

PRESS RELEASE

Friday 24 June 2011

CALL FOR 'MORE HELP FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS' SUPPORTED BY PEARSON ASSESSMENT

A new report by the Children's Commissioner today entitled 'I think I must have been born bad', highlights that mental health care for youth offenders is 'lacking' and called for more to be done to help address and support young people with mental health and behavioural problems. A view shared by Pearson Assessment, publishers of a wide portfolio of assessments that address mental health and behavioural needs.

Pearson Assessment have been providing assessment solutions to professional working with young people for over 90 years, and recently surveyed a number of mental health professionals to examine their growing assessments needs in this area. Chris Hall MD at Pearson comments:

We have seen that mental health, speech and behaviour problems can often be the underlying cause of why a number of young people become young offenders. It is crucial that we try and work to support children and identify what their needs are as early on as possible; helping them to not only reach their true potential but integrate fully into society. We can help support professionals using our experience through behavioural assessments such as the *Behavior Assessment System for Children, Second Edition (BASC-2)*, *Self Image Profiles* and the renowned *Millon* and *Beck* assessments for personality disorders, anxiety and depression.

The report also went on to highlight that '[s]ome 60% also have speech or language problems, while a quarter have learning difficulties - a figure which rises to 50% for youngsters in custody' - a significant statement in light of 2011 being the national year of communication.

Chris Hall continues:

This statistic is just one of many reasons why Pearson Assessment are proud to be sponsoring *Hello*, the national year of communication - a campaign which seeks to support the development of children's communication. Pearson Assessment believes that children and young people with communication needs, need to be heard. We are committed to raising the profile of this issue, and the development of our *Dyslexia Screening Range* is just one example of how we have had a positive effect in helping professionals identify children who need support. The *Hello* campaign is an excellent example of how we can continue to do this.

As part of the national year Pearson Assessment are also working with The Communication Trust to sponsor a series of booklets entitled *Universally Speaking*, which look to chart the key language milestones that children reach and have helped launch the first national awards for *Hello* called 'Shine a Light' which will show case the best practice work already being carried out.

Pearson Assessment will be looking in detail at The Children's Commissioners report to see what additional support we can offer young people and those working with young offenders.

Read the commissioners report in full: http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/content/publications/content_503

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Contacts:

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Notes for editors: Pearson Assessment is the world's largest commercial developer and distributor of educational assessments and psychological testing materials with an 90 year history of commitment to researching and developing products to a reliable high standard. Pearson Assessment is dedicated to the pursuit of professional excellence, leadership, and growth through acquisition, development, publication, and the maintenance of quality assessment tools in order to anticipate and meet the needs of its customers. Pearson Assessment are sponsors of the 2011 *Hello* campaign for the national year of communication. www.psychcorp.co.uk