

Ministers have had another busy week dealing with and meeting with key partners across a range of justice system and public safety issues – from launching a consultation on a major review of family law, to seeing first-hand an innovative scheme to help steer young people away from the risk of being drawn into serious organisation crime.

Child rights at heart of family law review

✖ Minister for Legal Affairs [Annabelle Ewing launched a public consultation](#) about the law involving children of separated parents, and on the law around parental responsibilities and rights. This will inform the key themes to be included in a new family justice modernisation strategy.

Ms Ewing said: “We know that family breakdown can be very upsetting for children and it is our responsibility to ensure that the family justice system is supportive and does not contribute to their distress. That means putting the best interests of the child first in every case, and feedback from this consultation will help us to identify where changes are needed.”

Read more and give your views on the [Scottish Government consultation pages](#) – or access a separate set of [child-friendly questions](#). And please pass on to others who may have an interest so they can make their views known.

Police training to strengthen response to domestic abuse

National charity [SafeLives was this week appointed by Police Scotland to train 14,000 officers](#) in identifying controlling behaviours to support the introduction of the new Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act.

Controlling and coercive behaviours are a significant factor of domestic abuse and the new legislation – due for implementation early next year – will help police and prosecutors to better-target perpetrators of such abuse.

Justice Secretary Michael Matheson said: “We are committed to ensuring our law enforcement agencies have the powers and resources necessary to tackle crime and keep communities safe. That is why we have provided £825,000 funding to Police Scotland to develop and deliver high-quality bespoke training which will help them to identify some of the more insidious and damaging behaviours that perpetrators use to control their partner or ex-partner which are covered within the new offence.”

Information and advice for anyone experiencing domestic abuse can be found on the [MyGov.Scot website](#).

Our CEO [@SuzanneEJacob](#) on the announcement that we will be working

with our partners to deliver [#domesticabuse](#) training across the whole of [@policescotland](#) Together we truly can improve the response so more people get the right support at the right time
<https://t.co/y4jtxtszRv> [pic.twitter.com/sDG7MVHHpb](https://t.co/y4jtxtszRv)

– SafeLives (@safelives_) [May 15, 2018](#)

Tackling Serious Organised Crime

On Wednesday the Justice Secretary joined representatives of Action for Children, Glasgow City Council and the Big Lottery Fund as those three partners announced a funding package to support a unique project that is helping to divert young people in Glasgow away from serious organised crime (SOC).

Delivered in partnership with Police Scotland, the SOC early intervention service is the only project of its kind in the UK, and works with young people across the city aged between 12 and 18. A recent review found 71% of young people who have used the service were kept out of secure care for at least six months during involvement with the programme – including a number deemed “high risk” of entering secure care by the children’s panel. And two-thirds of those involved have made demonstrable improvements in their offending behaviour.

Action for Children’s Chief Executive Paul Carberry said: “Today’s funding announcement for our ‘Serious Organised Crime Intervention Service’ is a very important step in the continued efforts in Scotland to tackle serious organised crime. We are grateful to work in collaboration with partner agencies to tackle these types of crime, which blights communities across the city.”

Action for Children is a key partner in the work of Scotland’s [Serious Organised Crime Taskforce](#), with Mr Carberry chairing its ‘Divert’ strand.

Mr Matheson commended the partners for securing continued funding for the project, including an expansion of services to support families. He said: “This is a valuable project that is making a real difference to the lives of young people by diverting them from involvement in a range of criminal activity that could have a seriously detrimental effect on the rest of their lives.”

Video: Watch [@MathesonMichael](#) talk about the [@Actn4ChildrScot](#) serious organised crime intervention service after meeting young people assisted by the project [@GlasgowCC](#) [@BIGScotland](#) [@GCHSCP](#) [@policescotland](#) [pic.twitter.com/cmkgil6xta](https://t.co/cmkgil6xta)

– ScotGov Justice (@ScotGovJustice) [May 16, 2018](#)

Cashback on the big screen

An innovative scheme that's helping young people in North Ayrshire to gain new skills and confidence for the workplace ahead of leaving school, and supported through funding from the government's Cashback for Communities initiative, featured on a BBC UK-wide broadcast, *Ill-Gotten Gains*, this week.


Pupils at Greenwood Academy in Dreghorn worked with staff to secure funding from the Princes Trust's Development Awards in order to set up a school-based business, Lovilicious, providing nail care to staff and pupils.

The Development Awards, which received more than £1 million [Cashback](#) funding drawn from seized criminal assets – are designed to provide grants for young people aged 13 -24, mainly in disadvantaged areas, who are ready for positive destinations but who struggle to access education, employment or training because of a financial barrier that prevents them gaining the resources or skills they need.

You can watch the episode featuring the Greenwood Academy project for a limited time on [BBC iPlayer](#) – just after 34 minutes.

For further information about the Development Awards in Scotland visit the [Princes Trust website](#).

Women in custody

 [Images for a proposed Community Custody Unit](#) (CCU) for women in Dundee at the former Our Lady's Primary School site in the city were unveiled this week during a public 'drop-in' information event for local residents, businesses and elected representatives. The CCU is part of a wider transformation of Scotland's female custodial estate, by the [Scottish Prison Service](#).

The Justice Secretary announced plans in 2015 to transform the female custodial estate, with a smaller national prison for around 80 women on the site of Cornton Vale and a number of CCUs – the first two of which will be in Dundee and in Maryhill, Glasgow, due for completion by the end of 2020.

Crimestoppers

Finally, a quick shout-out to our friends at the CRIMESTOPPERS charity who have launched their [new website](#).

The charity, which receives Scottish Government funding to support its work in Scotland, helps people to give information about crimes or suspected criminality anonymously.

The website also includes tips on how to keep your family and business safe from harm. You can also contact CRIMESTOPPERS by phone on 0800 555 111.

Check out our brand new shiny website! <https://t.co/C0dwSl8pm1>
[pic.twitter.com/Ekgc8eSa0z](https://t.co/C0dwSl8pm1)

– Scotland Crimestoppers (@CrimestopSCOT) [May 17, 2018](#)

The post appeared first on [Justice and Safety](#).