

The Centre for Social Justice  
9 Westminster Palace Gardens  
Artillery Row  
London SW1P 1RL

Telephone 020 7340 9650  
Website [www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk](http://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk)



**PRESS RELEASE FROM THE CENTRE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE**  
**RELEASE TIME: EMBARGOED UNTIL 20:00 WEDNESDAY 1<sup>st</sup> JULY**

# Youth gangs charities scoop cash awards from Iain Duncan Smith's think-tank

Two grassroots charities battling to reverse the youth gang culture are among the seven winners of awards totalling £70,000 presented by the Centre for Social Justice, the think-tank set up by former Conservative Party leader Iain Duncan Smith.

The SOS Gangs Project at the St Giles Trust based in south London and Young Disciples operating in Birmingham were both honoured for their pioneering work in helping young people turn away from criminal embrace of the street gang.

At an awards ceremony on Wednesday night (July 1) hosted by GMTV presenter Emma Crosby, seven small grassroots poverty-fighting charities dealing with entrenched social problems such as drug addiction, youth unemployment and family breakdown were singled out for recognition.

The awards ceremony, attended by leading politicians from all parties, anti-poverty campaigners, celebrities and prominent media figures, was hosted by investment bank J P Morgan in the City.

Mr Duncan Smith and Ms Crosby were joined by actress Tamsin Greig, Daily Mail Columnist Amanda Platell and former Home Secretary Charles Clarke MP, who presented awards.

The CSJ awards ceremony raises awareness of the work of some of Britain's many exceptional charities, faith-based organisations and good causes who wage a war on social breakdown and poverty.

This year's award attracted nearly 400 nominations from across the country, with 13 projects shortlisted by a panel of independent judges.

The seven winners, announced on the night were: Nelson Trust, Working Rite, Blue Sky, Chance UK, Young Disciples, U Too, and SOS Gangs Project at the St Giles Trust.

Mr Duncan Smith also presented an additional award to Strathclyde Police for their self-referral session and innovative work in Glasgow in reducing gang-related violence.

This project, the first of its kind in the UK was launched in 2008 and pulls together both public and voluntary sector groups. With an uncompromising message of “go straight or go to jail” the scheme is based on work in America in cutting gang-related violence, known as the ‘Boston Miracle’.

The event was attended by over 300 guests, who were entertained by singers from winning charity Young Disciples, who performed an arrangement called ‘Life’.

Mr Duncan Smith said, “I would like to congratulate all the organisations who were nominated for this year’s awards. The CSJ Awards are a way to recognise and highlight the outstanding work of the country’s voluntary and faith-based organisations that have been pioneering solutions to the problems associated with our broken society.

“Every one of the organisations nominated for our awards are restoring hope to some of our country’s most disadvantaged communities. They work hard, with little or no money, recognition or support and yet they are overcoming the social challenges that have defeated the agencies of the state. Their efforts show that the war on poverty can be won.”

For media inquiries, please contact Nick Wood of Media Intelligence Partners Ltd on 07889 617003 or 0203 008 8146 or Alistair Thompson on 07970 162225 or 0203 008 8145.

**ends**

## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

The Centre for Social Justice is an independent think tank established, by Rt Hon Iain Duncan Smith MP in 2004, to seek effective solutions to the poverty that blights parts of Britain.

In July 2007 the group published Breakthrough Britain. Ending the Costs of Social Breakdown. The paper presented over 190 policy proposals aimed at ending the growing social divide in Britain.

Subsequent reports have put forward proposals for reform of the police, prisons, social housing, the asylum system and family law. Other reports have dealt with street gangs and early intervention to help families with young children.

The Judging panel included Camila Batmanghelidjh (founder and CEO of Kids Company) Prof Bob Holman, (Social affairs writer) Rt Hon Frank Field MP, Rt Hon Theresa May MP, (Shadow Secretary of State for Work and Pensions) Tim Campbell (First winner of the Apprentice) and Tris Lumley (New Philanthropy Capital).

[www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk](http://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk)

The seven winners were:

### **Nelson Trust - Stroud**

Works with people with drug or alcohol addictions, ensuring that they are able to access quality treatment, education, housing and the support that they need to turn their lives around. [www.nelsontrust.com](http://www.nelsontrust.com)

### **Working Rite - Edinburgh**

Works with vulnerable teenagers helping them to find work with local employers to give them real work and mentoring support. [www.workingrite.co.uk](http://www.workingrite.co.uk)

**Blue Sky - Uxbridge**

Works with people leaving prison, to enable them to move successfully into long-term employment. [www.blueskydevelopment.co.uk](http://www.blueskydevelopment.co.uk)

**Chance UK – London**

Provides mentoring programmes for 5-11 year olds with behavioural difficulties who are at risk of developing anti-social or criminal behaviour later in life. [www.chanceuk.com](http://www.chanceuk.com)

**Young Disciples - Birmingham**

Works with hard to reach young people and those involved in gangs helping them re-engage with education and training. [www.youngdisciples.co.uk](http://www.youngdisciples.co.uk)

**U Too - Swindon**

Runs courses for young mums-to-be, young mums and young dads-to-be across Swindon and Wiltshire helping them understand their responsibilities and support each other as a family unit. <http://dads-matter-too.blogspot.com/>

**SOS Gangs Project at the St Giles Trust – East London**

Works with young offenders, who are serving sentences for gang related crimes and helps them break free from the cycle of gang life and criminality.  
[www.stgilestrust.org.uk/what/208746/sos\\_gangs\\_project.html](http://www.stgilestrust.org.uk/what/208746/sos_gangs_project.html)