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| **2.1** | **Always unpick why**  Understanding benefits of offending | |
| **Young person:** | |  |
| **Practitioner:** | |  |
| **Date:** | |  |

Normally youth justice interventions focus **only on the negative consequences** of young people’s offending.

However, to truly understand and then influence young people’s decision making processes, **it is important to also consider the positive consequences (or benefits) of young people’s offending behaviour.**

It is helpful to consider this in terms of there being **two reasons** a young person might offend:

1. **Though the costs of offending outweigh the benefits, the young person didn’t appreciate the extent of the costs at the time.**

For instance, they may have been impulsive or naive, or they may not have understood where their actions might lead.

1. **The benefits of the offending actually outweigh the costs (or at least it certainly feels that way to the young person)**

For instance, factors such as disadvantage, circumstances, peer pressure, thrill-seeking or self-destructive compulsions might mean that although the costs of offending are significant and well understood, the situation is such that the benefits feel more valuable (at least in the moment).

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|  | **Completing the following table of consequential costs and benefits will help you work with the young person to begin to unpick which of the two reasons above has been responsible for the decision to offend.**   * If the young person’s offending **is primarily driven by reason 1, they might benefit from some work on consequential thinking.** * However, if the young person’s offending is **primarily driven by reason 2, they would benefit from brainstorming alternative ways of achieving the things they are lacking, without the costs associated with offending.** |

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| **BENEFITS** | **COSTS** |
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