

How well are Family Intervention Projects (FIPs) Working?

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Agenda

- What are FIPs?
 - Why developed?
 - How FIPs work?
- How well are FIPs working?
 - FIP Families
 - Positive outcomes
 - Eight critical features of the FIP model
 - Reflections on FIPs
- What future for FIPs?



What are FIPs?



Core features of a FIP

- Focus on most problematic families
- Whole family approach
- Dedicated key worker
- Practical and emotional support
- Persistent and assertive working methods
- Families agree to a contract and support plan
- Sanctions are used
- Multi agency working



Dundee Families Project

- Set up in 1986
- To prevent families becoming homeless due to ASB
- Model involved:
 - Residential Support in a 'core' block – for 3 families
 - Community Based Support – temporary accommodation
 - Outreach support for Dundee council tenants
- Evaluation reported positive outcomes for families (2001):
 - helped to reduce ASB
 - helped to prevent eviction and children being taken into LA care
 - promoted quality of life



Family Intervention Projects

- 67 FIPs developed out of the Respect Agenda
- Set up to reduce ASB and prevent homelessness
 - Tackle problems of families involved in persistent ASB
 - Improve outcomes for children in families
- FIPs use ‘assertive’ and ‘persistent’ style of working
 - To challenge and support families to address behaviour
- Now cornerstone of policy for families at risk of poor outcomes



How do FIPs work?



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How do families experience the service?

- Regular contact with their key worker
- Intensive practical and emotional support
 - Educational, housing, emotional and financial advice
 - Parenting advice and guidance
- Behaviour management
- Organised activities
- Supported referrals to other services
- Monitoring through the support plan and contract



**What about the
evidence?**



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Evidence based on

NatCen Evaluation (published July 2008):

- Quantitative analysis of FIP families, support provided, and outcomes reported
 - Via a web based monitoring system
 - Data collected by FIP staff
- In depth exploration of experience and views of FIPs
 - FIP Staff
 - Families
 - Local services working with FIPs
- Feasibility of impact assessment and economic evaluation
- Subsequent monitoring of families (last report September 2008)



Families FIPs working with (Sept 2008)

- Just under 1,500 families (74%) met criteria and agreed to work with FIP
 - 12% of these families were put on a waiting list
- 24% not considered suitable
- 2% declined to work with a FIP

- FIP Families:
 - Most (70%) headed by a lone mother
 - 55% had 3+ children
 - 88% were white
 - 69% were living in workless households



FIPs working with intended beneficiaries

- High levels of ASB and criminal activities
- At risk of becoming homeless because of ASB
 - 24% Notice of Seeking Possession
 - 5% Notice of Demotion of Tenancy
 - 9% other types of severe enforcement
 - And 7% already in temporary accommodation
- FIP faced high level of risk
 - 68% education and learning problems
 - 63% had a physical/mental health issue
 - 24% domestic violence
 - 22% child protection issues



The Families



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Maria lived with her three daughters and three sons aged from one to 17. John, the father of all six children, lived nearby. Both parents were unemployed and claimed benefits. John had a conviction for a violent offence. Two of the sons had ASBOs and convictions for burglary, resulting in YOT supervision orders and home detention curfews. One of the boys had also been convicted for handling stolen property, taking a car without consent and breaching bail. He had a YOS mentor. The neighbours regularly complained about the noise. And the family had recently been threatened with eviction from their 3 bedroom council house due to their ASB.

The house was in need of serious maintenance; paint was coming off the walls, carpets were missing and there was a damp problem. Two of the young girls had to share a room with two of the teenage boys. The youngest child slept in the same room as Maria.



Maria had been drinking heavily for a long time. She said she found it difficult to control her children. All but the eldest child were on the child protection register. Two of the sons had SEN, one attended a school for children with SEN and the other had been excluded from mainstream education and was temporarily attending a PRU. Both sons were repeatedly sent home from school for bad behaviour. In addition one son suffered from depression and the other from ADHD. The two daughters who were in school, attended regularly, but they were often late and were academically significantly below average for their age.



Valued the FIP support

- Emotional support - *My offloader – to shout at - to cry on*
- Helped them to manage their behaviour
- Parenting advice and guidance
- Organised activities for children and family
- Supported referrals to other services
- Practical help with household chores and financial management
- Contacting schools and getting children back into education



Some of the resulting consequences...

- Children engaging in education
- Children not getting into trouble
- Resolved housing problems
- House becoming more of a 'home'
- Improved relationships with neighbours
- Improved parenting and relationships
- Prevented children going into care
- Taking responsibility for lives and addressing problems
- Feeling less isolated and more confident



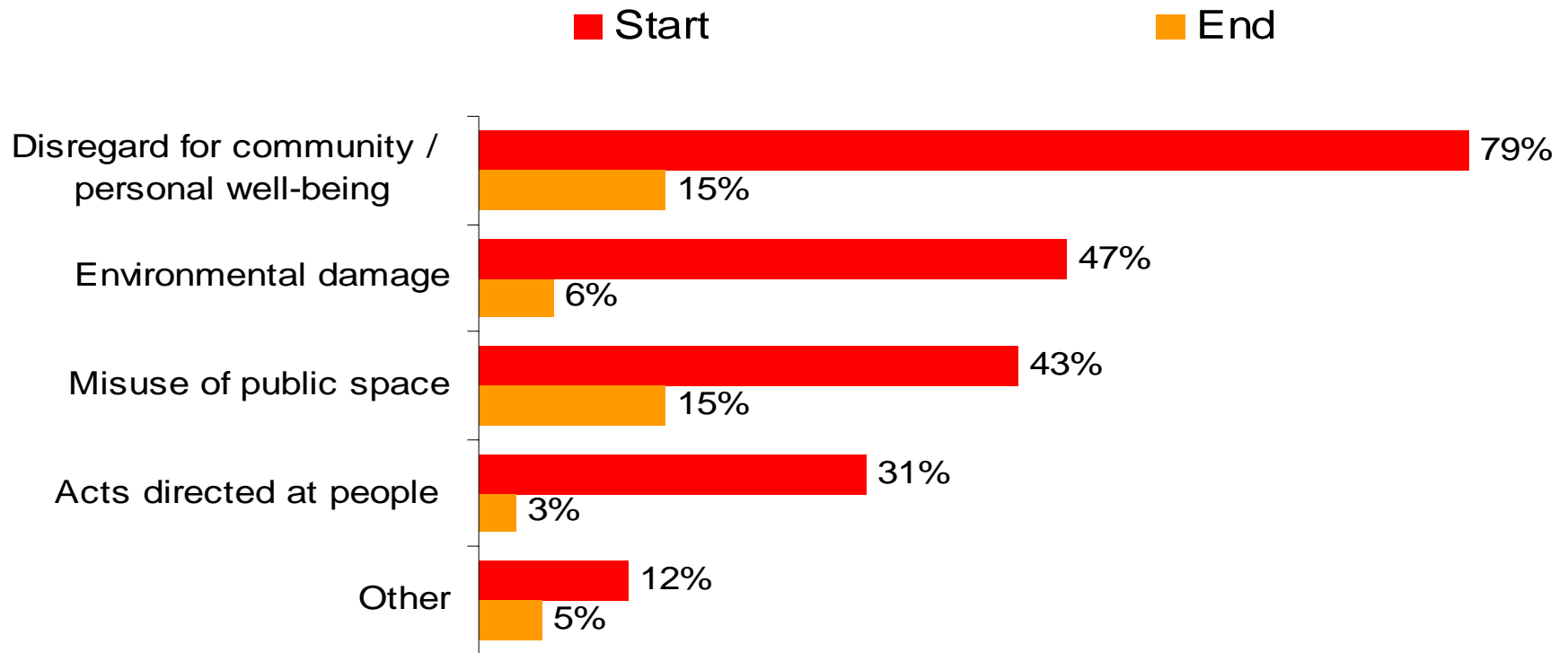
Positive outcomes for first 337 families



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ASB problems

49% of families had 4 or more ASB problems at the start of the intervention, by the end this was 4% (NatCen)

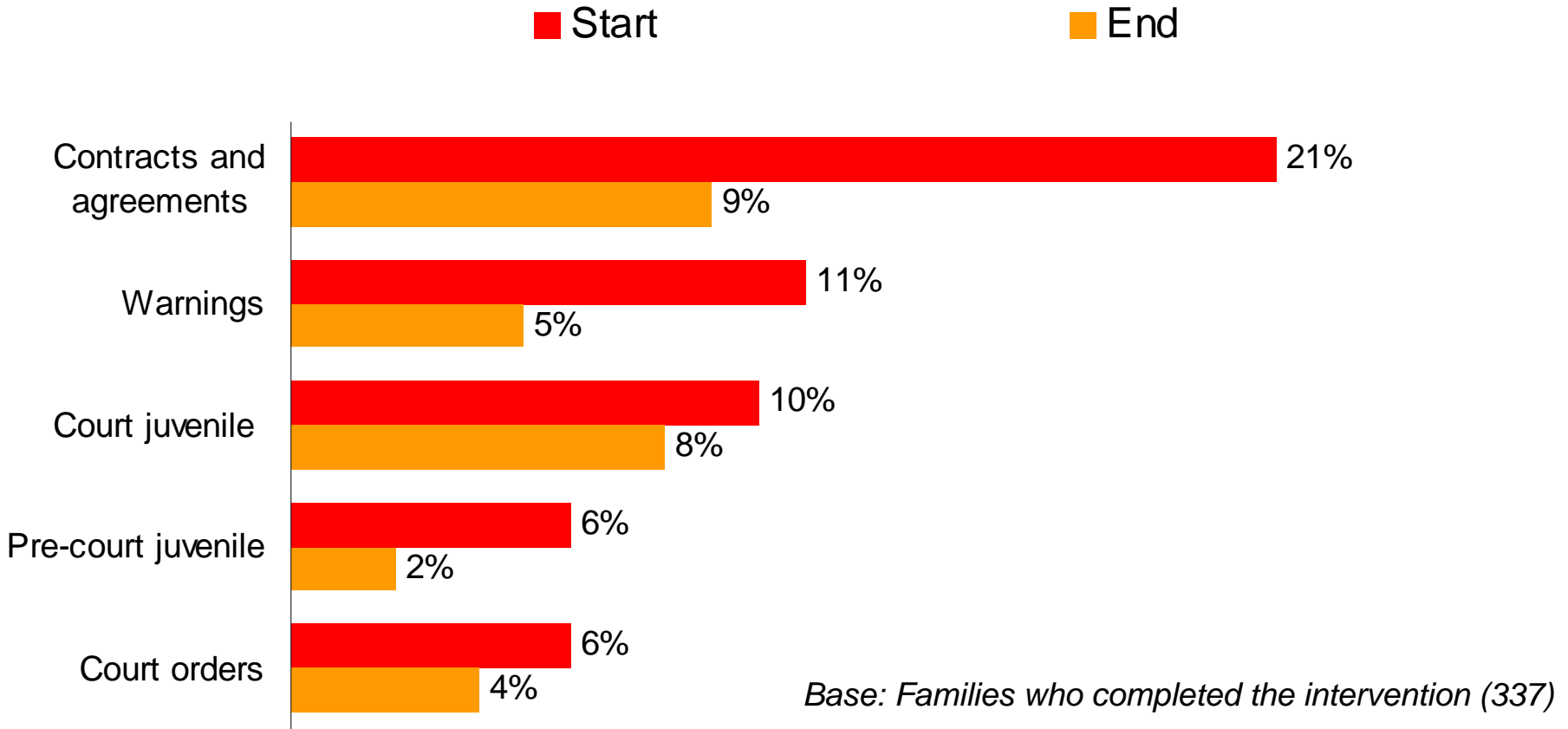


Base: Families who completed the intervention (337)



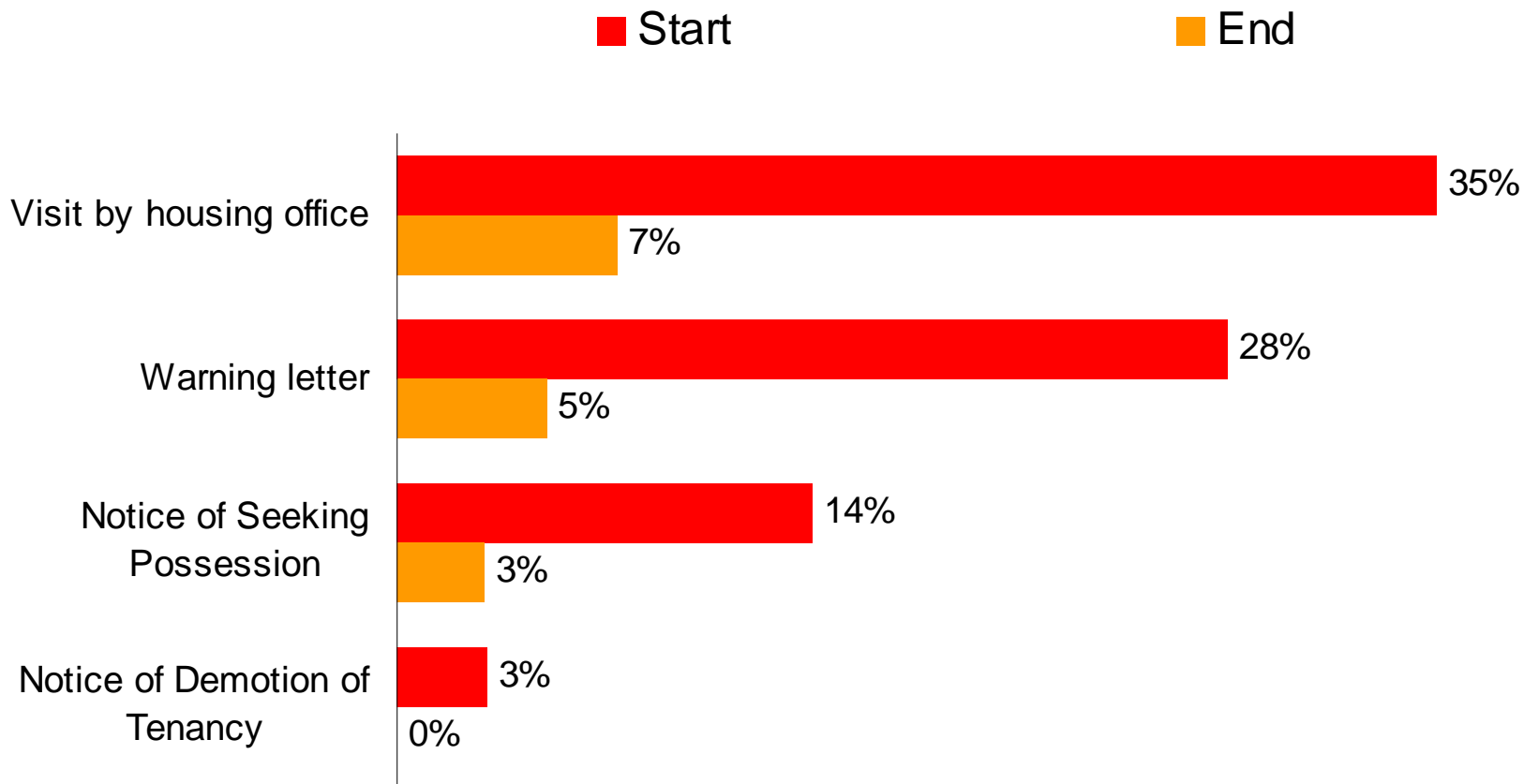
Enforcement actions

44% of families had one or more ASB enforcement actions against them at the start of intervention, by the end this was 25% (Natcen)



Housing enforcement actions

58% of families were subject to one or more housing enforcement action at the beginning of intervention, 14% at the end (NatCen)



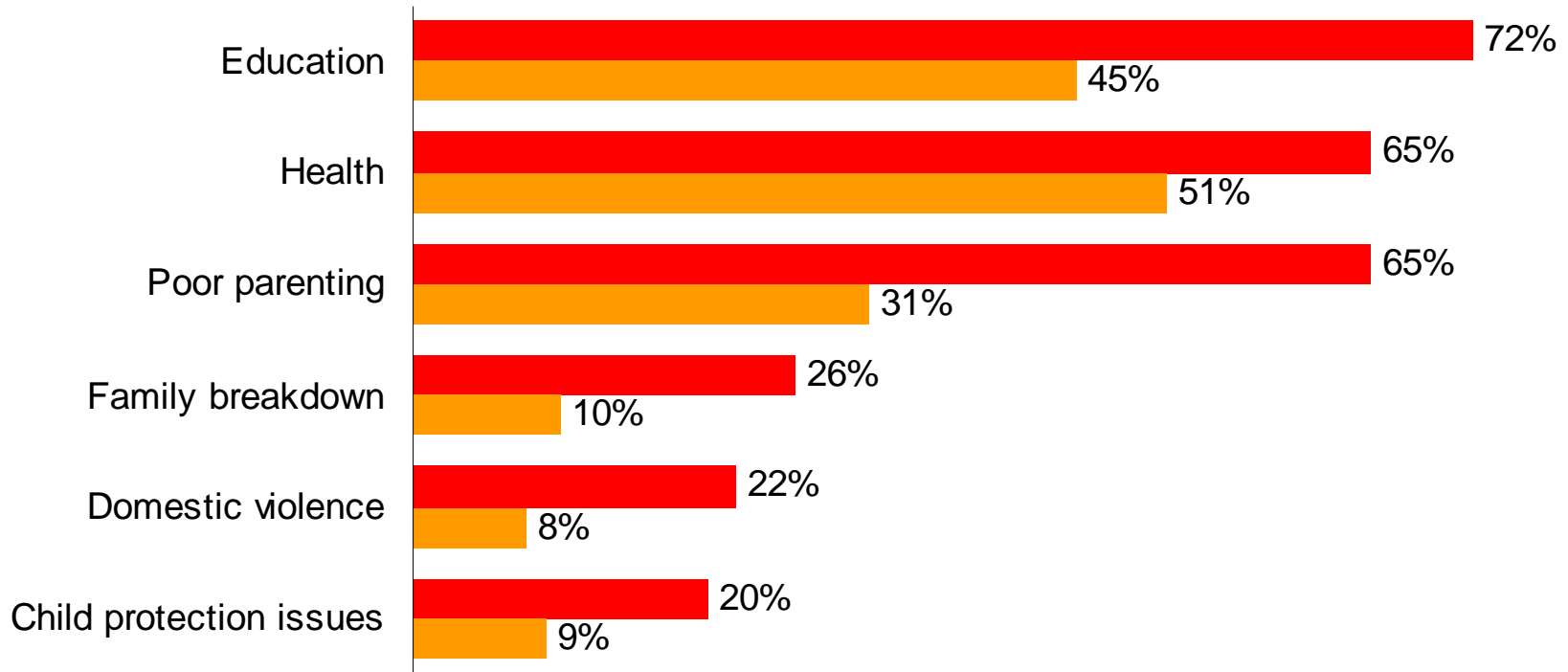
Base: Families who were in social housing at the start and/or end of the intervention (260,259)



Risk factors

73% of families had 4 or more risk factors at the beginning of intervention, by the end it was 31% (NatCen)

■ Start ■ End



Base: Families who completed the intervention (337)

**Evaluation identified
8 critical features of the
FIP model**



Eight Critical Features

1. Recruitment and retention of high quality staff

- Range of experience and backgrounds

2. Key worker model

- Vital for ensuring engagement and trust
- Family feel responsible to the worker

3. Small case loads

- Builds trust and rapport
- Available when families need them
- Uncover deeply rooted problems
- Supervise and coach
- Persistent and tenacious – families/agencies



Eight Critical Features

4. Whole family approach

- Get to root of problem
- Necessary to change mindset/lifestyle
- Prevent regressive influence

5. Stay involved as long as necessary

- Can take long term approach
- Essential for deeply entrenched issues

6. Use of sanctions with support

- Encourages families to agree to work with FIP
- Helps families realise the need for change



Eight Critical Features

7. Scope to use resources creatively

- Buy in services and goods
- Work in a flexible and holistic way

8. Effective multi-agency relationships

- Families get services and interventions needed
- Consistent message
- Reduces opportunity for families to 'play agencies off against each other'
- Enables FIPs to get to the root of family's problems



Some reflections on FIPs



Early evidence very encouraging

- FIP model is 'fit for purpose' for families they currently work with
- FIPs seem to be working with intended beneficiaries
- Outcomes reported by FIP staff are very positive
- Need to know more about families after they leave FIPs
 - Early indications are positive (Nixon et al 2008)
- But efficacy of FIPs depends on an impact assessment
- Helpful to consider who they work best for
- And whether they are value for money



What future for FIPs?



Families at Risk Review

‘Excellent children’s services and excellent adults’ services are not enough in isolation. To transform life chances and break the cycle of disadvantage, services must go further. They must ‘think family’.’



Time to implement 'Think Family' model

- Reforming LA systems and workforce culture to ensure consideration of the family context
- Better systems for identifying and intervening early
- Integration between adult and children's services
- Whole family assessment (e.g. develop family CAF)
- Key worker/lead professional led whole family support
- Multi agency teams strengthened and working
- Improved information sharing
- Joined up planning & commissioning and governance

- 15 Family Pathfinders informing the design and implementation of the Think Family model
- Youth Crime Action Plan commitment to expand 'think family' to all LAs



Expansion of Family Intervention Projects to all local authorities

- 65 Projects aimed at families involved in persistent anti social behaviour
- New projects aimed at tackling child poverty and inter generational worklessness
- Youth Crime Action Plan announced projects in every local authority as part of efforts to tackle youth crime

Number of Family Intervention Projects 2006-11

