



PRESS RELEASE

28 Fitzroy Square
London W1T 6DD

E-mail: ann.flintham@magistrates-association.org.uk

Telephone: 020 7387 2353

Fax: 020 7383 4020

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In response to new research published by the Prison Reform Trust and National Children's Bureau

John Bache JP, Chairman of the Youth Courts Committee of the Magistrates' Association, said:

"The Magistrates' Association remains very concerned that looked after children are still being brought to court for behaviour that should certainly not result in a criminal charge. We do not condone bad behaviour but most children do behave inappropriately on occasions and this should be dealt with in an appropriate way not by a criminal charge which brings about unnecessary criminalization of our young people with all its associated consequences. The CPS and ACPO have very sensible guidelines but we are not convinced that they are always followed."

END

For further information contact Ann Flintham, Communications Director 020 7387 6099 / 07812 038889

Notes for Editors

2011 will be the 650 anniversary of the institution of the office of Justice of the Peace (JP) and a senior judge recently stated that *its members have served the justice system with distinction ever since*. Currently just over 27,000 men and women - known as JPs or magistrates - deal with 95% of all criminal cases brought before courts and a significant number of civil matters including family work. Magistrates are not paid for attending court, receiving only modest expenses, subsistence and small recompense for any loss of earnings. They have to attend training, are mentored and regularly appraised and work within guidelines.

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