

Young Persons' Probation in the Republic of Ireland: An Evaluation of Risk Assessment

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Summary: The paper refers to a study carried out in the Probation Service in Ireland on Young Persons' Probation (YPP). The YPP introduced the Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI), a standardized risk assessment tool, into clinical practice. Further to this development an inter-rater reliability study was conducted in 2008, where quantitative data was collected and comparisons made by statistical means. The research consisted of a census of all Probation Officers trained in the use of the YLS/CMI and it found that there was a high degree of consistency in assessments for young people appearing before the courts across Ireland. The study also highlights the need for the YLS/CMI to be applied to individual cases and that it cannot therefore replace clinical training, local knowledge and judgement.

Keywords: Risk, juvenile offenders, probation assessment, risk tools, interrater reliability.