down.
27 So, you know, you get to the point where you think, "Do I actually want to tick 'yes'?" You do.
28 Because obviously, you know, you need to make sure that everything's correct for that child.
29 But actually, there's stuff on there that doesn't need to be there. It's repetitive..." (Esme, YOT
30 Officer)
31
32

33 Some practitioners felt the new assessment tool subjected children to more intrusive questioning,
34 rather than creating space for equal and reciprocal partnerships to be built:
35

36 "Suddenly you ask them all these questions, and it's quite, Whoa, what's going on here?".
37 (William, YOT Officer)
38

39 This response considers how the intrusive questioning is recognised as another barrier for power
40 imbalances to be addressed and meaningful participation to occur. The new assessment tool was
41 meant to enhance self-assessment⁴, but professionals feared the tool exacerbated children's feelings
42 of disempowerment, worsening the feeling of being 'assessed to death' by 'an 'instrument of symbolic
43 violence' (Schubert, 2014:189; see also Bourdieu, 2019:94). This resulted in professionals spending
44 more time in front of a computer screen, increasing the difficulty for trusting relationships with
45 children to form. This relational aspect of their work, considered key to effective participatory
46 practice, was almost seen 'as a luxury they could rarely afford because of other ('bureaucratic')
47 demands on their time' (Robinson, et al., 2014:130), as expressed by Scarlett:
48
49

50
51 "...participation is kind of like the cream of the crop. The goal that you always want to achieve,
52 but realistically we know we can't always get it. Because those – safeguarding, risk of harm to
53 the public, you know, risk of reoffending – is just so high, that we do have to focus our energies
54 there". (Scarlett, YOT Officer)
55
56
57

58 ⁴ An AssetPlus process evaluation raised concerns that the updated self-assessment component to AssetPlus
59 remains underutilised (See Picken et al., 2019). This can result in children being unable to fully express their
60 perspective on their care needs and experiences of supervision.

1
2
3 Although systems and processes do not categorically determine how agents respond in a given field,
4 dominant discourses, including processes of risk-focused practice, can constrain professional's desire
5 to implement participatory practices with children. This became evident in discussion around the
6 updated assessment tool. Furthermore, workers occupying a subordinate position in the field,
7 described too much pressure from managers in dominant positions, with an expectation that they
8 'just get on with it' and not react against the dominance of 'top-down decision-making'. Their accounts
9 depicted forms of symbolic violence:
10
11

12 "… across the team, there is uneasiness about the workload and what's expected of us, for
13 what money that we get, for the wages that we get. So, we're expected to drive the whole of
14 [the Borough], we're expected to do all these AssetPlusses within the national framework,
15 we're expected to have quite high caseloads." (Esme, YOT Officer)
16
17

18 These practitioners felt uncertain about how to navigate demands of the changing system or how to
19 effectively participate in the 'game' (Bourdieu, 2020:82). The status quo remained structured in a way
20 for children's voice, knowledge, and expertise to be dismissed at the expense of a risk-focused,
21 managerialist and bureaucratic field. However, the Child First approach has potential to inject a
22 cultural change in practice, by privileging children's power and choice to meaningfully contribute to
23 their own care and supervision needs. Despite the anxiety, tension, and conflict amidst the constraints
24 in the youth justice field, professionals still appear willing to implement Child First principles as they
25 emphasise care about the children they work with:
26
27

28 "We do this job because we want to show tolerance and compassion and care for the young
29 people we work with. But since the cuts I think... the pressure is actually quite intense".
30 (Scarlett, YOT Officer)
31
32

33 As discussed, Child First promotes effective relationship building throughout assessment and
34 supervision processes. As some of the quotes illustrate, those working on the front line do want to
35 practice this, harrowing the urgency for systems change so professionals have agency to prioritise the
36 child's voice and facilitate shared decision-making processes. Perhaps more resistance dispositions
37 consciously activated by agents in the field are required to provoke effective challenges to the
38 dominant model, forcing change and freedom from symbolic violence.
39
40

41 **Concluding Thoughts and Implications for Practice**

42

43 The purpose of this paper was to offer a critical perspective on participatory practices in the field of
44 youth justice. Bourdieu's framework has been overlooked by those with an interest in researching
45 participation, despite playing a more important role in criminological research (See Fraser and
46 Sandberg 2020). Therefore, using Bourdieu's thinking tools, practitioner perspectives of participatory
47 approaches and children's experiences of supervision were subjected to analytical scrutiny. Most
48 notably, through the concept of 'symbolic violence', the purpose was to reveal types of harm and
49 concealed forms of power within youth justice supervision. This paper has highlighted how, to an
50 extent, there has been commitment to involve children in decision-making processes. However, there
51 were concerns raised that children were not being meaningfully included in high-risk panel meetings.
52 Here, agendas seemed to clash in that a culture to involve children in decision making did not match
53 the processes in place to manage 'risk', which devalued children's knowledge, restricted
54 opportunities for children to participate in shared decision making and maintained unequal power
55 relationships. By professionals referring to children as a risk to others, this cautiously veers into a
56 deficit lens, resulting in children under supervision acquiring limited power and agency to
57 meaningfully participate, which contributed to a form of symbolic violence.
58
59
60

1
2
3 Moreover, the ability of professionals to utilise Child First principles was constrained by a habitus of
4 risk-based systems and forms of managerialism, exacerbating workload pressures. Despite being
5 afflicted by anxiety-provoking restructures, unmanageable caseloads and the perennial threat of
6 redundancy, professionals reacted, at times, by internalising rather than externalising such pain and
7 suffering. Subordinate professionals, also on the receiving end of symbolic violence, perceived the
8 experience as necessary and accepted the harms caused by 'just getting on with it'. This demonstrates
9 how symbolic violence is endured by both children and professionals, albeit in different forms, as the
10 system and processes within youth justice services appear to create noticeable barriers to progressing
11 collaborative decision-making or embedding a Child First and participatory rights-based approach. A
12 recent project also identified challenges implementing participatory approaches within YOTs and
13 uncovered similar barriers to children's involvement in 'high risk' management processes (Peer
14 Power/ YJB 2021). Thus, it is recommended that for 'high risk' panels to be inclusive and participative,
15 there is a need to align the purpose and strategy of these processes with a Child First ethos. More
16 specifically, this involves professionals raising their consciousness of the intersecting power
17 imbalances due to age, knowledge and professional authority within the supervision process and
18 prioritise treating children as equal, reciprocal partners with their own expertise who are capable of
19 contributing to shared decision making processes. We recommend that youth justice services involve
20 lived experience professionals as co-producers in 'high risk' management processes. As the findings in
21 this study reveal, they can be an authentic and credible voice and act as 'advocates' for the child. This
22 potentially progressive and principled practice is an approach that places value on *expertise borne of*
23 *experience* (Burns and Creaney, 2023; Lister, 2000). Moreover, high risk management panels are a
24 multi-agency co-ordinated approach to monitor concerns related to behaviour, harm, safety and
25 wellbeing. It also remains important that suitable justification or reasoning is provided to the child on
26 how decisions are reached in order to maximise positive outcomes (Wood and Kemshall, 2008:151;
27 Creaney and Smith, 2023).

28
29
30
31
32
33
34 Furthermore, it is pivotal that consideration of children's non-voluntary participation involves
35 professionals self-assessing their readiness to provide structural and individual support to children,
36 which includes an emphasis on their rights and interests being at the heart of decision-making
37 processes, alongside an ethic of care and a commitment to collaboration and co-production. It is
38 clearly vital that children's strengths are promoted and that they are encouraged to participate
39 through a relational approach, including a proactive commitment to facilitate child friendly spaces to
40 break down power inequalities (Duke, et al., 2022). Relationships between children and professionals
41 are inherently unequal. As identified in this paper, children may not consciously detect forms of soft
42 power being inflicted upon them. They may feel uneasy about sharing their views within adult-led
43 risk focused environments, which includes modes of control and surveillance to monitor perceived
44 harms or safety concerns. Thus, in a Bourdieusian sense, children may 'accept' (Bourdieu, 2020:130)
45 the legitimacy of their exclusion and existing power relations. They can remain distrustful of authority
46 figures due to prior disempowering experiences of system contact. Thus, adults in positions of power
47 must recognise their privilege, which grants them real and symbolic authority in the field.

48
49
50
51 To invoke freedom from symbolic violence, the Child First approach necessitates a re-imagining of
52 youth justice service assessment and supervision processes, alongside re-constructing the role of
53 professional from one who instructs or dictates to one who facilitates or empowers to cultivate truly
54 child-centred and equitable partnerships. Participation is an integral component of Child First,
55 alongside the equal importance of co-creation, which is pivotal to sustain positive outcomes (Hazel,
56 et al., 2017). Children must be enabled to contribute to the full cycle of delivering services throughout
57 all stages of the process. This means that regardless of perceived risk, children are treated as co-
58
59
60

1
2
3 producers and partners, awarding equal value to both children and professionals' knowledge and
4 experiences.
5
6
7
8

9 References

10 Barnes M, Barnes M and Sullivan H (2007) Power, participation and political renewal: Case studies in
11 public participation. Bristol: Policy Press.

12
13 Barry, M. (2007) Youth offending and youth transitions: the power of capital in influencing change.
14 *Critical Criminology*, 15 (2) 185-198.

15
16 Bateman, T. (2021). Bridging the care-crime gap: reforming the youth court? Report, National
17 Association for Youth Justice, London.

18
19 Bateman, T. (2020). The state of youth justice 2020. Report, National Association for Youth Justice,
20 London

21
22 Beauchamp TL, Childress JF. (2001) Principles of biomedical ethics. 5th. New York: Oxford University
23 Press.

24
25 Bourdieu, P. (1977) Outline of a Theory of Practice. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

26
27 Bourdieu, P., and Passeron, J. C. (1977) Reproduction in education, society and culture. London Sage
28 Publications.

29
30 Bourdieu, P. (1984) Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste, London: Routledge.

31
32 Bourdieu, P. (1990a) In Other Words: Essays Toward a Reflexive Sociology. Cambridge: Polity Press.

33
34 Bourdieu P (1990b) The Logic of Practice. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

35
36 Bourdieu, P. (1998a) Practical Reason; on the Theory of Action. Cambridge: Polity Press.

37
38 Bourdieu, P. (1998b) Acts of Resistance. Against the New Myths of Our Time. (Transl. by Richard Nice).
39 Cambridge: Polity Press.

40
41 Bourdieu, P. Accardo,A., Balazas,G., Beaud,S., Bonvin,F., Bourdieu,E. (1999) The Weight of the World:
42 Social Suffering in Contemporary Society. Cambridge: Polity Press.

43
44 Bourdieu, P. (2007) Sketch for a Self-analysis, Cambridge: Polity Press.

45
46 Bourdieu, P. and Wacquant L, (1992) An Invitation to reflexive sociology. Cambridge: Polity Press.

47
48 Bourdieu, P. (2019) Classification Struggles. General Sociology, Volume 1. Lectures at the Collège de
49 France (1981–1982), Cambridge: Polity Press

50
51 Bourdieu, P. (2020) Habitus and Field. General Sociology, Volume 2. Lectures at the Collège de France
52 (1982–1983), Cambridge: Polity Press.

53
54 Bourdieu, P. (2021) Forms of Capital. General Sociology, Volume 3. Lectures at the Collège de France
55 (1983–1984), Cambridge: Polity Press.

56
57 Bowden, M. (2014) Crime, Disorder and Symbolic Violence: Governing the Urban Periphery.
58 Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
59
60

- 1
2
3 Brady, L-M (2020). Introduction: Embedding young people's participation into healthcare. In Brady L-
4 M (Ed.) *Embedding Young People's Participation in Health Services: New Approaches*. 1-30.
5
6 Brown, A (2020) *A rights-based analysis of youth justice in the United Kingdom*. London: UNICEF.
7
8 Brown K (2015) *Vulnerability and young people: care and social control in policy and practice*. Bristol:
9 Policy Press.
10
11 Burns, S. (2019) *Young People as Co-producers in Policing across England. An Evaluation of the 'Youth*
12 *Commission' on Police and Crime, Children & Society*, 33 (4), 347–362.
13 <https://doi.org/10.1111/chso.12312>
14
15 Burns, S. and Creaney, S. (2023) 'Embracing children's voices: Transforming Youth Justice practice
16 through co-production and Child First participation' in Case, S and Hazel, N (Eds.) *Child First:*
17 *Developing a new Youth Justice System*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
18
19 Case, S. (2018). *Youth justice: A critical introduction*. Oxon, United Kingdom: Routledge.
20
21 Case, S, Browning, A (2021a) *Child First Justice: the research evidence-base [Full report]*.
22 Loughborough University.
23
24 Case, S, Browning, A (2021b) *The child first strategy implementation project: Realising the guiding*
25 *principle for youth justice. [Full report]*. Loughborough University.
26
27 Case, S., Creaney, S., Coleman, N., Haines, K., Little, R., & Worrall, V. (2020). "Trusting children to
28 enhance youth justice policy: The importance and value of children's voices", *Youth Voice Journal*,
29 ISBN:978-1-911634-23-2.
30
31 Clinks (2016), "Clinks' submission to the review of the youth justice system", available at:
32 www.clinks.org/sites/default/files/2018-10/clinks_taylorreview_final.pdf (accessed 16 July 2017).
33
34 Coffey, A. and Atkinson, P. (1996), *Making Sense of Qualitative Data: Complementary Strategies*, Sage,
35 London.
36
37 Creaney, S. (2020) "Game playing" and "docility": youth justice in question, *Safer Communities*, Vol.
38 19 No. 3, pp. 103-118. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SC-01-2020-0002>.
39
40 Creaney, S. and Smith, R. (2023), "Social work and youth justice", in Parker, J. (Ed.) *Introducing Social*
41 *Work*, 2nd edition. Sage, London.
42
43 Crossley, N. (2005) *Key Concepts in Critical Social Theory*, London, Sage.
44
45 Crossley, S. (2017) *Making trouble: a Bourdieusian analysis of the UK Government's Troubled Families*
46 *Programme*, Durham theses, Durham University. Available at Durham E-Theses Online:
47 <http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/12271/> (Last accessed 19th August 2019).
48
49 Day A-M. (2022) 'It's a Hard Balance to Find': The Perspectives of Youth Justice Practitioners in England
50 on the Place of 'Risk' in an Emerging 'Child-First' World. *Youth Justice*.
51
52 Deakin, J., Fox, C., & Matos, R. (2020). Labelled as 'risky' in an era of control: How young people
53 experience and respond to the stigma of criminalized identities. *European Journal of Criminology*.
54 <https://doi.org/10.1177/1477370820916728>
55
56 Duke, K., Gleeson, H., Dabrowska, K., Dich Herold, M., Rolando, S., & Thom, B. (2022). *Building Cultures*
57 *of Participation: Involving Young People in Contact with the Criminal Justice System in the*
58
59
60

1
2
3 Development of Drug Interventions in the United Kingdom, Denmark, Italy and Poland. Youth Justice.
4 <https://doi.org/10.1177/14732254221075206>
5

6 Farrow, K., Kelly, G. and Wilkinson, B. (2007) *Offenders in Focus*. Bristol: Policy Press.
7

8 Forde, L. (2018) 'Realising the Right of the Child to Participate in the Criminal Process'. Youth Justice,
9 18 (3). pp. 265 - 284.
10

11 Fowler, B. (2020) Afterword to *Criminology & Criminal Justice's Virtual Special Issue: Bourdieu and*
12 *Criminology*. *Criminology and Criminal Justice* Online First.
13 <https://journals.sagepub.com/page/crj/bourdieu-and-criminology>
14

15 France, A.P. (2015), "Theorising and researching the youth crime nexus: habitus, reflexivity and the
16 political ecology of social practice", in Costa, C. and Murphy, M. (Eds) *Bourdieu, Habitus and Social*
17 *Research: The Art of Application*, Palgrave Macmillan, London.
18

19 Fraser, A and Sandberg, S (2020). Foreword to *Criminology & Criminal Justice's Virtual Special Issue:*
20 *Bourdieu and Criminology*. *Criminology & Criminal Justice*, available at:
21 <https://journals.sagepub.com/page/crj/bourdieu-and-criminology>
22
23

24 Friedman. S and Laurison, D (2020) "The class ceiling: Why it pays to be privileged" Bristol, UK: Policy
25 press.
26

27 Graham, H. (2020) Hysteresis and the sociological perspective in a time of crisis. *Acta Sociologica*. 63
28 (4) 450 – 452.
29

30 Gray, E., Taylor, E., Roberts, C., Merrington, S., Fernandez, R and Moore, R. (2005) *ISSP: The Final*
31 *Report*. London: Youth Justice Board
32

33 Goldson, B. (ed) (2000) *The New Youth Justice*, Lyme Regis: Russell House Publishing.
34

35 Haines, K. and Case, S. (2015) *Positive Youth Justice: Children First, Offenders Second*. Bristol: Policy
36 Press.
37

38 Hampson, K. (2017) 'Researching with Young People who are Vulnerable and 'Difficult to Reach' in
39 Wincup, E. *Criminological Research: Understanding Qualitative Methods*. (2nd Edition) London: Sage.
40

41 Hampson, K. S. (2018). Desistance Approaches in Youth Justice – The Next Passing Fad or a Sea-Change
42 for the Positive? Youth Justice, 18(1), 18–33.
43
44

45 Hart, D. and Thompson, C. (2009), *Young People's Participation in the Youth Justice System*, National
46 Children's Bureau, London.
47

48 Hazel, N, Goodfellow, P, Liddle, M, Bateman, T, Pitts, J (2017) *Now all I care about is my future –*
49 *Supporting the shift: Framework for the effective resettlement of young people leaving custody.*
50 *Report, Beyond Youth Custody*, London.
51

52 HM Inspectorate of Probation (2020) A thematic review of the work of youth offending services during
53 the COVID-19 pandemic. Available at: [https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmiprobation/wp-](https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmiprobation/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2020/11/201110-A-thematic-review-of-the-work-of-youth-offending-services-during-the-COVID-19-pandemic.pdf)
54 [content/uploads/sites/5/2020/11/201110-A-thematic-review-of-the-work-of-youth-offending-](https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmiprobation/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2020/11/201110-A-thematic-review-of-the-work-of-youth-offending-services-during-the-COVID-19-pandemic.pdf)
55 [services-during-the-COVID-19-pandemic.pdf](https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmiprobation/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2020/11/201110-A-thematic-review-of-the-work-of-youth-offending-services-during-the-COVID-19-pandemic.pdf) (Accessed 7th December 2020).
56
57

58 Houston, S. (2002) Reflecting on habitus, field and capital: Towards a culturally sensitive social work.
59 *Journal of Social Work*, 2(2) 149–167.
60

Jenkins, R. (1992) Pierre Bourdieu, London: Routledge.

Kilkelly, U (2019) The UN convention on the rights of the child: incremental and transformative approaches to legal implementation. *International Journal of Human Rights*. 23(3), 323-337.

Leigh, J., Beddoe, L., and Keddell, E. (2019) Disguised compliance or undisguised nonsense?: A critical discourse analysis of compliance and resistance in social work practice. *Families Relationships and Societies*, 1-17.

Lister, R (2000). Participation should be a reality, not just a buzz word <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2000/dec/07/comment>

Lundy, L. (2007) 'Voice' is not enough: conceptualising Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. *British Educational Research Journal*. 33 (6) 927-942

MacDonald R. and Marsh, J. (2005) *Disconnected Youth? Growing Up in Britain's Poor Neighbourhoods*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Mahar, C., Harker, R., & Wilkes, C. (1990) 'The basic theoretical position', in Harker, R. Mahar, C & Wilkes, C (Eds.) *An introduction to the work of Pierre Bourdieu: the practice of theory*. Houndmills: Macmillan.

Martin K and Feltham A. (2020) 'Shared decision-making with young people in mental health services' in Brady, L-M. (Ed.) *Embedding Young People's Participation in Health Services: New Approaches*. 31-52

McNeill, F. (2006) Community supervision: Context and relationships matter. In Goldson, B. and Muncie, J. (eds) *Youth Crime and Justice*. London: Sage

McNeill, F. (2009) Young people, serious offending and managing risk: a Scottish perspective, in Baker, K and Sutherland, A (eds) *Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements and Youth Justice*. Bristol: Policy Press.

McNeish D (1999) Promoting participation for children and young people: Some key questions for health and social welfare organisations. *Journal of Social Work Practice* 13(2): 191–2013.

Milbourne L (2009) Valuing Difference or Securing Compliance? Working to Involve Young People in Community Settings. *Children & Society* 23(5): 347–363.

Peer Power / Youth Justice Board (2021) *Co-creation and Participation in Practice Project*. Peer Power/ YJB. London.

Percy-Smith B (2012) Participation as Mediation and Social Learning. In: Baraldi C and Iervese V (eds), *Participation, Facilitation, and Mediation Children and Young People in their Social Contexts*, London: Routledge, pp. 12–29.

Phoenix, J. (2016) Against Youth Justice and Governance, For Youth Penalty. *British Journal of Criminology*, 56 (1) 123-140.

Picken, N. Baker, K. d'Angelo, B. Fays, C. Sutherland, A. (2019) Process Evaluation of AssetPlus. RAND Europe. https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR3177.html. (Accessed 7th December 2020).

Robinson, G., Priede, C., Farrall, S., Shapland, J. and McNeill, F (2014) Understanding "quality" in probation practice: frontline perspectives in England & Wales. *Criminology and Criminal Justice*, 14 (2) 123-142.

- 1
2
3 Saar-Heiman, Y & Gupta, A 2019, 'The Poverty-Aware Paradigm for Child Protection: A Critical
4 Framework for Policy and Practice', *British Journal of Social Work*, pp. 1-18.
5 <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcz093>
6
7 Schubert, J. D. (2014) *Suffering/symbolic violence in Grenfell*, M. (ed) (2014) *Pierre Bourdieu: Key*
8 *concepts*, Durham: Acumen.
9
10 Scraton, P. (2007) *Power, Conflict and Criminalisation*, Abingdon: Routledge.
11
12 Segre S (2014) *Contemporary sociological thinkers and theories*. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing.
13
14 Sentencing Act (2020) c. 17. Part 9. Youth Rehabilitation Orders. Available at:
15 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2020/17/group/THIRD/part/9/chapter/1/enacted> [Accessed
16 on 1.6.2020]
17
18 Shamas, V. L. and Sandberg, S. (2016) Habitus, capital, and conflict: Bringing Bourdieusian field
19 theory to criminology. *Criminology & Criminal Justice*, 16(2) 195-213.
20
21 Shier H, Hernández Méndez M, Centeno M, et al. (2014) How Children and Young People Influence
22 Policy-Makers: Lessons from Nicaragua. *Children & Society* 28(1): 1–14.
23
24 Silverman D (2013) *Doing qualitative research*. 4th ed. London: Sage.
25
26 Slay J and Penny J (2014) *Commissioning for outcomes and co-production: A practical guide for local*
27 *authorities*. London.
28
29 Smithson, H., Gray, P., & Jones, A. (2020). 'They Really Should Start Listening to You': The Benefits and
30 Challenges of Co-Producing a Participatory Framework of Youth Justice Practice. *Youth Justice*.
31
32 Smithson H, Jones A. (2021) Co- creating youth justice practice with young people: Tackling power
33 dynamics and enabling transformative action. *Children & Society*. 2021;00: 1– 15
34
35 Smith, R., & Gray, P. (2019). The changing shape of youth justice: Models of practice. *Criminology &*
36 *Criminal Justice*, 19(5), 554–571.
37
38 Snook, I. (1990) 'Language, Truth and Power: Bourdieu's Ministerium' in Harker, R Mahar, C and &
39 Wilkes, C (Eds.), *An introduction to the work of Pierre Bourdieu: the practice of theory*. Houndmills:
40 Macmillan.
41
42 Stephenson M, Giller H and Brown, S. (2007) *Effective Practice in Youth Justice* Cullompton: Willan
43 Publishing.
44
45 Stephenson M, (2013) 'Desistance' in Stephenson, M. and Allen, R. eds. *Youth Justice: Challenges to*
46 *Practice*, 2nd Edition. London: UNITAS
47
48 Taylor, C. (2016) *Review of the youth justice system in England and Wales* London: Ministry of Justice.
49
50 Tisdall EKM (2013) The Transformation of Participation? Exploring the Potential of 'Transformative
51 Participation' for Theory and Practice around Children and Young People's Participation. *Global*
52 *Studies of Childhood* 3(2). pp. 183 - 193
53
54 Tisdall EKM (2017) Conceptualising children and young people's participation: examining vulnerability,
55 social accountability and co-production. *The International Journal of Human Rights* 21(1): 59–75.
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 Tuddenham, R. (2000). Beyond Defensible Decision-Making: Towards Reflexive Assessment of Risk
4 and Dangerousness. *Probation Journal*, 47(3), 173–183.
5 <https://doi.org/10.1177/026455050004700302>
6

7 Ugwudike, P and Morgan, G. (2018) Bridging the gap between research and frontline youth justice
8 practice. *Criminology & Criminal Justice*
9

10 UNICEF (1989). *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989*, Geneva: United Nations.

11 UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (2019). General Comment No. 24 on children’s rights in the
12 child justice system. *CRC/C/GC/24*. Geneva: Switzerland
13

14 Warming H (2012) Participation, Facilitation, Mediation. In: Baraldi C and Iervese V (eds), *Participation,*
15 *Facilitation, and Mediation Children and Young People in their Social Contexts*, London: Routledge, pp.
16 30–48.
17

18 Weaver, B., Lightowler, C., & Moodie, K. (2019) *Inclusive Justice - Coproducing Change: A Practical*
19 *Guide to Service User Involvement in Community Justice*. Glasgow.
20

21 Wigzell, A. (2021) NAYJ Briefing: Explaining desistance: looking forward, not backwards. London:
22 National Association of Youth Justice
23

24 Winter, K. (2015) Decision-making processes in review meetings for children in care: A Bourdieusian
25 analysis. In Alanen, L., Brooker, E. and Mayall, B. (eds) *Childhood with Bourdieu*. London: Palgrave.
26

27 Wolfreys, J. (2000) In perspective: Pierre Bourdieu *International Socialism Journal*. 87 available at
28 <http://pubs.socialistreviewindex.org.uk/isj87/wolfreys.htm> (Last accessed 20th February 2019).
29

30 Youth Justice Board (2014) *AssetPlus*. London: YJB
31

32 Youth Justice Board (2016) *Participation strategy: Giving young people a voice in youth justice*.
33 London: Youth Justice Board.
34

35 Youth Justice Board (YJB) (2018) *Referral Order Guidance*. London: Youth Justice Board
36

37 Youth Justice Board (YJB) (2019) *Standards for children in the youth justice system* London: Youth
38 Justice Board.
39

40 Youth Justice Board (YJB) (2021) *Strategic plan 2021–24*. Report, YJB, London.
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

Freedom from Symbolic Violence? Facilitators and Barriers to Participatory Practices in Youth Justice

Abstract

~~The Child First Participation agenda in England marks a paradigm shift in youth justice. This solidifies a commitment to democratising decision-making processes with children. Drawing on interviews with children and professionals, this paper explores the enablers and constraints to Child First participation in youth justice services, including how risk-oriented practices, managerialism and neoliberal mechanisms constrain positive relationships with children. In this paper, Bourdieu's concept of 'symbolic violence' is used to explore systemic problems when engaging children in co-producing youth justice interventions. The paper suggests how participatory practices can provide freedom from symbolic violence for both children and practitioners.~~

The Child First Participation agenda in England marks a paradigm shift in youth justice. This solidifies a commitment to democratising decision-making processes with children. Drawing on interviews with children and professionals, this paper discusses explores the enablers and constraints to Child First participation, including how risk-oriented practices, managerialism and neoliberal mechanisms can be barriers to building positive relationships with children and maximising the voice of the child. In this paper, Pierre Bourdieu's concept of 'symbolic violence' is used to explore barriers of engaging children in co-producing youth justice interventions. The paper suggests how participatory practices can provide freedom from symbolic violence for both children and practitioners.

Introduction

Justice-involved children have legal rights to participate in decisions about their care and supervision needs, which are universal and unconditional under international children's rights legislation (Brown, 2020; Creaney and Case, 2021). In other words, professionals are required to respect children's rights to impart ideas and be listened to throughout contact with the youth justice system (Article 12, UNCRC, 1989). Embracing children's voices is a key theme in the General Comment No.24 on children's rights in the justice system (UNCRC, paras. 45 and 46, 2019), and professionals in England have also been encouraged to implement a participation strategy (YJB 2016). This involves activating a strengths-based approach to service design and delivery, by building relationships which enables the priority of children's voices throughout assessment, planning and supervision (YJB, 2021). However, children's participatory rights are not being fully implemented due to existing 'risk' processes, notably ensuing uncertainty concerning how to manage 'high risk' children (Day, 2022; Burns and Creaney, 2023; Peer Power / YJB, 2021). Thus, there remains concern about the relative absence of children's voice and participation in youth justice service decision making processes and professional practice.

[A review of the Youth Justice System in 2016 recommended that children under supervision and subject to mandatory appointments need to be viewed and responded to as 'children first' \(Taylor, 2016, p. 48\). Furthermore, there was a call to transform responses to children and enact system](#)

1
2
3 [change: from ‘justice with some welfare, to a welfare system with justice’ \(Taylor, 2016:49\). Against](#)
4 [this backdrop and criticisms levelled at the risk paradigm for marginalising the voice of the child and](#)
5 [a chorus of calls to be more rights-focused \(Case and Haines, 2009; Haines and Case, 2015\), the](#)
6 [Youth Justice Board developed and launched the Child First agenda \(YJB, 2021\). The Child First](#)
7 [approach promotes constructive, non-criminalizing and collaborative practices that are socially](#)
8 [inclusive and respectful towards children’s rights \(Case and Browning 2021a; Creaney and Case,](#)
9 [2021\).](#)

10
11
12 [The Child First approach in England has become a national strategy for practice, developed from the](#)
13 [positive youth justice model \(Haines and Case 2015\), insisting that children should be accredited for](#)
14 [their voice and contributions as partners involved in decision-making processes \(YJB, 2021\). The](#)
15 [Child First approach consists of four principles](#)

16
17
18
19
20 [which assert working with the child in a way that is socially inclusive and respectful towards their](#)
21 [rights \(Case and Browning 2021a\).](#) Indeed, children are better able to exert influence when their
22 knowledge and insights are seen as legitimate and ‘of value’ (Haines and Case, 2015). If children are
23 encouraged to enter into collaborate partnerships with professionals who strive to connect with the
24 child, positive outcomes are more likely. Advocates of Child First have drawn on a rich body of
25 empirical research (See Case, 2018; Smithson, et al., 2020; Hampson, 2018; Haines and Case, 2015)
26 to characterise its potential as an antidote, or at least a persuasive alternative, to a deficit-based
27 adult-led system, which has been in existence for two decades as a result of the ‘new’ youth justice
28 formulated in the late 1990s (Goldson, 2000). Child First provides the foundations for the
29 development of participatory practices, where children as ‘rights-holders’ (Kilkelly, 2019:332) are in
30 positions of power and have influence over processes, respected as ‘experts’ on their own lives,
31 perceived as capable of meaningfully contributing to discussions on policy and practice matters.
32 [Participation \(Article 12 of the UNCRC\) refers to children ‘having a say’ in decision-making processes](#)
33 [and being listened to regarding decisions that affect them \(UNCRC, 1989\). The nature of their](#)
34 [behaviour should not be allowed to override the entitlements to a fair hearing and just treatment](#)
35 [which should apply to all children and young people irrespective of their circumstances or](#)
36 [characteristics , ~~characteristics or character~~ \(Creaney and Smith, 2023\). Collaborative participatory](#)
37 [practice, in the sense of fully involving children in decisions and processes, is where children are](#)
38 [viewed as capable co-producers, and we argue that this is a fundamental feature of Child First youth](#)
39 [Justice \(Burns and Creaney, 2023; Creaney and Smith, 2023\).](#)

40
41
42
43
44 [Firstly, this paper presents a critical perspective on participatory practices in youth justice,](#)
45 [acknowledging the complex challenges involving children in decision making processes. Secondly, an](#)
46 [overview of Bourdieu’s fundamental analytical tools is provided. Leading on from this, the paper](#)
47 [proceeds to critically discuss the aims of the study and methods of data collection, and following](#)
48 [this, presents the findings and analysis. It ends by reflecting upon concluding thoughts, including](#)
49 [implications for practice.](#)

50
51
52
53
54 [As such, ~~this~~This paper is concerned with the application of the ~~the~~ third principle of ‘collaboration’](#)
55 [principle as part of the Child First approach, which proposes to “Encourage children’s active](#)
56 [participation, engagement, and wider social inclusion. All work is a meaningful collaboration with](#)
57 [children and their carers” \(YJB 2021:11\). This focus on children’s participation is presented as a](#)
58 [bulwark to exclusionary features of risk-oriented practices within an adult-led system. It can](#)
59 [potentially mitigate against the effects of individualised/pathologising neo-liberal discourses, and a](#)
60

1
2
3 'preoccupation with security' (Saar-Heiman and Gupta, 2019:1). Particularly pertinent is the extent
4 to which the participation principle of the Child First approach can be applied in practice. This paper
5 draws on empirical data that investigated children's involvement in the design and delivery of youth
6 justice services. More specifically, it focuses on the lived experiences and perspectives of key
7 stakeholders who participated in **interviews, group projects, feedback forums and supervision**
8 **meetings. Core components of Bourdieu's theory of practice is are utilised as a heuristic or practical**
9 **device to explore the perceived efficacy of participatory practices within youth justice processes.** The
10 habitus deployed by those 'in the thick of it', is shaped by external forces / field conditions and
11 embodied dispositions, which direct the thoughts and actions of professionals operating within the
12 field of youth justice (Bourdieu, 1977). For example, bureaucratic systems and dominant risk
13 discourses (Smith and Gray, 2019), both shape and constrain front line professionals' ability to adopt
14 participatory principles and practices.
15
16
17
18

19 Habitus can be utilised to expose how frontline professionals navigate classic tensions between
20 public protection, neo-liberal regimes, child welfare, rights-based, and punishment-oriented
21 practices, and more concretely how battles between those who accrue/retain power and those who
22 contest dominant discourses are 'played out'. These battles enshroud forms of 'symbolic violence',
23 which can ultimately become a barrier towards participatory practices in youth justice. Thus,
24 Bourdieu's conceptual instruments are used in this paper to gain deeper insight into the perceptions
25 and experiences of those practising in the risk focused, managerially driven youth justice
26 environment (Case, et al., 2020). It is a system that has in part maintained a precautionary risk
27 management and deficit ethos, **recently which has been** reiterated by HM Inspectorate of Probation
28 (2020). At the practice level, 'offender management' orthodoxy retains a degree of influence and
29 'risk' continues to shape responses, with decision making underpinned by insights from Risk Factor
30 Prevention Paradigm literature or undergird by the pseudo-science of risk factor analysis (Bateman,
31 2021; Smith and Gray, 2019). This focus on risk can result in children having limited choice,
32 influence, control, or power over processes, which contrasts from a rights-based approach (Article
33 12, UNCRC). With this in mind, the paper will proceed to explore what 'participation' means in youth
34 justice.
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42

43 What Participation Means in Youth Justice

44 Participation is a contested concept where meanings and measurements differ in various contexts.
45 However, it is proposed that to participate is to be involved, consulted on matters that are of
46 importance and to experience a sense of ownership of parts of the decision-making process (Shier et
47 al., 2014). Extending to 'meaningful participation' involves the 'transfer' of power and choice from
48 adults to children (McNeish 1999). Rather than simply transforming individual children's lives,
49 'meaningful participation' offers potential for relational and social transformation as a solution to
50 children's relative powerlessness in an adult-centric society. Elsewhere, Lundy's (2007) model of
51 participation exemplifies how crucial it is to reflect on the influence children's participation has.
52 However, in youth justice, children's participation is often non-voluntary. Those under supervision
53 have been mandated to attend appointments, often questioned about their attitudes to offending,
54 problematic lifestyles, 'pro-criminal' peer relationships, while participating in intervention
55 programmes and engaging in care needs processes (Stephenson, et al., 2007). Therefore, within the
56 youth justice system, it could be argued that the obligation to participate might not be fully in
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 conjunction with their rights, as they have limited power and choice entering this particular context,
4 resulting in difficulty in measuring practices of meaningful participation.
5
6
7

8 However, children's substantive involvement in the design and delivery of services can lead to
9 positive outcomes (e.g., self-esteem/confidence) and reductions in further offending (Haines and
10 Case, 2015; Weaver, et al., 2019). Yet, there are distinct barriers to overcome in order to ensure
11 children's participatory rights are realised in practice, including the 'adult knows best' mentality, and
12 children presenting behavioural, or intellectual difficulties who find it hard to express agency (Forde,
13 2018; YJB, 2016). Professionals may also not have sufficient knowledge and skills, awareness and
14 understanding, alongside limited time or space to meaningfully execute participatory or strengths-
15 based agendas (McNeill, 2006; Peer Power / YJB, 2021). Most notably, youth justice professionals
16 can be more inclined to execute restrictive as opposed to enabling strategies, fuelled by concern
17 that some children present a risk of harm to others (Day, 2022; Tuddenham, 2000 Farrow, et al.,
18 2007). ~~Previous research demonstrates professional's power to even withdraw from providing
19 services to children based on subjective judgement of children's 'high-risk' behaviour (Brown 2015).~~
20 In these instances, children may not be consciously aware of symbolic violence being inflicted upon
21 them and may even persuade 'themselves of the legitimacy of their exclusion' (Bourdieu and
22 Passeron, 1977:209) from broader decision-making processes. Consequently, within youth justice
23 practice it is imperative that each stage of the decision-making process involves the degree of
24 possibility to share power ~~and control~~ with children (Peer Power / YJB, 2021).
25
26
27
28
29
30
31

32 ***Co-production: Equal Partnerships and Shared Decision Making***

33 Across a range of children's services (Brady 2020, Slay and Penny 2014), and more recently in the
34 youth justice field (Smithson et al 2020), co-production as a conceptual framework has been
35 promoted ~~and adopted in practice to promote participatory ways of working with children to
36 participate with children.~~ Insights from co-production literature are useful to maximise the voice of
37 the child through viewing children as capable and knowledgeable 'experts by experience' (Brady
38 2020, Tisdall 2013). This can transform relationships between professionals and children. By
39 ~~accepting being receptive to notions of interdependency and reciprocity, which this creates can help
40 to nurture equal partnerships and~~ shared decision making. Shared decision making is characterised
41 by a partnership of equal value, privileging collaborative, non-hierarchical relationship building, and
42 the sharing of forms of power ~~and control~~ in decision making processes (Martin and Feltham 2020;
43 Peer Power / Youth Justice Board, 2021). ~~Focusing on partnerships can too easily ignore the inherent
44 power imbalances between professional and child in youth justice and dismiss how~~ Arguably, 'power
45 is everywhere' in the sense that adults and children are submerged within fields of ~~power and
46 domination~~ (Barnes et al. 2007). Of paramount importance is understanding how youth justice
47 professionals can facilitate shared decision-making ~~power~~ and build partnerships to ignite a more
48 transformative mode of children's participation, ~~especially when surveillance is a key part of when
49 supervision is a mode of surveillance/control.~~ Professionals still have authority to exert sanctions for
50 non-compliance or trigger breach proceedings if dissatisfied with the nature of a child's input into
51 processes, resulting in children still being relatively powerless (Creaney, 2020). Thus, there may still
52 be a level of uncertainty regarding whether children feel entitled to a voice and enabled to share
53 their expertise as co-producers with adult professionals.
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 Moreover, children in the Youth Justice System - especially those who are severely disadvantaged -
4 may refrain from engaging in participatory practices, unconvinced that positive change to their
5 circumstances is possible (MacDonald and Marsh, 2005). A further issue is children's knowledge
6 being vulnerable to disproportionate scrutiny, their views contested or discredited due to age and
7 emotional development. Indeed, youth justice professionals may deem their expert knowledge more
8 credible, invoking a 'hierarchy of knowledge' mentality (Deakin, et al., 2020). Subsequently, for
9 children's participation to be more transformative, adults must reposition themselves as 'co-
10 constructors of knowledge' (Percy-Smith 2012). By doing so, it enacts a greater possibility of shared
11 decision making and equal partnerships being forged between children and adult professionals.
12 Adopting some ideas of co-production as a conceptual basis for participation in youth justice can
13 support a reconceptualisation of both adults and children's knowledge, capabilities, and expertise.
14 However, it is important to note that, children may not feel entitled or deserving of the opportunity
15 to input into the design and delivery of services they receive (Case et al., 2020). Children may feel
16 they have forfeited participatory rights by being convicted of harm and ordered to repair the harm
17 caused (Hart and Thompson, 2009). Therefore, it is important to approach co-production in youth
18 justice with caution, as these potential barriers to participatory practices in youth justice may still
19 elicit power imbalances and systemic harms to children, which can be subjected to critical
20 examination with Bourdieu's thinking tools.
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28

29 Thinking with Bourdieu

30 Pierre Bourdieu dismantled the subjective/objective dichotomy through a theory of practice,
31 spotlighting the interplay between intentions and external influences on the ability to think and act
32 (Bourdieu, 1977). In other words, Bourdieu arguably sought to bridge an illogical gap between
33 subjective experiences and social structures (Houston, 1992:149). Although, [as Bourdieu observed](#),
34 'structures never determine behaviour mechanically' (Bourdieu, 2021:206), objective conditions
35 govern or at least impact a person's ability to exercise agency, either constraining or facilitating
36 possibilities to navigate precarity. For example, people are able to take control of their own lives,
37 and in so doing construct their own identities and mediate structural barriers. Crucially, however,
38 there is an important caveat: despite any sense of personal agency, their choices are limited, as
39 people can often be constrained by wider societal structures, 'regulated and reproduced through
40 relations of power, legitimacy and authority' (Scruton, 2007:7). In the youth justice context, it is vital
41 [that](#) there is a focus on assessing the impact of external influences on behaviours, which can limit
42 children's ability to shape decision making processes. Moreover, contemporary criminological
43 studies have made use of Bourdieu's thinking tools to empirically uncover central concerns related
44 to the treatment of adults in the criminal justice system (McNeill, 2009; Bowden, 2014), and to
45 theorise young people's experiences of criminalisation ([Barry, 2007](#)), and perspectives on pathways
46 into and out of offending (France, 2015). Despite criminological interest in Bourdieu's work, his
47 thinking tools have been seldom used to investigate the experiences of youth justice professionals
48 implementing participatory practices and children's involvement in decision making processes.
49 Therefore, we apply a Bourdieusian framework to explore this topic, drawing on findings from a
50 study ([see Creaney, 2020](#)) that subjected participatory practices to rigorous investigation and
51 analyses through empirical observation and in-depth interviewing.
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

Habitus

Habitus is conceptualised as ‘embodied history’ wherein actions or responses become ‘second nature’, influenced by ‘past experiences’ shaping attitudes, beliefs and responses to situations (Bourdieu, 1977: 82–83). Thus, processes of socialisation over time shape lived and learned experiences within a field. ‘Field’ is a cultural, social or institutional space formed by a network of relations that exists among social positions of either ‘domination’ or ‘subordination’ (Segre 2014). Habitus consists of a series of dispositions, which have been formed by, yet also direct the person’s unconscious mind and conscious thought. Whilst habitus tends to operate ‘below the level of consciousness and language, beyond the reach of introspective scrutiny or control of will’, people are still thinking beings, not ‘mindless dupes’ (Bourdieu, 1984:466). Nevertheless, as a concept, habitus has been criticised for being deterministic, in that agents, constrained by social structures, act in unconscious, uncritical ways to maintain dominance and privilege in the field and reproduce inequalities (Jenkins, 1992). Jenkins (1992: 91) described Bourdieu’s theory of practice and thinking tools as ultimately telling a depressing story that revolved around people being unable to ‘intervene in their individual and collective destinies’. However, although people possess limited agency or space and awareness to challenge norms, entrenched values, and beliefs, it is not a forgone conclusion that their situation remains the same.

There is some ‘room for manoeuvre’ as social agents have the ability to exercise agency, display a ‘margin of freedom’ and execute a level of discretion over the direction of proceedings (Bourdieu, et al., 1999). In particular, during challenging times, social agents can become hypervigilant and engage in reflexivity or consciousness raising and embark on a progressive project in an effort to overcome their precarious situation or disadvantaged position they find themselves in (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). For instance, professionals may experience discomfort or suffering, as a result of expectations to comply with newer ways of working, such as with the implementation of Child First principles within youth justice practice, [leading which in a Bourdieusian sense, can lead](#) to the emergence of a cleft or split habitus (Bourdieu, 1990a). As Houston (2002:157) notes, ‘Habitus acts as a very loose set of guidelines to strategise, adapt, improvise or innovate in response to situations as they arise’. Subsequently, whilst there is inevitably a continuation of the status quo in varied shape or form, there is the prospect that transformation of practice can occur in the field. Resistance dispositions consciously activated by agents in the field who are not advantaged by the current system can provoke challenges to the dominant model potentially forcing changes to norms and systems (Bourdieu, 1977). Thus, habitus can be used to explore how professionals in youth justice systems may be facilitators of participation, using their agency to challenge oppressive norms and practices that appear to be harming children either literally or symbolically.

Symbolic Violence

Symbolic violence is a non-physical, ‘gentle invisible form of violence, which is never recognised as such’ (Bourdieu, 1977:192). Symbolic violence is a type of harm and concealed form of power, described through ‘doxa’, that is; ‘unquestioned shared beliefs which constitute fields that explains which beliefs, truths, practices and relations are considered ‘natural’ and appropriate’ (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 108). Symbolic violence endures a process of misrecognition whereby domination is unperceived, [asand no one questionsthere is little challenge to relations of power, resulting in the social order continuing](#) (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). The dominated unwittingly accept their suffering, perceiving their treatment as natural, even at times with respect and fondness for those in

1
2
3 authority (Bourdieu, 1990b). Those harmed can become desensitised to repeated exposure to unfair
4 or degrading treatment, which often clouds their judgement during the interaction/exchange
5 (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992; Jenkins, 1992). Professionals in a youth justice context may feel
6 compelled to think in a certain way about a phenomenon and essentially adhere to orders and fulfil
7 bureaucratic requirements to achieve particular outcomes, the criteria for which is often determined
8 by the dominant or those who occupy seniority (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992; Crossley, 2017:34).
9 ~~This is largely 'misrecognised' by professionals and children, as they tend to accept their relatively~~
10 ~~precarious position. Therefore, in a Bourdieusian sense, dominating groups can 'sit back and relax'~~
11 ~~by allowing the existing system to continue reproducing itself.~~
12
13
14
15

16
17 Nonetheless, the dominated are not just 'slaves to rules' (Wolfreys, 2000:5). It is possible agents
18 become aware of their mistreatment and challenge the status quo. They may embark on a project of
19 resistance, challenging the legitimacy of certain claims perpetuated by those who hold superior
20 knowledge and status in the field (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). Those with status in the field
21 have accrued capital and fought to retain symbolic power. Those challenging, often in capital deficit,
22 may act against expectations, and question authority figures (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992:174). In
23 the field of youth justice, this can apply to professionals being reluctant to comply with certain
24 agendas and attempt to resist order by breaking away from the formulaic risk-led bureaucratic
25 system and managerialist discourse (Phoenix, 2016; Robinson, et al., 2014). This may involve not
26 completing copious amounts of paperwork and instead substituting an obsession with 'writing about
27 children' to one that involves spending more time working *with* them as partners for transformation.
28 However, front line practitioners may also be subject to symbolic power deployed by senior
29 authority to secure their compliance. This results in front-line professionals being denied the
30 opportunity to meaningfully shape organisational matters and ways of working that they internalise
31 as being out of their control (Bourdieu, 1998a and 1998b). How professionals act is influenced by
32 structural constraints affecting their ability to be sufficiently innovative, creative, or bespoke with
33 children when supervising them and delivering interventions.
34
35
36
37
38
39

40 Children perhaps also misrecognise [that](#) they are recipients of symbolic violence. They may remain
41 complicit, feeling unable to provide a competent viewpoint, unaware of the implications of being
42 subjectively judged and classified as 'high risk' with forfeited rights to a voice in their service
43 delivery. Children accept this judgemental, ultra-negative focus and 'exclude themselves' from
44 processes and systems that should concern them, feeling their influence is extremely limited
45 (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992:74). It is possible children refrain from levelling criticism at authority
46 figures and avoid challenging the legitimacy of knowledge associated with the dominant position
47 operating in a field that is more favourable to adult perspectives or top-down practitioner-led
48 practices (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). In other words, children may have an acute sense of what
49 'can' and what 'cannot be said' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992:257). These responses by children
50 can be captured as forms of symbolic violence. Freedom from this could entail professionals and
51 children working in partnership to transform their relationship.
52
53
54
55

56 Bourdieu (1977) recommends undertaking detailed, in-depth investigations, with a focus on
57 capturing direct knowledge of lived and learned experiences to provide rich and insightful accounts
58 of what lies behind the actions or motivations of individuals in the field. This involves detecting or
59
60

1
2
3 uncovering the habitus that individuals 'play out' in practice. This paper now reports from a 15-
4 month study between 2016-2017, informed by a Bourdieusian framework.
5
6
7
8

9 **Methods**

10 A critical social analysis of children's participation was conducted across one large youth offending
11 service in the Northwest of England. To explore perceptions and experiences of youth justice
12 supervision and the efficacy of children's involvement in the design and delivery of services, a
13 qualitative approach was adopted. This paper reports on discussions from in-depth interviews. The
14 study was approved by Liverpool John Moores University ethics committee. Ethical principles (see
15 Beauchamp and Childress, 2001) were integral to how the research was undertaken. It was pertinent
16 to treat all participants with respect and sensitivity, demonstrating active listening skills in a non-
17 judgemental manner. In a Bourdieusian sense, the researcher respected the principle of empathic
18 perspective taking, interacting with participants using language free from technical jargon (Bourdieu,
19 et al., 1999).
20
21
22

23 Formal permission and negotiation into the field was sought by writing to a youth offending team
24 (YOT). Access was gained through the YOT's management board and the practitioner forum. A
25 constructive relationship was formed with several gatekeepers (including managers and senior
26 practitioners) who supported the project by actively promoting the study among the workforce and
27 children alike. Participants were recruited for interviews using a blend of purposive, snowball and
28 convenient sampling techniques (Silverman 2013). This enabled a rich contextualised understanding
29 of the facilitators and barriers to children's participation in youth justice. Children interviewed were
30 either subject to a Referral Order, Youth Rehabilitation Order, Intensive Supervision and Surveillance
31 or a Detention and Training Order. Notably, children's case files, including demographic data, were
32 not accessed due to data protection concerns and due to the study being focused on children's *own*
33 *accounts of their care and support needs of participation and involvement in decision making*
34 *processes*. Professionals and managers were from diverse backgrounds, including health, speech
35 language and communication, and social work. The researcher interviewed front-line professionals
36 (n = 14), operational managers (n = 6) and children under youth justice supervision (n = 20). All
37 twenty of the young people (N=17 male and N=3 female) interviewed for the study were White
38 British, aged between thirteen and eighteen years old and living in the Northwest of England. The
39 twenty practitioners interviewed were employed within one large youth offending service within the
40 Northwest of England and their experience of working within the youth justice service ranged from
41 two months to thirty years. Interviews, audio recorded and transcribed verbatim, ranged from
42 between 1 to 3 hours in length and were conducted during working hours. Data was gathered/co-
43 constructed with participants through [interviews](#), observations of practice supervision, group work
44 projects and feedback forums.
45
46
47
48
49

50 Children were interviewed in a comfortable space with freedom to express deeply held views,
51 without judgement or prejudice. This was made possible through the forging of participative and
52 non-hierarchical relationships; consciously disrupting real and perceived imbalances of power
53 (Bourdieu, et al., 1999). It was explained to participants that participation in the study was voluntary.
54 Children were periodically reassured that non-attendance at interviews was not recorded as non-
55 compliance with their court order requirements (Hampson, 2017). Researchers have a responsibility
56 to protect research participants from harm and exploitation (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). It
57 was explained to children by the researcher and reinforced by their YOT supervisor that they would
58
59
60

not be pressured to answer a question, not least due to the [perceived risk their response would then incriminate or be upsetting for them](#). [Non-verbal cues were also observed, including body language, measuring-accessing](#) participant understanding, expectations and readiness or willingness to engage. These observations formed part of a reflexive practice used throughout fieldwork to determine the influence of the researcher. This practice intends to overcome bias, validate subjectivities, and increase trustworthiness of qualitative research (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, Madden 2010). The researcher maintained a commitment to uncovering how a researcher's presuppositions, prejudices and social world can influence ways of knowing.

~~Thematic analysis by Braun and Clark's (2006) approach to thematic analysis was~~ [drawn upon as guidance for analysing the data](#). An inductive approach involved formulating initial codes to aspects of the data that appeared insightful or significant. Open coding was then utilised to organise data, identifying mundane details including descriptions of the setting. Data was cross checked, and themes were constructed and revised, being immersed in "the depth and breadth of the content" (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p. 1). At this point, Bourdieu's social theory was particularly helpful, allowing the researcher to advance "beyond the data, thinking creatively with the data, asking the data questions and generating theories and frameworks" (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996, p. 30). Using Bourdieu's core concepts of symbolic violence, habitus, capital and field, as heuristic devices or guiding theoretical constructs, the themes were checked and verified by (re) examining the sample and (re) analysing the findings, and this iterative and reflexive process provided deep insight into the realities of youth justice practice and supervision.

In particular, Bourdieu's notion of habitus was useful when seeking to understand what drives a child or professional to act in a certain way or when attempting to detect the micro/macro forces that prevent compliance with a particular agenda in the field. It was a powerful analytical tool, providing insight into how past experiences or memories of events, whether knowingly or otherwise, impacts on present and future practice. Bourdieu's other analytical tools were similarly pivotal when interpreting the data. For instance, [symbolic violence](#) and the related concept of misrecognition were drawn upon as a lens to 'think through' forms of soft power in operation. Throughout the open coding phase, this conceptual framework assisted in the search to depict degrees of unfairness or levels of uncertainty in the accounts and narratives of stakeholders. As discussed, symbolic violence, exerted by those who are perceived to hold superior knowledge can be imposed and inflicted on the vulnerable and least advantaged with remarkable agreement due to the subtle nature of harms being imposed (Bourdieu, 1977). From the analysis, this article now presents some of the findings to demonstrate facilitators and barriers to participatory practices in youth justice supervision.

Findings and Analysis

Children's involvement in decision making

~~As discussed, children's~~ [Children's](#) participation in decision making has become a feature of recent policy developments (See YJB, 2016, 2019, 2021). Pivotal to this is the acknowledgment that children are equal partners in the process, who have the right and the ability to co-construct knowledge and shape decision making processes (YJB, 2021). Yet this [study paper](#) has [expressed-raised](#) critical concerns about how children's involvement in decision making can be meaningful in a youth justice

1
2
3 | **service context.** During time spent within the local YOT, it was found that some children were invited
4 to share concerns with their worker and shape some of their interventions and activities, as
5 illustrated by Ben:
6

7 “Well yeah, I guess you get to choose what you wanna do. What you wanna work around.
8 And you get treated nicely”. (Ben, 16, Referral Order)
9

10 However, one child shared how opportunities to input into his own intervention plan were limited.
11 He commented on how the service tended to impose their vision, compelling him to adhere to their
12 agenda and its requirements. In an interview with Tommy, his perception was that his participation
13 rights were subordinate to organisational priorities:
14

15 “‘It should be, but what it is and what it isn’t is two different things, innit. Like, obviously I’d
16 like to have more of a say in what I’m doing...What meetings I’d go to, and stuff that I think’s
17 productive for me. But obviously they’ve got the way they work” (Tommy, 16, ISS)
18
19

20 Similarly, Callum, subject to a Youth Rehabilitation Order¹, was interested in securing an
21 apprenticeship near to when his order was complete and wanted to be more involved in decisions
22 on matters that affected his life. Specifically, he wanted to have more of a say on how often he was
23 required to attend meetings with his YOT Officer:
24

25 “...cos it would give me more of a say, wouldn’t it? Like I could say, like, once every two
26 weeks.... But, dunno – they choose innit. Not me who chooses.” (Callum, 15, YRO)
27
28

29 Elsewhere, Justin reflected upon his experiences of being on an Intensive Supervision and
30 Surveillance court order². He expressed during an interview how sometimes it would be nice to
31 influence his timetable of activities devised by his worker. Justin felt he provided minimal input into
32 deciding the content of supervision sessions:
33

34 “...I get a timetable, like, for a week, and it shows me what I’ve got to do in the week...
35 Obviously, like, they’d listen to my opinion. But it’s not up to me to choose”. (Justin, 15, ISS)
36
37

38 When asked about what improvements could be made to policy and practice, Tommy felt
39 unqualified to pass judgement:
40

41 “I don’t think it’s up to me to say that, is it? I don’t think... I don’t get a say in what the YOT
42 do, do I?”. (Tommy, 16, ISS)
43

44 Tommy appears to accept this form of symbolic violence, associated with the unequal power
45 inherently built into relationships between children and professionals within youth justice services,
46 whereby authority figures wield significant control over decision making processes, which limits
47 opportunities for co-production to occur. Indeed, one professional acknowledged some of these
48 issues:
49

50
51
52 ¹ A Youth Rehabilitation Order (YRO) is a community sentence. As part of the court order, the child is required
53 to attend appointments with professionals and comply with certain requirements such as unpaid work or a
54 curfew (Sentencing Act 2020 c. 17).
55

56 ² The Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programme (ISSP) was introduced by the YJB in 2001, as an
57 alternative to custody for children in ‘serious’ and ‘persistent’ conflict with the law (Gray et al. 2005). ISS can
58 be a requirement of a YRO, which would include the child participating in various activities or interventions,
59 such as education, training or arts-based programmes.
60

1
2
3 "I've just written a Referral Order³ report today, after an interview with the young person,
4 and he's in panel tomorrow, and I've made suggestions of what should go on his contract,
5 and I'm pretty sure that when I look at the contract on Thursday, after panel, that whatever
6 I've put will be on the contract. And the young person won't have had much input into that,
7 really. But that's because the panel procedure that's a bit of a tick box. And I think it needs
8 to be improved so young people can say, "Well no actually, I'd like to do this," or, "I'd like to
9 do that." But there isn't that much opportunity at the moment for them to do that". (Evelyn,
10 YOT Officer).
11
12

13 Likewise, children also described limited opportunities to feed into discussions during the referral
14 order panel process:
15

16 "They said, "Well you can pick up litter." And I just didn't... I just didn't talk, really. They
17 didn't ask me to talk. They didn't say, "Well, what's your points on this. They didn't say
18 that". (Baden, 15, [Referral Order](#))
19
20

21 The quote from Baden is akin to a form of symbolic violence, 'accepting' a subordinate position
22 (Bourdieu, 1977; 2019) by not sharing [his views/voice in this decision-making process. It is important](#)
23 [in non-voluntary participation contexts, that professionals provide explicit opportunities for](#)
24 [involvement and views to be voiced and](#) inform children how their perspectives and knowledge are
25 of equal value, ensuring partnerships are built, with the voice of the child prioritised throughout
26 intervention planning and supervision (Duke, et al., 2022).
27 [The professionals tended to demonstrate an awareness of this, moving beyond notions of misrecognition \(Bourdieu, 2020:145\),](#)
28 [as they identified barriers within the process of referral order panels, but appeared to also be](#)
29 [subject to symbolic power by not being able to transform the Referral Order panel process. Another](#)
30 [area where a participatory approach was particularly challenging to practice was during 'High risk'](#)
31 [panels.](#)
32
33
34
35
36

37 ***Professional perspectives on 'High risk' panels***

38 [High risk management panels are a multi-agency co-ordinated approach to monitor concerns related](#)
39 [to behaviour, harm, safety and wellbeing. ~~adult led and concerned with harm reduction. This~~](#)
40 [involves ~~specialist workers and senior managers~~ professionals involved in these processes provide](#)
41 [guidance and support to those managing cases. This includes identifying the resources needed to](#)
42 [manage risk, ~~including police, social work and probation either detecting and monitoring~~ It also](#)
43 [includes monitoring ~~safeguarding concerns, or responding reacting to intelligence received, that, for~~](#)
44 [children ~~example, children are judged to be displaying undesirable harmful behaviours and/or~~](#)
45 [presenting as a 'high or very high risk' of harm to themselves \(see Burns and Creaney 2023; see also](#)
46 [Peer Power / Youth Justice Board, 2021:61\). During fieldwork, one YOT manager explained why](#)
47 [children were not invited to attend 'high risk' panels:](#)
48
49
50

51 "Because we might be talking about some, you know, information in relation to the victim.
52 Protective exclusion zones around victims' houses and all that kind of stuff... it would be
53 quite difficult practically to see how that would work..." (Jackson, YOT Manager)
54
55

56 ³ Referral Orders (RO) were introduced in the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999 as a statutory
57 community-based order in which the court 'refers' the child to a youth offender panel. The panel will agree a
58 contract of work with which the child is expected to comply (YJB 2018).
59
60

Jackson did acknowledge the sensitive and confidential nature of the discussions being a barrier to enabling the child to voice their opinions or perspectives in these processes. [Intelligence may be shared between professionals, which may be confidential or sensitive in nature and not appropriate for the child to hear. Nevertheless, There there were consequences from this strategy to not allow children to be physically present at the meetings,](#) which resulted in some frontline professionals struggling to secure 'buy in' from those under supervision:

"Because, really, you're making big decisions, particularly around risk and vulnerability on someone, when you're not really getting any kind of buy-in. The problem with the high-risk meetings is you can make these big decisions – everybody's like, "Yep. I think that's the way to go." It's down to me then to go and sell that to the young person. And what if they don't buy it? I've got to do it to them, haven't I, really?... I can tell them "We've assessed you as high-risk, for these reasons", but I don't think it really means anything to them. But if they're in a meeting, with maybe a small number of people saying, "Right, we think that, you know, at the moment you're high-risk because of these reasons." It might just bring it home to them and help with the interventions as well". (Scarlett, YOT Officer, England)

As Scarlett demonstrates in her explanation of high-risk meetings, it becomes a strategy concerned with forms of surveillance and control, rather than upholding the principal of 'collaboration' and having a Child First ethos at the forefront of youth justice practice for these children. [Those under youth justice supervision are not able to be physically present at the meetings. Professionals are expected to gather children's views about perceived risk, harm and safety. In these situations, the child's case manager or other trusted professional is given responsibility to represent those views at the meeting. There There](#) is at least some consideration regarding the inclusivity aspect of participation within these processes given the paucity of the opportunities for children labelled 'high risk' to input into this aspect of service delivery:

"I think it's a bit bizarre actually...I've got one upcoming with – social care are coming, management here are coming, I'm coming, obviously. I've invited the support worker. So, but the most important person is not there...how can we change anything if that child's not included and able to give their views? I find it a bit bizarre, that we're making decisions about the young person, who's not attending...". (Esme, YOT Officer)

"I think it's morally indefensible, actually, to discuss people without them being there for at least part of it". (Hayley, Health Worker)

This is also a case of symbolic violence in that there are constraints on expressions of agency with children being denied sufficient freedom to express themselves and to co-design or even partially input into the 'high risk' panel process. This example highlights symbolic violence of front-line professionals, as they recognise the necessity of children's participation but are also being denied the opportunity to meaningfully shape high risk meetings with children and internalise this as being out of their control instead of challenging the status quo (Bourdieu, 1998a and 1998b). [It is important to note that the organisation did previously pilot an approach that involved enlisting the help of a professional, who was care and criminal justice experienced, to act as an 'advocate' for the child:](#)

["he... absolutely represented that young person's views in a fantastic way. And altered the way that the case manager, and me as the chair of the risk meeting, had his risk management plan, intervention plan, you know. In terms of where he was seen, erm... you](#)

1
2
3 [know". \(Jackson, YOT Manager\)](#)
4
5

6 [Jackson did acknowledge that children are informed of outcomes/judgements concerning 'risk' and](#)
7 [encouraged to input into and critique professional decision making.](#) It is of note that a study by Peer
8 [Power / Youth Justice Board, \(2021\), problematised the application of the 'high risk' term.](#) The
9 authors of the report recommended a re-think concerning language, in the light of forthcoming
10 changes to the participation strategy and the introduction of Child First as a guiding principle (YJB,
11 2021). It was also argued that, if children are encouraged to enter into collaborate partnerships with
12 professionals who strive to connect with the child, positive outcomes are likely to result. In the
13 present study, several barriers to such partnership building were identified, which will now be
14 discussed.
15
16
17
18
19

20 ***Barriers to partnership building***

21 It is important that professionals project empathy and encourage children to reflect on their feelings
22 and emotions during supervision meetings. [A consistent, trusting adult/child relationship,](#)
23 [underpinned by an emphasis on listening with care and compassion, is vitally important](#) (Wigzell,
24 [2021; Burns and Creaney, 2023](#)). Mutual respect also plays a pivotal role in bolstering children's
25 participation, reducing passive compliance and increasing active participation. This type of
26 relationship focused practice is conducive to children's meaningful participation (Duke, et al., 2022).
27 However, it was found that practice continued to be predominately computer-based, interpreted by
28 practitioners as overly focused on 'getting everything on the system' (Esme, YOT Officer). As a result,
29 this negatively impacted 'professional time and space to form supervision relationships with young
30 people' (Ugwudike and Morgan, 2018:6). This is exemplified through interviews with professionals:
31
32
33

34 "So what difference are we making to a child's life if we're just sitting purely behind a
35 computer? ... there is an over-focus on paperwork". (Esme, YOT Officer)

36
37 "It's all the paperwork, yeah. That is why. And I guess it has to be like that. And in most
38 services, it's like that as well. Even in social care". (Freya, YOT Officer)

39
40 "We didn't do this job just to sit around a computer, we did this job because we want to
41 make changes in children's lives, and families' lives. And it just feels like we're not even
42 touching the surface anymore. Which is quite sad". (Scarlett, YOT Officer)
43
44

45 One professional discussed how children's participation rights and principles of co-production may
46 not be in the mind of front-line professionals in their day-to-day decision making:
47

48 "...making anything that is properly participative, just takes a lot more planning, a lot more
49 time. It's just a lot harder. The truth is...with why participation isn't at the top and the User
50 Voice isn't central, is because it slows everything down and makes everything a lot more
51 difficult to do. And when we haven't got much time and we've got a million things to do, the
52 stuff that's hard to do slips down the list, doesn't it?". (Jackson, YOT Manager)
53
54

55 A noticeable barrier to facilitating participatory practices related to practitioners having the ability to
56 spend time with children, be creative in their work and the space to 'think through' how to
57 implement Child First principles into practice. The combination of a risk-focused, managerialist and
58 bureaucratic field is indicative of a habitus that invokes symbolic violence, on both children and
59
60

youth justice professionals, especially those in subordinate and precarious positions (Bourdieu, 1990a).

A risk-focused, managerialist and bureaucratic field as the 'status quo'

Profound changes had been introduced at the fieldwork site during the course of the fieldwork, such as the new assessment tool 'AssetPlus' and information systems, designed to overcome formulaic and bureaucratic processes. AssetPlus is utilised as an assessment-intervention tool that comprises of information gathering of collects information about the child, which includes including personal family and social factors, offending and anti-social behavior, foundations for change, and self-assessment (YJB, 2014). This can be time consuming to complete and limits children's involvement in supervision arrangements. AssetPlus appeared to constrain practitioner expertise, discretion and innovation:

"[AssetPlus is] the most long-winded, repetitive thing I've ever seen in my life... if a child's got really complex needs, it opens up all sorts of boxes. So, it'll open up speech – is there an issue with speech? Well, if there is, then this whole dropdown comes down. Is there mental health? That comes down. Alcohol? Comes down. If they've ever been detained, that comes down. So, you know, you get to the point where you think, "Do I actually want to tick 'yes'?" You do. Because obviously, you know, you need to make sure that everything's correct for that child. But actually, there's stuff on there that doesn't need to be there. It's repetitive...".
(Esme, YOT Officer)

Some practitioners felt the new assessment tool subjected children to more intrusive questioning, rather than creating space for equal and reciprocal partnerships to be built:

"Suddenly you ask them all these questions, and it's quite, Whoa, what's going on here?".
(William, YOT Officer)

This response considers how the intrusive questioning is recognised as another barrier for power imbalances to be addressed and meaningful participation to occur. The new assessment tool was meant to enhance self-assessment⁴, but professionals feared the tool exacerbated children's feelings of disempowerment, worsening the feeling of being 'assessed to death' by 'an 'instrument of symbolic violence' (Schubert, 2014:189; see also Bourdieu, 2019:94). This resulted in professionals spending more time in front of a computer screen, increasing the difficulty for trusting relationships with children to form. This relational aspect of their work, considered key to effective participatory practice, was almost seen 'as a luxury they could rarely afford because of other ('bureaucratic') demands on their time' (Robinson, et al., 2014:130), as expressed by Scarlett:

"...participation is kind of like the cream of the crop. The goal that you always want to achieve, but realistically we know we can't always get it. Because those – safeguarding, risk of harm to the public, you know, risk of reoffending – is just so high, that we do have to focus our energies there". (Scarlett, YOT Officer)

Although systems and processes do not categorically determine how agents respond in a given field, dominant discourses, including processes of risk-focused practice, can constrain professional's desire

⁴ An AssetPlus process evaluation raised concerns that the updated self-assessment component to AssetPlus remains underutilised (See Picken et al., 2019). This can result in children being unable to fully express their perspective on their care needs and experiences of supervision.

to implement participatory practices with children. This became evident in discussion around the updated assessment tool. Furthermore, workers occupying a subordinate position in the field, described too much pressure from managers in dominant positions, with an expectation that they 'just get on with it' and not react against the dominance of 'top-down decision-making'. Their accounts depicted forms of symbolic violence:

"... across the team, there is uneasiness about the workload and what's expected of us, for what money that we get, for the wages that we get. So, we're expected to drive the whole of [the Borough], we're expected to do all these AssetPluses within the national framework, we're expected to have quite high caseloads." (Esme, YOT Officer)

These practitioners felt uncertain about how to navigate demands of the changing system or how to effectively participate in the 'game' (Bourdieu, 2020:82). The status quo remained structured in a way for children's voice, knowledge, and expertise to be dismissed at the expense of a risk-focused, managerialist and bureaucratic field. However, the Child First approach has potential to inject a cultural change in practice, by privileging children's power and choice to meaningfully contribute to their own care and supervision needs. Despite the anxiety, tension, and conflict amidst the constraints in the youth justice field, professionals still appear willing to implement Child First principles as they emphasise care about the children they work with:

"We do this job because we want to show tolerance and compassion and care for the young people we work with. But since the cuts I think... the pressure is actually quite intense". (Scarlett, YOT Officer)

As discussed, Child First promotes effective relationship building throughout assessment and supervision processes. As some of the quotes illustrate, those working on the front line do want to practice this, harrowing the urgency for systems change so professionals have agency to prioritise the child's voice and facilitate shared decision-making processes. Perhaps more resistance dispositions consciously activated by agents in the field are required to provoke effective challenges to the dominant model, forcing change and freedom from symbolic violence.

Concluding Thoughts and Implications for Practice

The purpose of this paper ~~was~~ to offer a critical perspective on participatory practices in the field of youth justice. Bourdieu's framework has been overlooked by those with an interest in researching participation, despite playing a more important role in criminological research (See Fraser and Sandberg 2020). Therefore, using Bourdieu's thinking tools, practitioner perspectives of participatory approaches and children's experiences of supervision were subjected to analytical scrutiny. Most notably, through the concept of 'symbolic violence', ~~the purpose was to reveal types of harm and concealed forms of power within youth justice supervision. This paper has highlighted how, to an extent, there has been commitment to children's meaningful involvement involve children in the decision-making processes. of their supervision seemed to be less salient, and However, particularly noticeable in there were concerns raised that children were not being meaningfully included in high-risk panel meetings.~~ Here, agendas seemed to clash in that a culture to involve children in decision making did not match the processes in place to manage 'risk', which devalued children's knowledge, restricted opportunities for children to participate in shared decision making and maintained unequal power relationships. By professionals referring to children as a risk to others, this cautiously veers into a deficit lens, resulting in children under supervision acquiring limited power and agency to meaningfully participate, which contributed to a form of symbolic violence.

1
2
3 Moreover, the ability of professionals to utilise Child First principles was constrained by a habitus of
4 risk-based systems and forms of managerialism, exacerbating workload pressures. Despite being
5 afflicted by anxiety-provoking restructures, unmanageable caseloads and the perennial threat of
6 redundancy, professionals ~~can react~~reacted, at times, by internalising rather than externalising such
7 pain and suffering. Subordinate professionals, also on the receiving end of symbolic violence,
8 perceived the experience as necessary and ~~unwittingly~~ accepted the harms caused by 'just getting
9 on with it'. This demonstrates how symbolic violence is endured by both children and professionals,
10 albeit in different forms, as the system and processes within youth justice services appear to create
11 noticeable barriers to progressing collaborative decision-making or embedding a Child First and
12 participatory rights-based approach. ~~At this point, it is important to note that empirical data was
13 conducted prior to the publication of the YJB's Child First Strategy (YJB 2019) whereby future
14 research could identify a cultural shift within the field. However, A~~ a recent project also identified
15 ~~ongoing~~ challenges of implementing participatory approaches within YOTs and uncovered similar
16 barriers to children's involvement in 'high risk' management processes (Peer Power/ YJB 2021).
17 Thus, it is recommended that for 'high risk' panels to be inclusive and participative, there is a need
18 to align the purpose and strategy of these processes with a Child First ethos. More specifically, this
19 involves professionals raising their consciousness of the intersecting power imbalances due to age,
20 knowledge and professional authority within the supervision process and prioritise treating children
21 as equal, reciprocal partners with their own expertise ~~who are capable of contributing to~~ contribute
22 to shared decision making processes. ~~We recommend that youth justice services involve lived
23 experience professionals as co-producers in 'high risk' management processes. As the findings in this
24 study reveal, they can be an authentic and credible voice and act as 'advocates' for the child. This
25 potentially progressive and principled practice is an approach that places value on expertise borne of
26 experience (Burns and Creaney, 2023; Lister, 2000). Moreover, high risk management panels are a
27 multi-agency co-ordinated approach to monitor concerns related to behaviour, harm, safety and
28 wellbeing. It also remains important that suitable justification or reasoning is provided to the child
29 on how decisions are reached in order to maximise positive outcomes (Wood and Kemshall,
30 2008:151; Creaney and Smith, 2023).~~

31
32
33 Furthermore, it is pivotal that consideration of children's non-voluntary participation involves
34 professionals self-assessing their readiness to provide structural and individual support to children,
35 which includes an emphasis on their rights and interests being at the heart of decision-making
36 processes, alongside an ethic of care and a commitment to collaboration and co-production. It is
37 clearly vital that children's strengths are promoted and that they are encouraged to participate
38 through a relational approach, including a proactive commitment to facilitate child friendly spaces to
39 break down power inequalities (Duke, et al., 2022). Relationships between children and
40 professionals are inherently unequal. As identified in this paper, children may not consciously detect
41 forms of soft power being inflicted upon them. ~~They may feel ill-equipped or uneasy about sharing
42 their voice-views within adult-led risk focused environments/practices, which includes -and dominant
43 modes of control and surveillance to monitor perceived harms or safety concerns~~. Thus, in a
44 Bourdieusian sense, children may 'accept' (Bourdieu, 2020:130) the legitimacy of their exclusion and
45 existing power relations. They can remain distrustful of authority figures due to prior disempowering
46 experiences of system contact. Thus, adults in positions of power must recognise their privilege,
47 which grants them real and symbolic authority in the field.

48
49 To invoke freedom from symbolic violence, the Child First approach necessitates a re-imagining of
50 youth justice service assessment and supervision processes, alongside re-constructing the role of
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 professional from one who instructs or dictates to one who facilitates or empowers to cultivate truly
4 child-centred and equitable partnerships. Participation is an integral component of Child First,
5 alongside the equal importance of co-creation, which is pivotal to sustain positive outcomes (Hazel,
6 et al., 2017). Children must be enabled to contribute to the full cycle of delivering services
7 throughout all stages of the process. This means that regardless of perceived risk, children are
8 treated as co-producers and partners, awarding equal value to both children and professionals'
9 knowledge and experiences.
10
11
12
13
14

15 References

16 Barnes M, Barnes M and Sullivan H (2007) Power, participation and political renewal: Case studies in
17 public participation. Bristol: Policy Press.

18 [Barry, M. \(2007\) Youth offending and youth transitions: the power of capital in influencing change.
19 Critical Criminology, 15 \(2\) 185-198.](#)

20
21
22 Bateman, T. (2021). Bridging the care-crime gap: reforming the youth court? Report, National
23 Association for Youth Justice, London.

24
25 Bateman, T. (2020). The state of youth justice 2020. Report, National Association for Youth Justice,
26 London

27
28 Beauchamp TL, Childress JF. (2001) Principles of biomedical ethics. 5th. New York: Oxford University
29 Press.

30
31 Bourdieu, P. (1977) Outline of a Theory of Practice. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

32
33 Bourdieu, P., and Passeron, J. C. (1977) Reproduction in education, society and culture. London Sage
34 Publications.

35
36 Bourdieu, P. (1984) Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste, London: Routledge.

37
38 Bourdieu, P. (1990a) In Other Words: Essays Toward a Reflexive Sociology. Cambridge: Polity Press.

39
40 Bourdieu P (1990b) The Logic of Practice. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

41
42 Bourdieu, P. (1998a) Practical Reason; on the Theory of Action. Cambridge: Polity Press.

43
44 Bourdieu, P. (1998b) Acts of Resistance. Against the New Myths of Our Time. (Transl. by Richard
45 Nice). Cambridge: Polity Press.

46
47 Bourdieu, P. Accardo,A., Balazas,G., Beaud,S., Bonvin,F., Bourdieu,E. (1999) The Weight of the
48 World: Social Suffering in Contemporary Society. Cambridge: Polity Press.

49
50 Bourdieu, P. (2007) Sketch for a Self-analysis, Cambridge: Polity Press.

51
52 Bourdieu, P. and Wacquant L, (1992) An Invitation to reflexive sociology. Cambridge: Polity Press.

53
54 Bourdieu, P. (2019) Classification Struggles. General Sociology, Volume 1. Lectures at the Collège de
55 France (1981–1982), Cambridge: Polity Press

56
57 Bourdieu, P. (2020) Habitus and Field. General Sociology, Volume 2. Lectures at the Collège de
58 France (1982–1983), Cambridge: Polity Press.
59
60

1
2
3 Bourdieu, P. (2021) *Forms of Capital*. General Sociology, Volume 3. Lectures at the Collège de France
4 (1983–1984), Cambridge: Polity Press.

5
6 Bowden, M. (2014) *Crime, Disorder and Symbolic Violence: Governing the Urban Periphery*.
7 Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

8
9 Brady, L-M (2020). Introduction: Embedding young people’s participation into healthcare. In Brady L-
10 M (Ed.) *Embedding Young People’s Participation in Health Services: New Approaches*. 1-30.

11
12 Brown, A (2020) *A rights-based analysis of youth justice in the United Kingdom*. London: UNICEF.

13
14 Brown K (2015) *Vulnerability and young people: care and social control in policy and practice*. Bristol:
15 Policy Press.

16
17 Burns, S. (2019) *Young People as Co-producers in Policing across England. An Evaluation of the*
18 *‘Youth Commission’ on Police and Crime, Children & Society*, 33 (4), 347–362.
19 <https://doi.org/10.1111/chso.12312>

20
21 [Burns, S. and Creaney, S. \(2023\) ‘Embracing children’s voices: Transforming Youth Justice practice](#)
22 [through co-production and Child First participation’ in Case, S and Hazel, N \(Eds.\) Child First:](#)
23 [Developing a new Youth Justice System. London: Palgrave Macmillan.](#)

24
25
26 Case, S. (2018). *Youth justice: A critical introduction*. Oxon, United Kingdom: Routledge.

27
28 Case, S, Browning, A (2021a) *Child First Justice: the research evidence-base [Full report]*.
29 Loughborough University.

30
31 Case, S, Browning, A (2021b) *The child first strategy implementation project: Realising the guiding*
32 *principle for youth justice. [Full report]*. Loughborough University.

33
34 Case, S., Creaney, S., Coleman, N., Haines, K., Little, R., & Worrall, V. (2020). “Trusting children to
35 enhance youth justice policy: The importance and value of children’s voices”, *Youth Voice Journal*,
36 ISBN:978-1-911634-23-2.

37
38 Clinks (2016), “Clinks’ submission to the review of the youth justice system”, available at:
39 www.clinks.org/sites/default/files/2018-10/clinks_taylorreview_final.pdf (accessed 16 July 2017).

40
41 Coffey, A. and Atkinson, P. (1996), *Making Sense of Qualitative Data: Complementary Strategies*,
42 Sage, London.

43
44 Creaney, S. (2020) “Game playing” and “docility”: youth justice in question, *Safer Communities*, Vol.
45 19 No. 3, pp. 103-118. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SC-01-2020-0002>.

46
47 [Creaney, S. and Smith, R. \(2023\), “Social work and youth justice”, in Parker, J. \(Ed.\) *Introducing Social*](#)
48 [Work, 2nd edition. Sage, London.](#)

49
50 Crossley, N. (2005) *Key Concepts in Critical Social Theory*, London, Sage.

51
52 Crossley, S. (2017) *Making trouble: a Bourdieusian analysis of the UK Government's Troubled*
53 *Families Programme*, Durham theses, Durham University. Available at Durham E-Theses Online:
54 <http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/12271/> (Last accessed 19th August 2019).

55
56 Day A-M. (2022) ‘It’s a Hard Balance to Find’: The Perspectives of Youth Justice Practitioners in
57 England on the Place of ‘Risk’ in an Emerging ‘Child-First’ World. *Youth Justice*.

1
2
3 Deakin, J., Fox, C., & Matos, R. (2020). Labelled as 'risky' in an era of control: How young people
4 experience and respond to the stigma of criminalized identities. *European Journal of Criminology*.
5 <https://doi.org/10.1177/1477370820916728>
6

7 Duke, K., Gleeson, H., Dabrowska, K., Dich Herold, M., Rolando, S., & Thom, B. (2022). Building
8 Cultures of Participation: Involving Young People in Contact with the Criminal Justice System in the
9 Development of Drug Interventions in the United Kingdom, Denmark, Italy and Poland. *Youth*
10 *Justice*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14732254221075206>
11
12

13 Farrow, K., Kelly, G. and Wilkinson, B. (2007) *Offenders in Focus*. Bristol: Policy Press.

14
15 Forde, L. (2018) 'Realising the Right of the Child to Participate in the Criminal Process'. *Youth Justice*,
16 18 (3). pp. 265 - 284.
17

18 Fowler, B. (2020) Afterword to *Criminology & Criminal Justice's Virtual Special Issue: Bourdieu and*
19 *Criminology*. *Criminology and Criminal Justice* Online First.
20 <https://journals.sagepub.com/page/crj/bourdieu-and-criminology>
21

22 France, A.P. (2015), "Theorising and researching the youth crime nexus: habitus, reflexivity and the
23 political ecology of social practice", in Costa, C. and Murphy, M. (Eds) *Bourdieu, Habitus and Social*
24 *Research: The Art of Application*, Palgrave Macmillan, London.
25

26 Fraser, A and Sandberg, S (2020). Foreword to *Criminology & Criminal Justice's Virtual Special Issue:*
27 *Bourdieu and Criminology*. *Criminology & Criminal Justice*, available at:
28 <https://journals.sagepub.com/page/crj/bourdieu-and-criminology>
29

30 Friedman. S and Laurison, D (2020) "The class ceiling: Why it pays to be privileged" Bristol, UK: Policy
31 press.
32

33 Graham, H. (2020) Hysteresis and the sociological perspective in a time of crisis. *Acta Sociologica*. 63
34 (4) 450 – 452.
35
36

37 Gray, E., Taylor, E., Roberts, C., Merrington, S., Fernandez, R and Moore, R. (2005) *ISSP: The Final*
38 *Report*. London: Youth Justice Board
39

40 Goldson, B. (ed) (2000) *The New Youth Justice*, Lyme Regis: Russell House Publishing.
41

42 Haines, K. and Case, S. (2015) *Positive Youth Justice: Children First, Offenders Second*. Bristol: Policy
43 Press.
44

45 [Hampson, K. \(2017\) 'Researching with Young People who are Vulnerable and 'Difficult to Reach' in](#)
46 [Wincup, E. *Criminological Research: Understanding Qualitative Methods*. \(2nd Edition\) London: Sage.](#)
47
48

49 Hampson, K. S. (2018). Desistance Approaches in Youth Justice – The Next Passing Fad or a Sea-
50 Change for the Positive? *Youth Justice*, 18(1), 18–33.
51

52 Hart, D. and Thompson, C. (2009), *Young People's Participation in the Youth Justice System*, National
53 Children's Bureau, London.
54

55 Hazel, N, Goodfellow, P, Liddle, M, Bateman, T, Pitts, J (2017) *Now all I care about is my future –*
56 *Supporting the shift: Framework for the effective resettlement of young people leaving custody.*
57 *Report, Beyond Youth Custody*, London.
58
59
60

1
2
3 HM Inspectorate of Probation (2020) A thematic review of the work of youth offending services
4 during the COVID-19 pandemic. Available at:
5 [https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmiprobation/wp-](https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmiprobation/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2020/11/201110-A-thematic-review-of-the-work-of-youth-offending-services-during-the-COVID-19-pandemic.pdf)
6 [content/uploads/sites/5/2020/11/201110-A-thematic-review-of-the-work-of-youth-offending-](https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmiprobation/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2020/11/201110-A-thematic-review-of-the-work-of-youth-offending-services-during-the-COVID-19-pandemic.pdf)
7 [services-during-the-COVID-19-pandemic.pdf](https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmiprobation/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2020/11/201110-A-thematic-review-of-the-work-of-youth-offending-services-during-the-COVID-19-pandemic.pdf) (Accessed 7th December 2020).
8
9

10 Houston, S. (2002) Reflecting on habitus, field and capital: Towards a culturally sensitive social work.
11 *Journal of Social Work*, 2(2) 149–167.
12

13 Jenkins, R. (1992) Pierre Bourdieu, London: Routledge.
14

15 Kilkelly, U (2019) The UN convention on the rights of the child: incremental and transformative
16 approaches to legal implementation. *International Journal of Human Rights*. 23(3), 323-337.

17 Leigh, J., Beddoe, L., and Keddell, E. (2019) Disguised compliance or undisguised nonsense?: A critical
18 discourse analysis of compliance and resistance in social work practice. *Families Relationships and*
19 *Societies*, 1-17.
20

21 [Lister, R \(2000\). Participation should be a reality, not just a buzz word](https://www.theguardian.com/society/2000/dec/07/comment)
22 <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2000/dec/07/comment>
23

24 Lundy, L. (2007) 'Voice' is not enough: conceptualising Article 12 of the United Nations Convention
25 on the Rights of the Child. *British Educational Research Journal*. 33 (6) 927-942
26

27 MacDonald R. and Marsh, J. (2005) *Disconnected Youth? Growing Up in Britain's Poor*
28 *Neighbourhoods*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
29

30 Mahar, C., Harker, R., & Wilkes, C. (1990) 'The basic theoretical position', in Harker, R. Mahar, C &
31 Wilkes, C (Eds.) *An introduction to the work of Pierre Bourdieu: the practice of theory*. Houndmills:
32 Macmillan.
33

34 Martin K and Feltham A. (2020) 'Shared decision-making with young people in mental health
35 services' in Brady, L-M. (Ed.) *Embedding Young People's Participation in Health Services: New*
36 *Approaches*. 31-52
37

38 McNeill, F. (2006) Community supervision: Context and relationships matter. In Goldson, B. and
39 Muncie, J. (eds) *Youth Crime and Justice*. London: Sage
40

41 McNeill, F. (2009) Young people, serious offending and managing risk: a Scottish perspective, in
42 Baker, K and Sutherland, A (eds) *Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements and Youth Justice*.
43 Bristol: Policy Press.
44

45 McNeish D (1999) Promoting participation for children and young people: Some key questions for
46 health and social welfare organisations. *Journal of Social Work Practice* 13(2): 191–203.
47

48 Milbourne L (2009) Valuing Difference or Securing Compliance? Working to Involve Young People in
49 Community Settings. *Children & Society* 23(5): 347–363.
50

51 Peer Power / Youth Justice Board (2021) *Co-creation and Participation in Practice Project*. Peer
52 Power/ YJB. London.
53

54 Percy-Smith B (2012) Participation as Mediation and Social Learning. In: Baraldi C and Iervese V
55 (eds), *Participation, Facilitation, and Mediation Children and Young People in their Social Contexts*,
56 London: Routledge, pp. 12–29.
57
58
59
60

- 1
2
3 Phoenix, J. (2016) Against Youth Justice and Governance, For Youth Penalty. *British Journal of*
4 *Criminology*, 56 (1) 123-140.
5
6 Picken, N. Baker, K. d'Angelo, B. Fays, C. Sutherland, A. (2019) Process Evaluation of AssetPlus. RAND
7 Europe. https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR3177.html. (Accessed 7th December
8 2020).
9
10 Robinson, G., Priede, C., Farrall, S., Shapland, J. and McNeill, F (2014) Understanding “quality” in
11 probation practice: frontline perspectives in England & Wales. *Criminology and Criminal Justice*, 14
12 (2) 123-142.
13
14 Saar-Heiman, Y & Gupta, A 2019, 'The Poverty-Aware Paradigm for Child Protection: A Critical
15 Framework for Policy and Practice', *British Journal of Social Work*, pp. 1-18.
16 <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcz093>
17
18 Schubert, J. D. (2014) *Suffering/symbolic violence in Grenfell*, M. (ed) (2014) *Pierre Bourdieu: Key*
19 *concepts*, Durham: Acumen.
20
21 Scraton, P. (2007) *Power, Conflict and Criminalisation*, Abingdon: Routledge.
22
23 Segre S (2014) *Contemporary sociological thinkers and theories*. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing.
24
25 Sentencing Act (2020) c. 17. Part 9. Youth Rehabilitation Orders. Available at:
26 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2020/17/group/THIRD/part/9/chapter/1/enacted> [Accessed
27 on 1.6.2020]
28
29 Shammas, V. L. and Sandberg, S. (2016) Habitus, capital, and conflict: Bringing Bourdieusian field
30 theory to criminology. *Criminology & Criminal Justice*, 16(2) 195-213.
31
32 Shier H, Hernández Méndez M, Centeno M, et al. (2014) How Children and Young People Influence
33 Policy-Makers: Lessons from Nicaragua. *Children & Society* 28(1): 1–14.
34
35 Silverman D (2013) *Doing qualitative research*. 4th ed. London: Sage.
36
37 Slay J and Penny J (2014) *Commissioning for outcomes and co-production: A practical guide for local*
38 *authorities*. London.
39
40 Smithson, H., Gray, P., & Jones, A. (2020). 'They Really Should Start Listening to You': The Benefits
41 and Challenges of Co-Producing a Participatory Framework of Youth Justice Practice. *Youth Justice*.
42
43 Smithson H, Jones A. (2021) Co- creating youth justice practice with young people: Tackling power
44 dynamics and enabling transformative action. *Children & Society*. 2021;00: 1– 15
45
46 Smith, R., & Gray, P. (2019). The changing shape of youth justice: Models of practice. *Criminology &*
47 *Criminal Justice*, 19(5), 554–571.
48
49 Snook, I. (1990) 'Language, Truth and Power: Bourdieu's Ministerium' in In Harker, R Mahar, C and &
50 Wilkes, C (Eds.), *An introduction to the work of Pierre Bourdieu: the practice of theory*. Houndmills:
51 Macmillan.
52
53 Stephenson M, Giller H and Brown, S. (2007) *Effective Practice in Youth Justice Cullompton: Willan*
54 *Publishing*.
55
56
57
58
59
60

Stephenson M, (2013) 'Desistance' in Stephenson, M. and Allen, R. eds. *Youth Justice: Challenges to Practice, 2nd Edition*. London: UNITAS

Taylor, C. (2016) Review of the youth justice system in England and Wales London: Ministry of Justice.

Tisdall EKM (2013) The Transformation of Participation? Exploring the Potential of 'Transformative Participation' for Theory and Practice around Children and Young People's Participation. *Global Studies of Childhood* 3(2). pp. 183 - 193

Tisdall EKM (2017) Conceptualising children and young people's participation: examining vulnerability, social accountability and co-production. *The International Journal of Human Rights* 21(1): 59–75.

Tuddenham, R. (2000). Beyond Defensible Decision-Making: Towards Reflexive Assessment of Risk and Dangerousness. *Probation Journal*, 47(3), 173–183. <https://doi.org/10.1177/026455050004700302>

Ugwudike, P and Morgan, G. (2018) Bridging the gap between research and frontline youth justice practice. *Criminology & Criminal Justice*

UNICEF (1989). United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989, Geneva: United Nations.

UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (2019). General Comment No. 24 on children's rights in the child justice system. CRC/C/GC/24. Geneva: Switzerland

Warming H (2012) Participation, Facilitation, Mediation. In: Baraldi C and Iervese V (eds), *Participation, Facilitation, and Mediation Children and Young People in their Social Contexts*, London: Routledge, pp. 30–48.

Weaver, B., Lightowler, C., & Moodie, K. (2019) *Inclusive Justice - Coproducing Change: A Practical Guide to Service User Involvement in Community Justice*. Glasgow.

Wigzell, A. (2021) *NAYJ Briefing: Explaining desistance: looking forward, not backwards*. London: National Association of Youth Justice

Winter, K. (2015) Decision-making processes in review meetings for children in care: A Bourdieusian analysis. In Alanen, L., Brooker, E. and Mayall, B. (eds) *Childhood with Bourdieu*. London: Palgrave.

Wolfreys, J. (2000) In perspective: Pierre Bourdieu *International Socialism Journal*. 87 available at <http://pubs.socialistreviewindex.org.uk/isj87/wolfreys.htm> (Last accessed 20th February 2019).

Youth Justice Board (2014) *AssetPlus*. London: YJB

Youth Justice Board (2016) *Participation strategy: Giving young people a voice in youth justice*. London: Youth Justice Board.

Youth Justice Board (YJB) (2018) *Referral Order Guidance*. London: Youth Justice Board

Youth Justice Board (YJB) (2019) *Standards for children in the youth justice system* London: Youth Justice Board.

Youth Justice Board (YJB) (2021) *Strategic plan 2021–24*. Report, YJB, London.