

2025 - 2026

**INSIGHT INTO
THE VIEWS OF
YOUNG PEOPLE,
SCHOOL STAFF
AND
PARENT/CARERS**



PREPARED AND PRESENTED BY
MERSEYSIDE YOUTH ASSOCIATION

CONTENTS

About this report	1
What is the Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) Programme?	2
MVP and National/Local Guidance Alignment	3
Young People - Survey Results	4-21
Breakdown of participants	5-6
Root causes of youth violence	7-8
Topical issues	9-10
How can young people stop Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)?	11-13
Reporting Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)	14
Suggestions to divert young people away from ASB	15-17
Racism in school	18
Mental Health - what would you do if you were worried?	19
What activities make you feel good?	20
How much screen time have you averaged this week?	20
How much sleep have you averaged in the last 3 days?	20
In the environment, what helps or harms people's mental health?	21
Parents and Carers - Survey Results	22-35
Breakdown of participants	23
Root causes of youth violence	24
Topical issues	25-26
Reporting Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)	27
Racism in Liverpool	27
Suggestions to divert young people away from ASB	28-30
Mental Health - what would you do for your child?	31
How much screen time have you averaged this week?	32
How much sleep have you averaged in the last 3 days?	32
In the environment, what helps or harms people's mental health?	33
Additional comments and feedback	34-35
School Workforce - Survey Results	36-43
Breakdown of participants	37-38
Root causes of youth violence	39
Topical issues	40-41
Mental Health - what would you do for your students?	42
In the environment, what helps or harms people's mental health?	43

CONTENTS

Impact of the Mentors' Journey	44-56
Mentor Population	45
Pre and Post Programme measures	46-48
What did you enjoy about the Mentor Training?	49
What did you dislike about the Mentor Training?	50
What is your most memorable MVP moment?	51-52
What are the benefits of MVP/Violence Prevention in school?	53
Case Study - St Anselm's College	54-55
School Feedback	56
Youth Voice	57-62
How do you know when time online is affecting your wellbeing?	58
- What do you do to help yourself when this happens?	58
What helps you feel safe, respected and understood in school?	59
How do schools create safe spaces?	59
What could schools do to help with transition?	60
Why do you think people don't report VAWG?	61-62
Resources	63-666
Film Library and Guidance	64
Youth Voice Workshop: Violence Against Women & Girls	65
Resource RoundUps	66
Graduation 2026	66-68

ABOUT THIS REPORT

During the delivery of the Mentors in Violence Prevention Programme (MVP), Merseyside Youth Association's RAISE mental health promotion team invite students, members of the workforce and parents/carers to take part in online surveys.

The surveys explore similar topical and current issues but through the eyes of each audience (students, staff, parents and carers). Students were asked how they would respond to various situations related to areas covered in the MVP programme. Workforce members were asked about their school culture, Parents and carers were asked about their child's wellbeing and school provisions.

This report captures the survey responses - views held by young people, parents and carers and school staff, reinforcing the value of the MVP programme.

Previous reports, along with an **[Evaluation of the Mentors in Violence Prevention Programme across Merseyside](#)** - researched and written by Nadia Butler, Charley Wilson, Rebecca Bates and Zara Quigg, Public Health Institute, Liverpool John Moores University, can be viewed on the [MVP website](#).



INTRODUCTION

What is the Mentors in Violence Prevention Programme?

Merseyside Youth Association's Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) is a peer education programme funded by the Merseyside Violence Reduction Partnership.

It provides young people with the language and framework to explore and challenge the attitudes, beliefs, and cultural norms that underpin gender-based violence, bullying, and other forms of abuse while building resilience and promoting positive mental health.

The programme empowers pupils to identify and communicate concerns with peers and school staff by supporting schools to take a 'Whole School Approach' to early intervention and prevention of bullying, harassment, and risky behaviours.

The MVP Programme focuses on five core components:

- Exploring violence through a gendered lens;
- Developing leadership;
- Adopting a bystander approach;
- Recognising the scope of violent behaviour; and
- Challenge victim-blaming.

Additional bespoke themes chosen by young people include:

Weapons

- Labelled
- Online Abuse
- Being Left Out
- Carrying Weapons

Hate Crime

- Racism
- Disability
- Homophobia
- Transphobia

Relationships

- Sexual Harassment
- Expectations
- Manipulation
- Consent

"Our Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) programme is central to our education offer. It strengthens evidence-based practice through a peer-to-peer model that places youth voice at its heart. It is impactful, empowering, and rooted in our communities.

MVP is owned and championed by schools and educators year after year, with resources that span all education settings across our region. The programme equips both our young people, and the professionals who support them, with the confidence, skills, and understanding to challenge harmful behaviours and promote positive change. Through this programme, we are collectively creating generations of active bystanders who drive positive change within their communities.

Through a genuinely collaborative partnership, MYA and the Merseyside Violence Reduction Partnership work side by side to achieve the best outcomes for young people across Merseyside. We remain committed to driving engagement, strengthening awareness, and championing MVP so that every young person benefits from a safer, more supportive environment."

Nadine Bogan - Education Lead, Merseyside Violence Reduction Partnership

MVP AND NATIONAL/LOCAL GUIDANCE ALIGNMENT

This section outlines how the MVP programme aligns with national government guidance, local initiatives, the statutory PSHE curriculum, and safeguarding responsibilities for keeping children safe. The programme has been designed to support schools and settings in meeting their statutory duties while promoting the wellbeing, resilience and safety of children and young people.

[Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)

[Keeping children safe in education](#)

[Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education](#)

[Serious Violence Duty](#)

[PSHE Association - Programme of Study for PSHE Education](#)

[Pol-Ed: A Positive Force in Education](#)

[Teaching to Prevent Weapons, Gangs & Violence - School Improvement Liverpool](#)

[Protecting Lives, Building Hope: A Plan to Halve Knife Crime](#)

[Working in partnership to tackle Violence Against Women and Girls \(VAWG\) across Merseyside](#)

Merseyside Youth Association's

Mentors in Violence Prevention

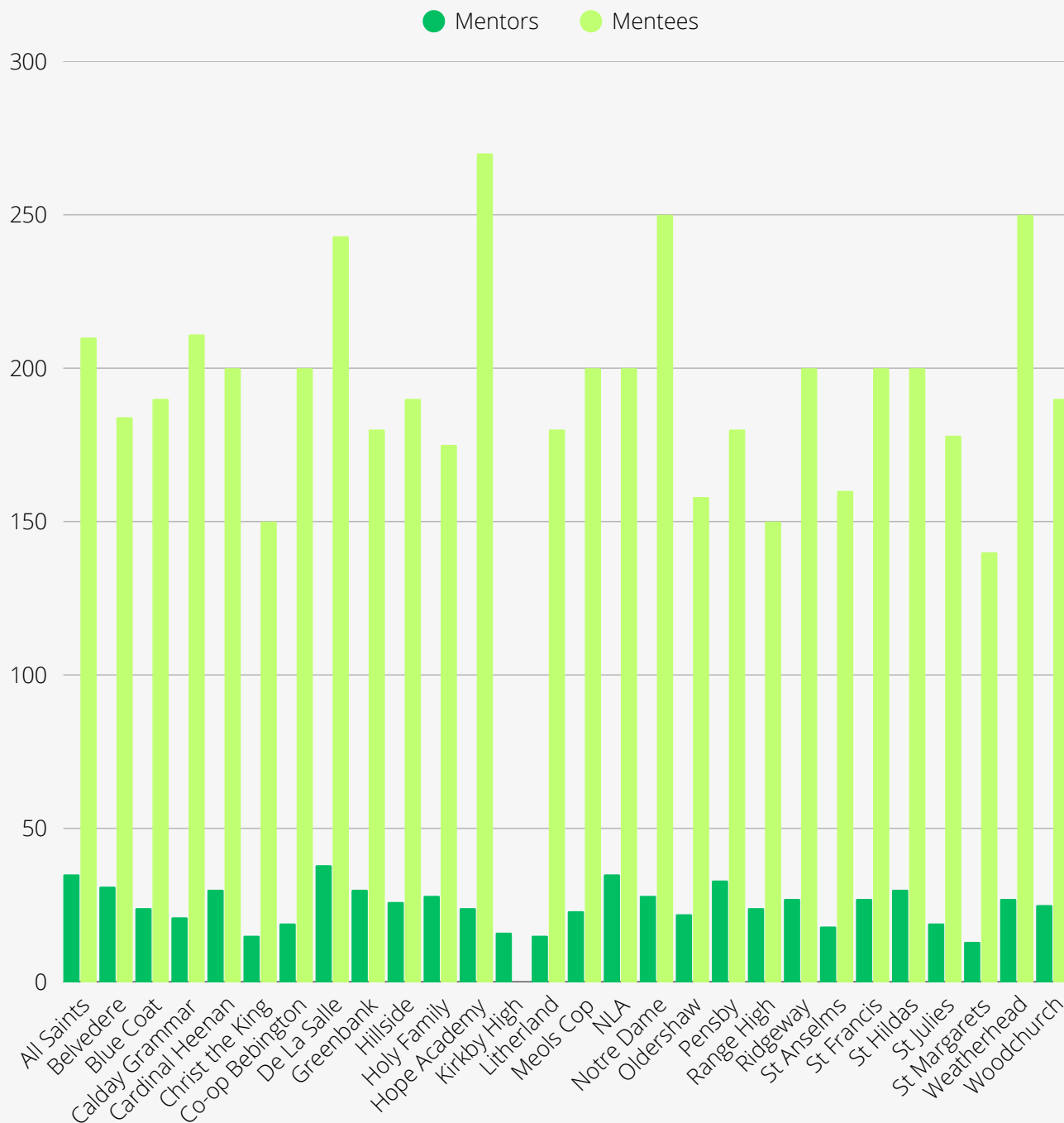


YOUNG PEOPLE SURVEY RESULTS



YOUNG PEOPLE

703 mentors have completed the MVP training, who then went on to train 5239 mentees (academic year 2025-2026)



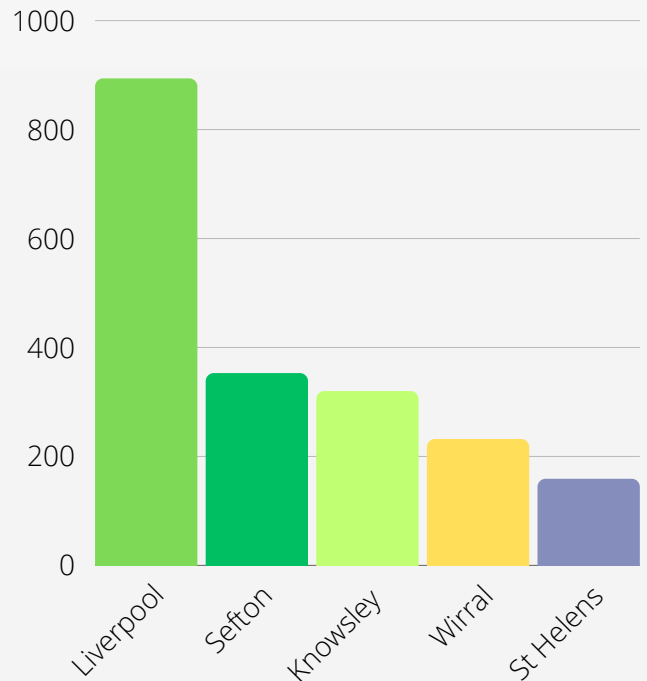
YOUNG PEOPLE

1,807 responses

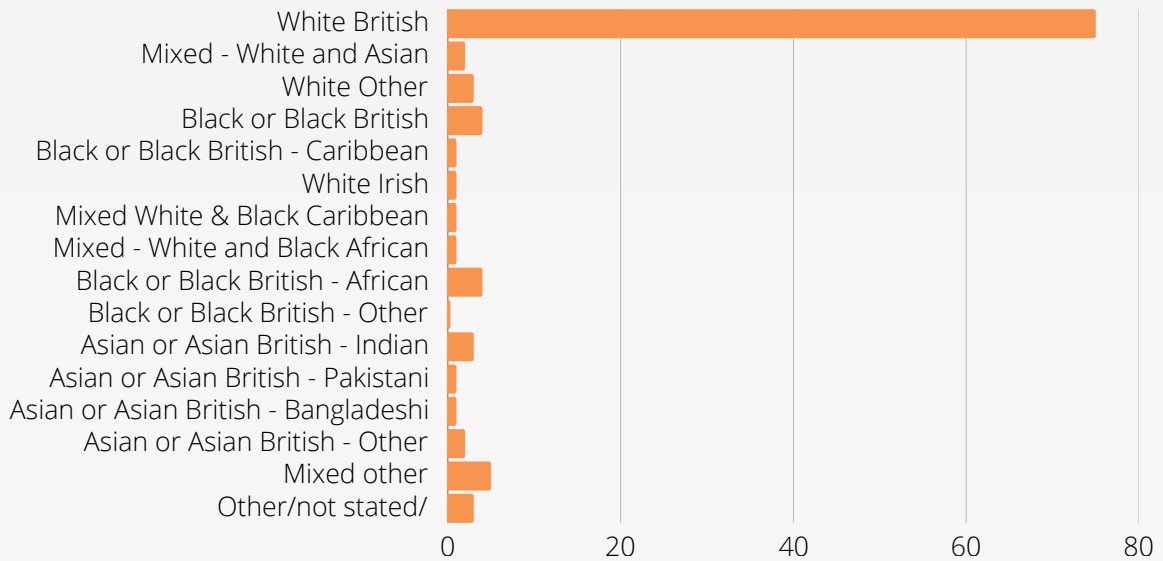
RESPONSES BY LOCAL AUTHORITY

Schools:

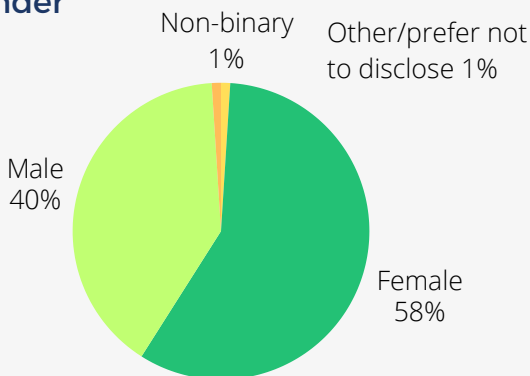
- Academy of St Francis of Assisi - Liverpool
- The Blue Coat School - Liverpool
- St Hilda's CofE - Liverpool
- St Julie's Catholic High School - Liverpool
- Hillside High School - Sefton
- Holy Family Catholic High School - Sefton
- Litherland High School - Sefton
- Greenbank High School - Sefton
- Range High School - Sefton
- All Saints Catholic High School - Knowsley
- Calday Grange Grammar - Wirral
- De La Salle - St Helens
- Ridgeway High School - Wirral
- Pensby High School - Wirral
- St Anselm's College - Wirral
- Weatherhead High School - Wirral



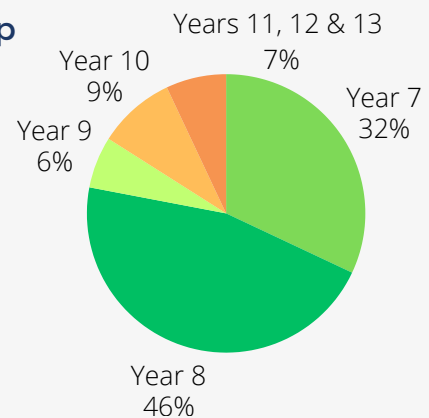
Ethnicity %



Gender

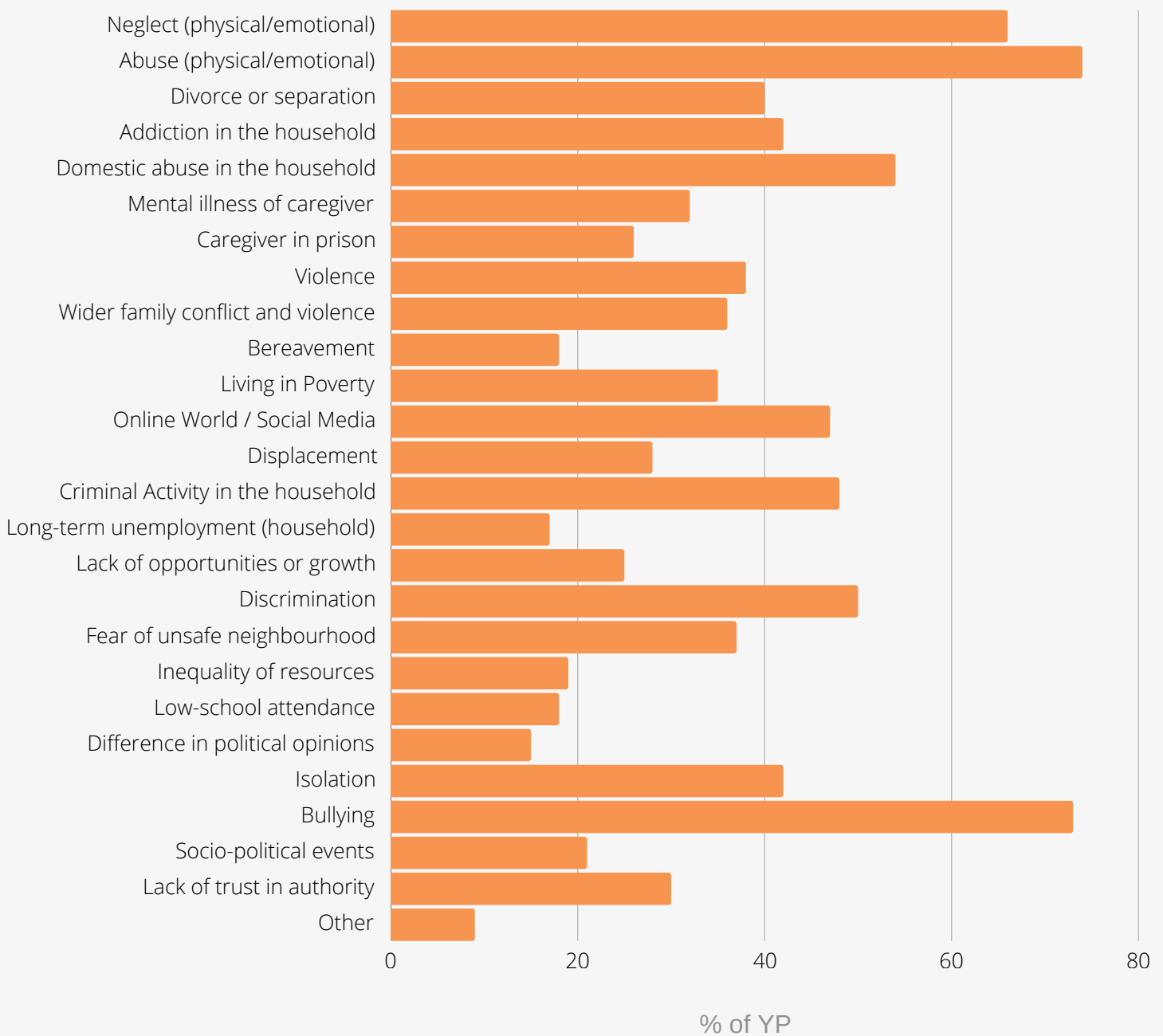


Year Group



YOUNG PEOPLE

WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE ROOT CAUSES OF YOUTH VIOLENCE?



YOUNG PEOPLE

WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE ROOT CAUSES OF YOUTH VIOLENCE?

ALL OF THE ABOVE

Unavailable parents/caregivers caring for them or not enough support they need for them, as if they're mentally ill in the head there parents could think they're sick and not do anything, which leads to abandoning feelings for the child.

Everything that was mentioned, but also trying to impress others within the community or people you hang around (trying to gain respect for doing things that are not good/antisocial behaviour).

Knifecrime

Seen murder

Well it can all vary because of online bullying and people can be affected by other people's actions

PEER

PRESSURE

Caregivers not caring for u so u do what ever want and u do not realise good or bad

Greiving
Being forced to do things you don't want to do
Often

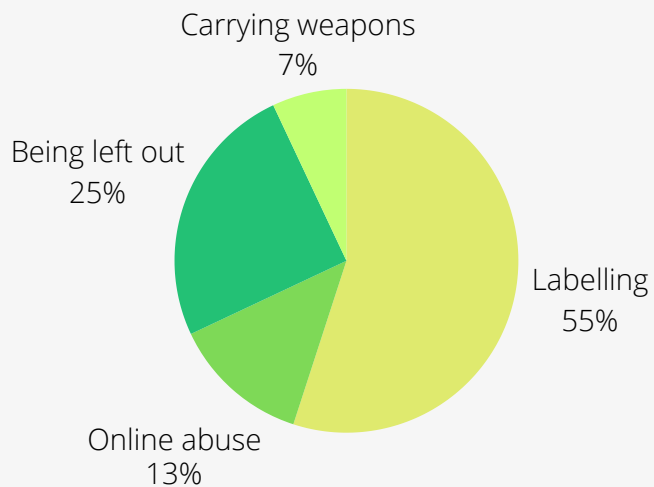
ABUSE

CHILDHOOD TRAUMA

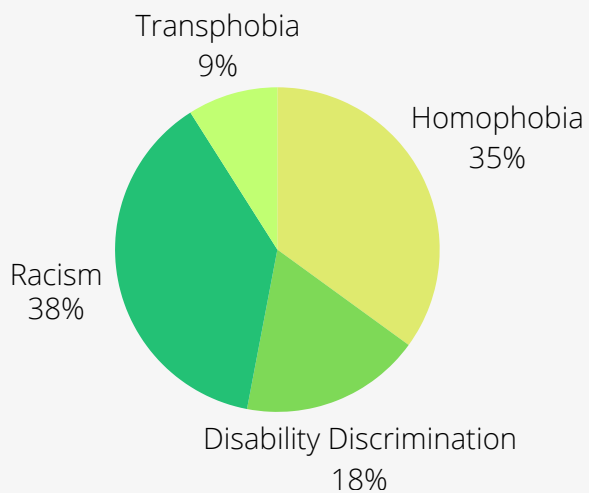
A lack of strength in authority.

YOUNG PEOPLE

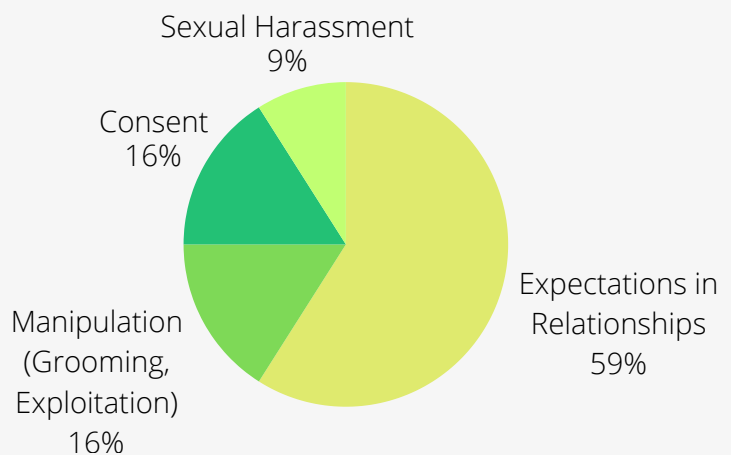
SESSION 1 OF MVP FOCUSES ON 'WEAPONS'. SELECT ONE TOPIC THAT IS AN ISSUE IN YOUR SCHOOL.



SESSION 2 OF MVP FOCUSES ON 'HATE CRIME'. SELECT ONE TOPIC THAT IS AN ISSUE IN YOUR SCHOOL.



SESSION 3 OF MVP FOCUSES ON 'RELATIONSHIPS'. SELECT ONE TOPIC THAT IS AN ISSUE IN YOUR SCHOOL.



YOUNG PEOPLE

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT AND TICK WHETHER YOU AGREE, DISAGREE, OR ARE UNSURE.

	I AGREE	I DISAGREE	I AM UNSURE
I can recognise healthy and unhealthy behaviours within my relationships,	80%	4%	16%
I have a responsibility to ensure other pupils around me are safe and included,	75%	6%	19%
I know of different ways to help if I see bullying or abusive behaviour happening,	71%	5%	21%
I would take action if I saw someone being bullied or abused,	66%	7%	27%
I know how to support someone who is distressed.	64%	9%	27%
I know where to signpost myself or my peers if they are distressed	55%	8%	37%

YOUNG PEOPLE

WHAT DO YOU THINK YOUNG PEOPLE LIKE YOU CAN DO TO HELP STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS? (VAWG)



Speak Up, Report, and Tell Someone

This was the most common theme. Young people frequently said they would:

- Tell a trusted adult, teacher, parent, or youth worker
- Report incidents to police (999/101)
- Speak out if they see or hear violence, harassment, misogyny, or bullying
- Not “stay quiet” or “be a bystander”

Many referenced being an active bystander.



Raise Awareness

A huge number suggested increasing awareness by:

- Talking to others
- Making posters, campaigns, adverts
- Using social media to spread messages
- Creating clubs, safe spaces, or events
- Holding assemblies or workshops



Education and Learning

Young people said both women/girls and men/boys need more education on:

- Respect and equality
- Consent
- Healthy relationships
- Gender stereotypes
- The harms of violence and sexism

Many specifically said teach boys and men better.

YOUNG PEOPLE

WHAT DO YOU THINK YOUNG PEOPLE LIKE YOU CAN DO TO HELP STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS? (VAWG) CONT.



Be Kind and Treat Everyone Equally

Large numbers focused on behaviour:

- Being kind
- Respecting women and girls
- Not bullying, name-calling, or stereotyping
- Challenging sexist jokes/comments

Some added: "Treat girls the way you want to be treated."



Protests, Campaigns and Community Action

Many suggested:

- Protests
- Marches
- Community groups
- Speaking publicly
- Signing petitions

Some wanted harsher laws or punishments.



Create Safe Spaces

Young people frequently mentioned:

- Girls-only groups, clubs, or gyms
- Safe spaces in school
- A place to talk to trusted adults
- Anonymous reporting systems or apps



Support Friends and Peers

Common responses included:

- Supporting friends going through violence
- Checking in on people
- Making sure people feel "seen" and "not alone"
- Helping others get help

YOUNG PEOPLE

WHAT DO YOU THINK YOUNG PEOPLE LIKE YOU CAN DO TO HELP STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS? (VAWG) CONT.



Learn Self-Defence / Encourage Safety

Some young people mentioned:

- Learning self-defence
- Staying in groups
- Avoiding unsafe areas
- Carrying safety items (perfume, alarms etc.)

A few responses leaned toward fighting back, though these were less common.



Change Stereotypes and Challenge Misogyny

Young people want to:

- Challenge sexist attitudes
- Reduce gender stereotypes
- Stop making girls “second class”
- Provide better role models
- Remove harmful online influences (e.g., Andrew Tate)



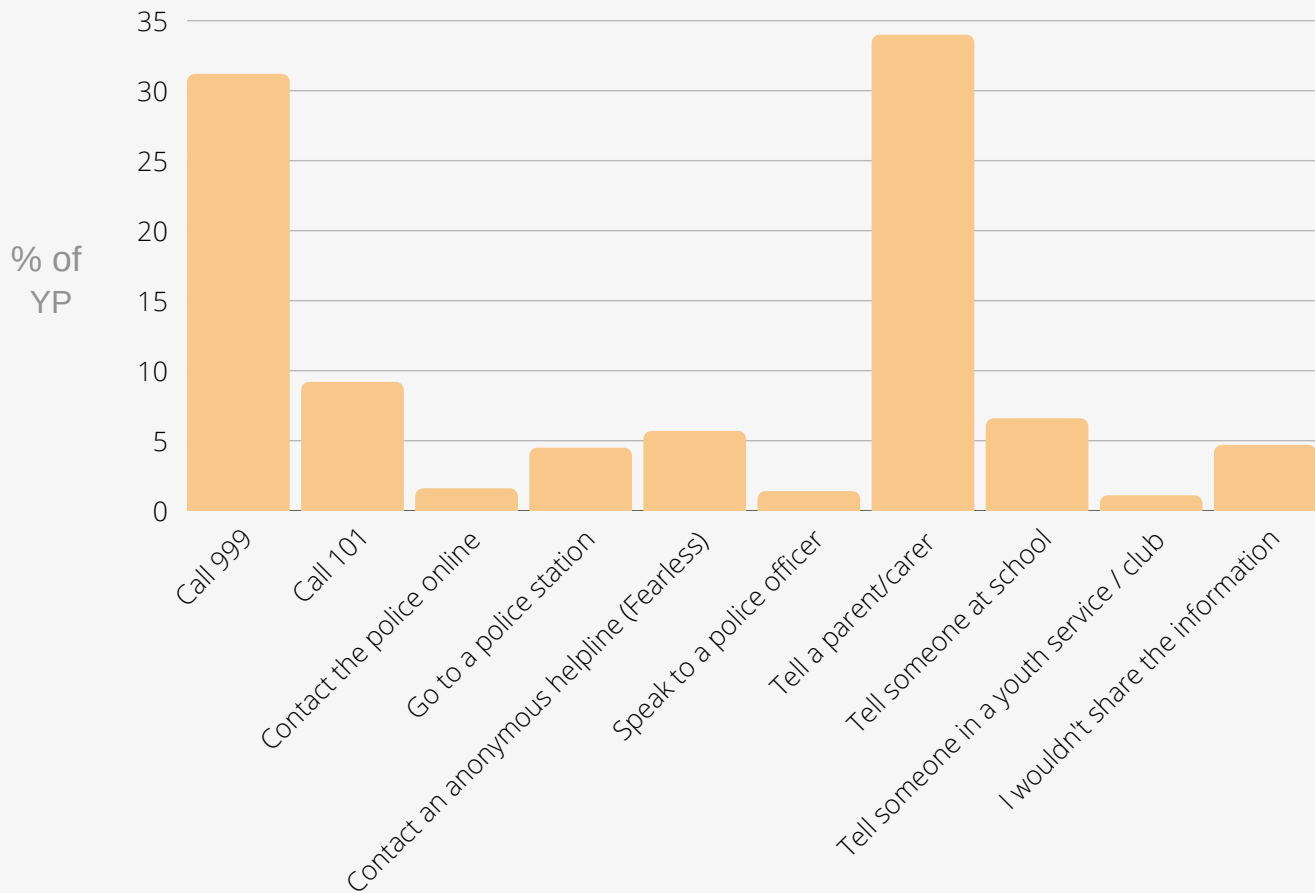
“I Don’t Know” / Unsure

A notable proportion—around 10-15%—said:

- “I don’t know”
- “Not sure”
- or felt that they were too young to make a difference.

YOUNG PEOPLE

IF YOU HAD INFORMATION TO SHARE ABOUT A CRIME OR ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR; HOW WOULD YOU MOST LIKELY SHARE THIS?



YOUNG PEOPLE

POLICING PARTNERS FUND ACTIVITIES THAT AIM TO DIVERT YOUNG PEOPLE AWAY FROM ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR, SUCH AS FOOTBALL, DRAMA, BOXING, AND ARTS PROJECTS. WHAT OTHER ACTIVITIES OR PROJECTS WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE MORE OF / INSTEAD?



Sports Activities (by far the strongest theme)

Young people consistently requested:

- Football, basketball, netball, rugby, badminton, tennis
- Gymnastics, swimming, trampolining
- Running, athletics, cross-country
- Martial arts: boxing, MMA, Muay Thai, kickboxing, jiu jitsu
- Outdoor/Adventure sports: biking, hiking, rock climbing, horse riding

Sports were viewed as fun, social, physically healthy, and a positive outlet for stress or anger.



Creative Arts & Performing Arts Activities

Strong desire for more:

- Dance (appears in hundreds of responses)
- Drama, theatre, musicals
- Arts and crafts, drawing, colouring, painting
- Music lessons, singing, learning instruments
- Creative writing, poetry, storytelling These activities were seen as expressive, calming, and good for mental wellbeing.



Youth Clubs & Social Spaces

Many young people asked for:

- Youth clubs, social clubs, “places to hang out”
- Community centres
- Spaces to talk with friends and feel safe

They linked these directly to preventing loneliness, boredom and anti-social behaviour.

YOUNG PEOPLE

POLICING PARTNERS FUND ACTIVITIES THAT AIM TO DIVERT YOUNG PEOPLE AWAY FROM ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR, SUCH AS FOOTBALL, DRAMA, BOXING, AND ARTS PROJECTS. WHAT OTHER ACTIVITIES OR PROJECTS WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE MORE OF / INSTEAD? CONT.



Mental Health & Wellbeing Activities / Support

A major theme:

- Mental health groups, calm-down clubs, meditation, mindfulness, yoga
- Opportunities to talk about feelings, identity, stress, bullying
- Requests for less homework and more wellbeing time

Students clearly associate wellbeing support with preventing ASB.



Activities Linked Directly to ASB Prevention

Young people suggested:

- Clubs that explicitly teach kindness, respect, or anti-bullying messages
- Awareness campaigns, posters, social media movements
- Anger management, therapy-style groups

Safe spaces for those “struggling”, experiencing problems at home, or feeling isolated



Educational & Skill-Building Activities

Many respondents want opportunities that aren't available in the usual curriculum:

- Coding, computer science, engineering, STEM clubs
- Science experiments
- Languages & cultural clubs
- Life skills: cooking, baking, sewing, textiles
- DT, wood tech, crafting
- Career-focused clubs (forensics, psychology, criminology, astronomy)

YOUNG PEOPLE

POLICING PARTNERS FUND ACTIVITIES THAT AIM TO DIVERT YOUNG PEOPLE AWAY FROM ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR, SUCH AS FOOTBALL, DRAMA, BOXING, AND ARTS PROJECTS. WHAT OTHER ACTIVITIES OR PROJECTS WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE MORE OF / INSTEAD? CONT.



Fun, Relaxing & Low-Pressure Activities

A significant group asked for:

- Gaming clubs, video game spaces
- Board games
- Movie nights
- Social trips (bowling, cinema, beach, fun fairs)
- Calm spaces for “quiet time” or relaxing activities



Outdoor & Community Activities

Requests included:

- Bike parks, skate parks
- Nature walks, gardening, outdoor games
- Community trips, days out
- Volunteering or positive community projects

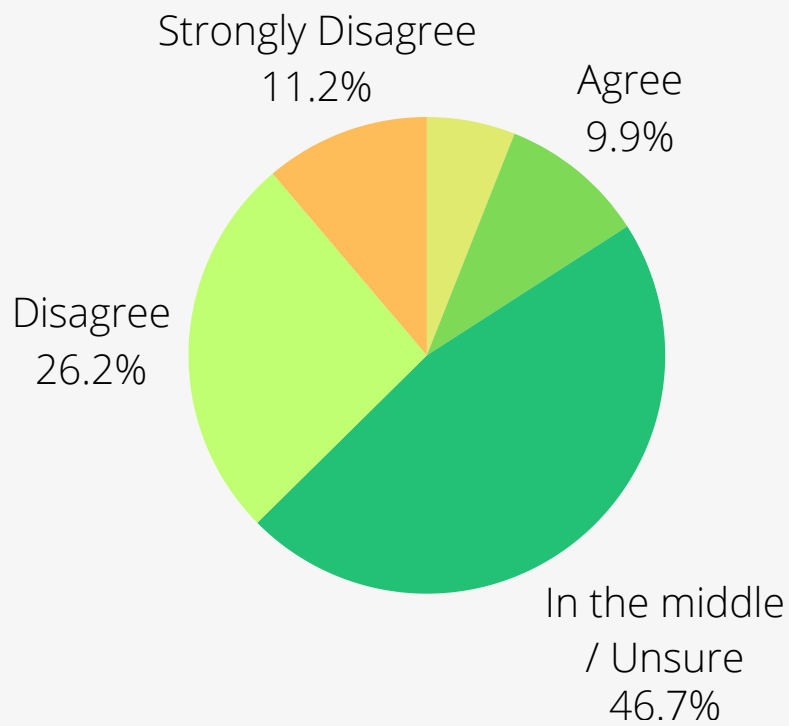


Less Common but Notable Suggestions

- Animal-based activities: horse riding, animal therapy
- Fashion or makeup workshops
- Religious/collective worship groups
- “No phone area” clubs
- Clubs addressing vandalism, bullying and safety education

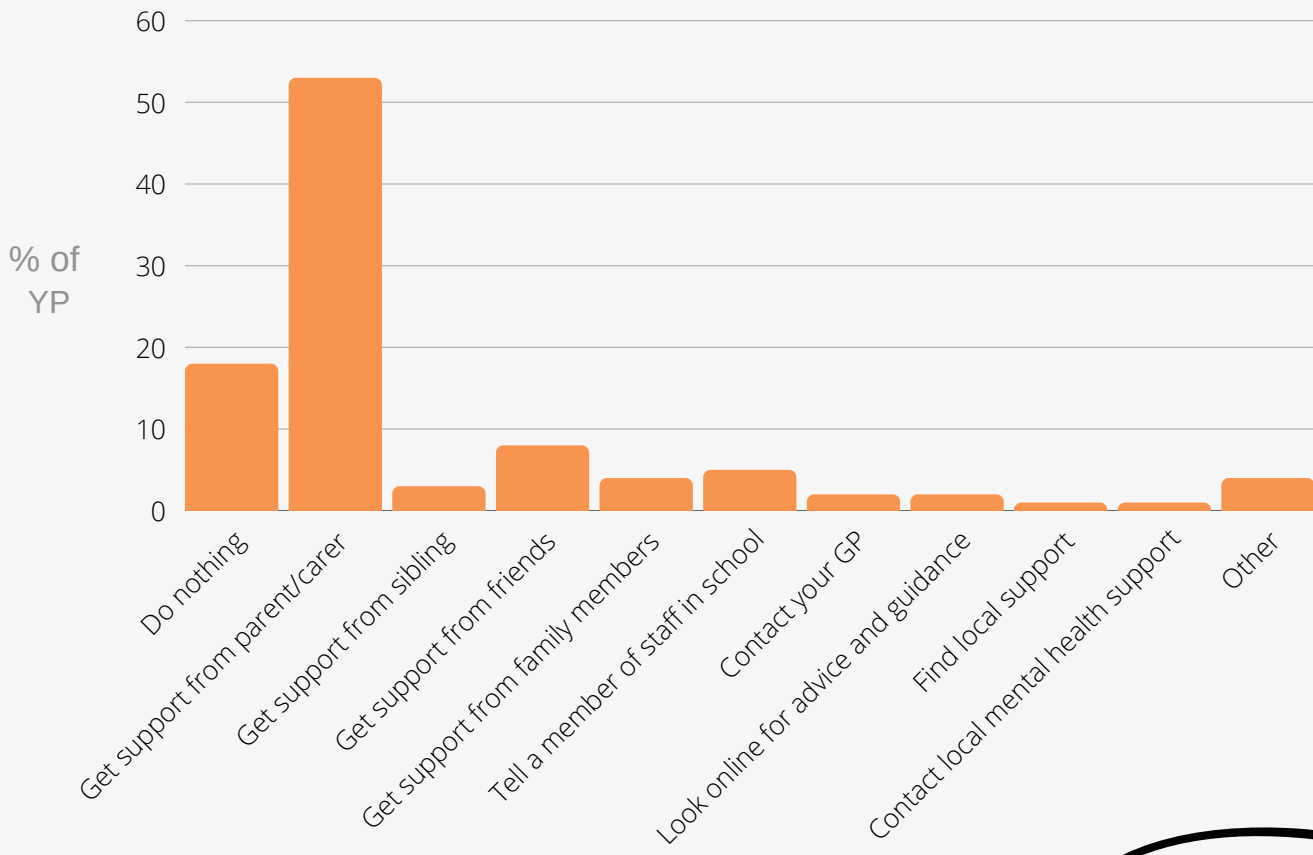
YOUNG PEOPLE

RACISM IS A BIG ISSUE IN YOUR SCHOOL?



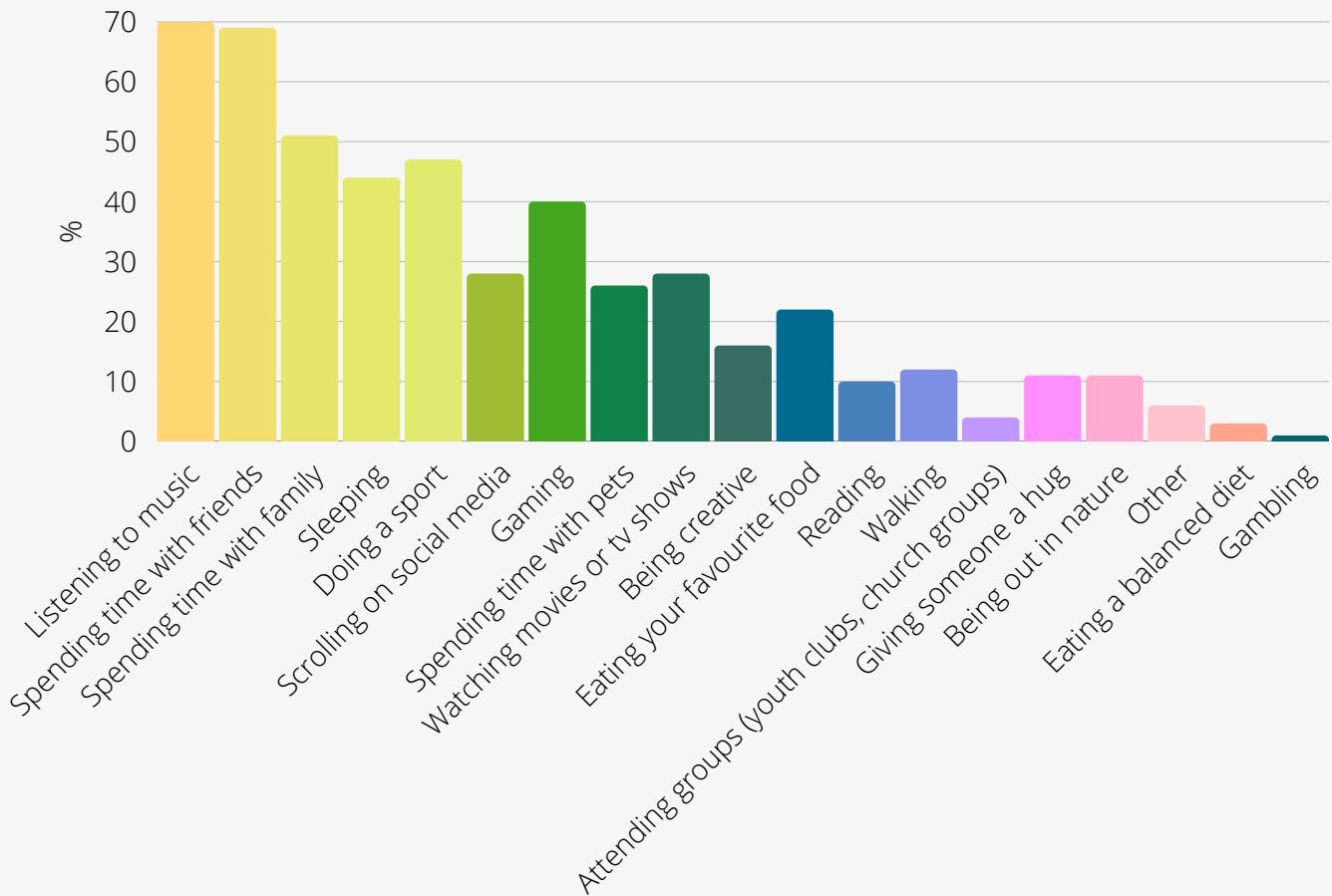
YOUNG PEOPLE

IF YOU WERE WORRIED ABOUT YOUR MENTAL HEALTH, WHAT WOULD YOU MOST LIKELY DO?

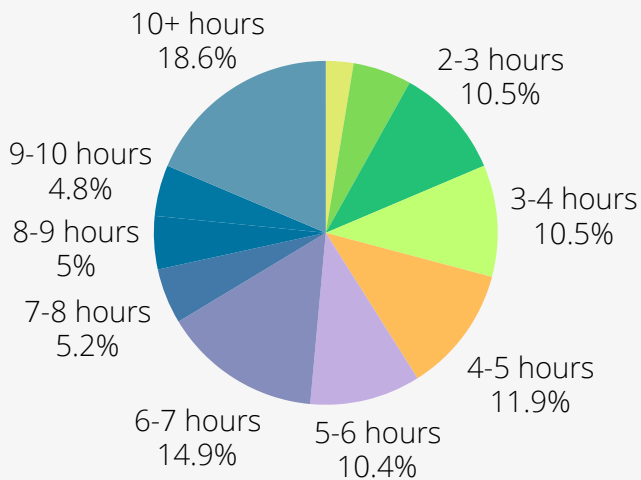


YOUNG PEOPLE

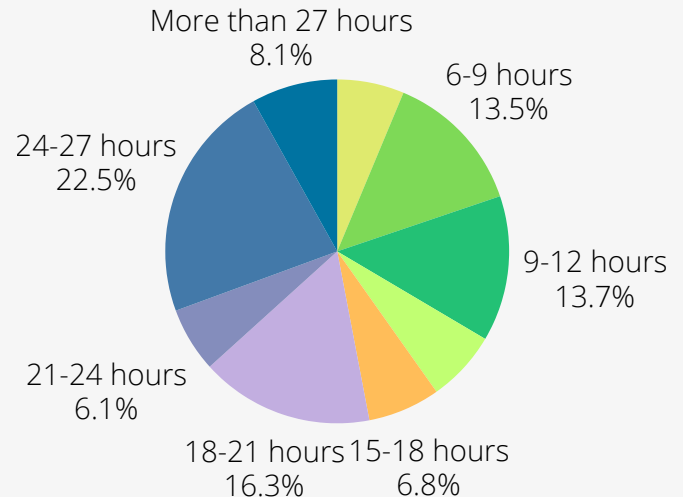
FROM THE LIST, SELECT FIVE ACTIVITIES THAT MAKE YOU FEEL GOOD



HOW MUCH SCREEN TIME HAVE YOU AVERAGED IN THE PAST WEEK?



HOW MUCH SLEEP HAVE YOU AVERAGED IN THE LAST 3 DAYS?



YOUNG PEOPLE

THINKING ABOUT YOUR LOCAL AREA/ENVIRONMENT, WHAT DO YOU FEEL ARE THE MAIN THINGS THAT HELP OR HARM PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH?



What Helps Mental Health

- Strong relationships – including friends, family, trusted adults, teachers and mentors. Having “someone to talk to” was the most common response.
- Safe and supportive communities – where people are kind, inclusive, non-judgemental and look out for one another.
- Nature and green spaces – such as parks, fields, beaches and quiet outdoor areas that feel calming and safe.
- Activities and routines – including sports, clubs, youth groups, hobbies, music, creative activities, walking and spending time outside.
- Access to support – youth clubs, school pastoral teams, therapists, doctors, charities and services like Childline.
- Feeling safe – safe streets, schools and social spaces were repeatedly linked to improved wellbeing.



What Harms Mental Health

- Bullying and unkind behaviour – both in person and online, including name-calling, exclusion, discrimination, racism, homophobia and cyberbullying.
- Violence, gangs and crime – particularly knife crime, antisocial behaviour and feeling unsafe in local areas.
- Social media pressures – including online abuse, comparison, unrealistic expectations and harmful content.
- Loneliness and isolation – not having friends, being left out, or feeling unable to talk about feelings.
- Lack of support or safe spaces – limited youth provision, not being listened to, or not knowing where to get help.
- Unsafe or unpleasant environments – litter, noise, overcrowding, run-down areas and lack of green space.
- Stress and pressure – particularly related to school, exams, expectations and family difficulties.

Merseyside Youth Association's

**Mentors in
Violence
Prevention**



PARENT AND CARER SURVEY RESULTS



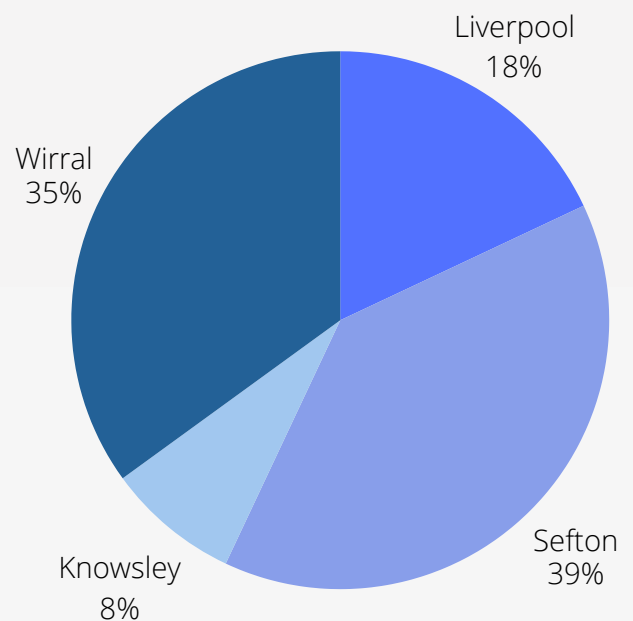
PARENTS/CARERS

264 responses

WHAT IS YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL?

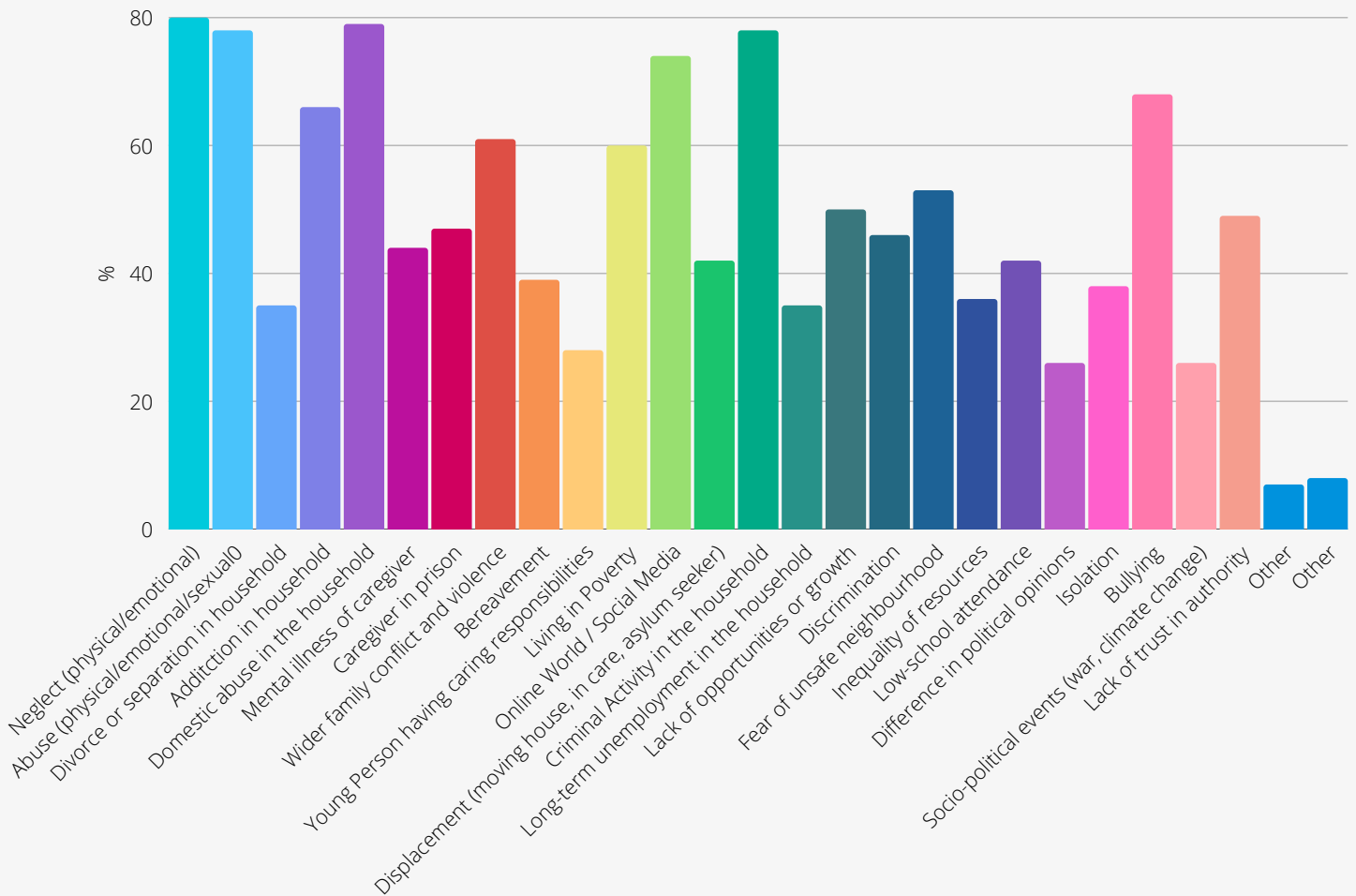
Schools:

- All Saints Catholic High School - Knowsley
- Holy Family Catholic High School - Sefton
- Pensby High School - Wirral
- St Anselm's College - Wirral
- St Hilda's CofE - Liverpool



PARENTS/CARERS

WHAT DO YOU THINK THE ROOT CAUSES OF YOUTH VIOLENCE ARE?



'Other' included:

Being bullied in school. Then become the bully to protect self before harm comes to them.

I have ticked many boxes, as I believe there are many causes and it is multifactorial and there isn't a single root cause.

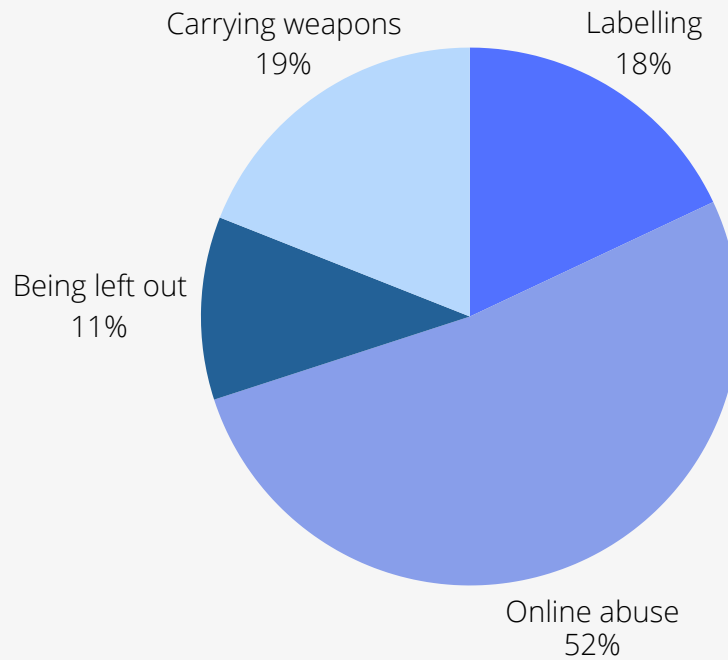
Potentially a combination of the above, but surely each case is different, and root causes can differ. It is important to recognise that the reasons for any person's violence can be different to another's and effectively find the cause and address this.

These are ACEs/traumatic events that impact on a child's likelihood to commit SYV. They can all be interlinked to increase a child's risk of committing SYV

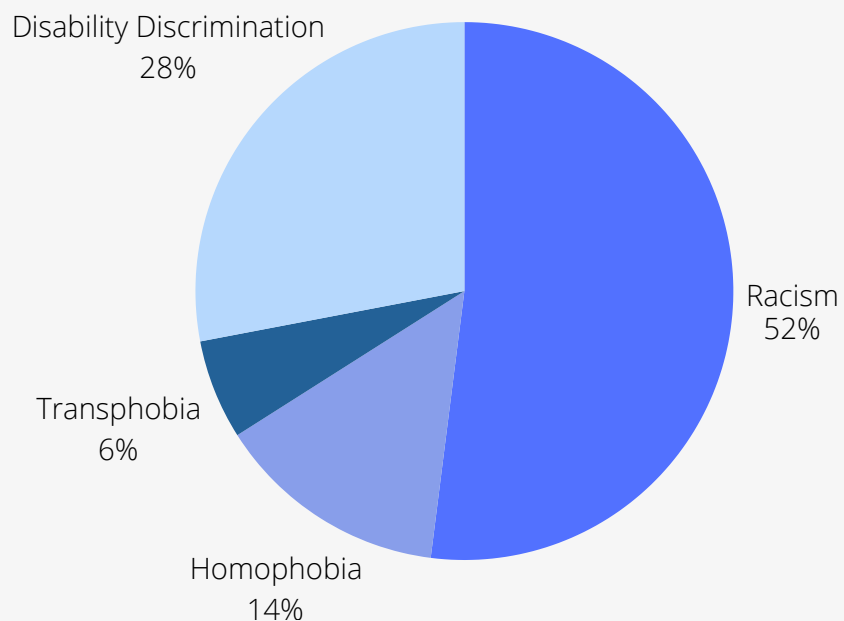
Disenfranchisement with society, poor boundaries and supervision.

PARENTS/CARERS

SESSION 1 OF MVP FOCUSES ON 'WEAPONS'. SELECT ONE OF THE TOPICS BELOW THAT YOU FEEL YOUR CHILD WOULD BENEFIT LEARNING ABOUT

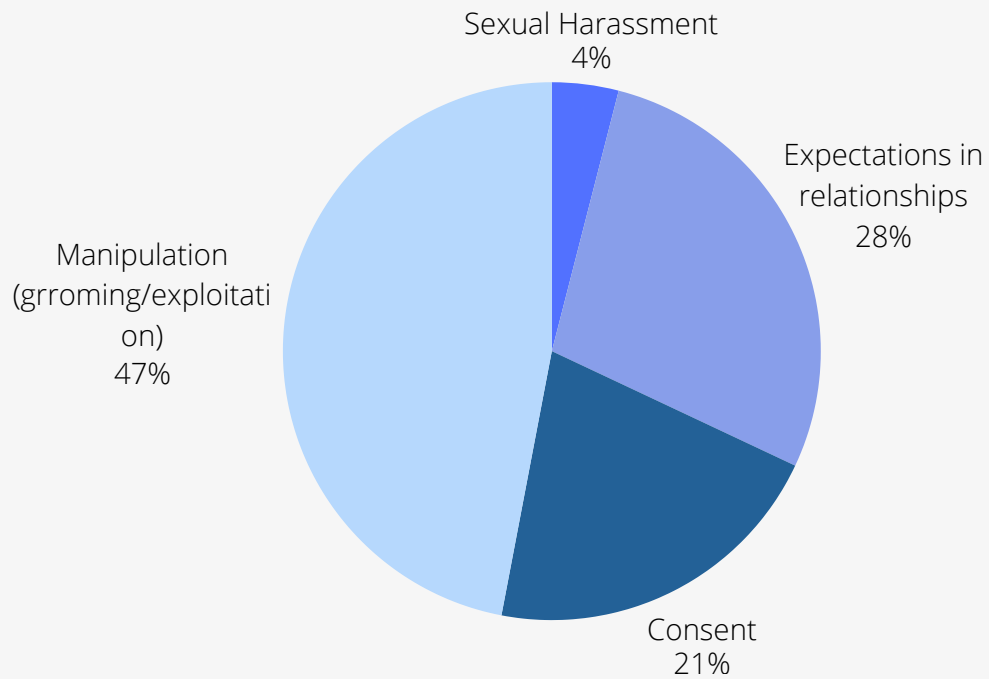


SESSION 2 OF MVP FOCUSES ON 'HATE CRIME'. SELECT ONE OF THE TOPICS BELOW THAT YOU FEEL YOUR CHILD WOULD BENEFIT LEARNING ABOUT



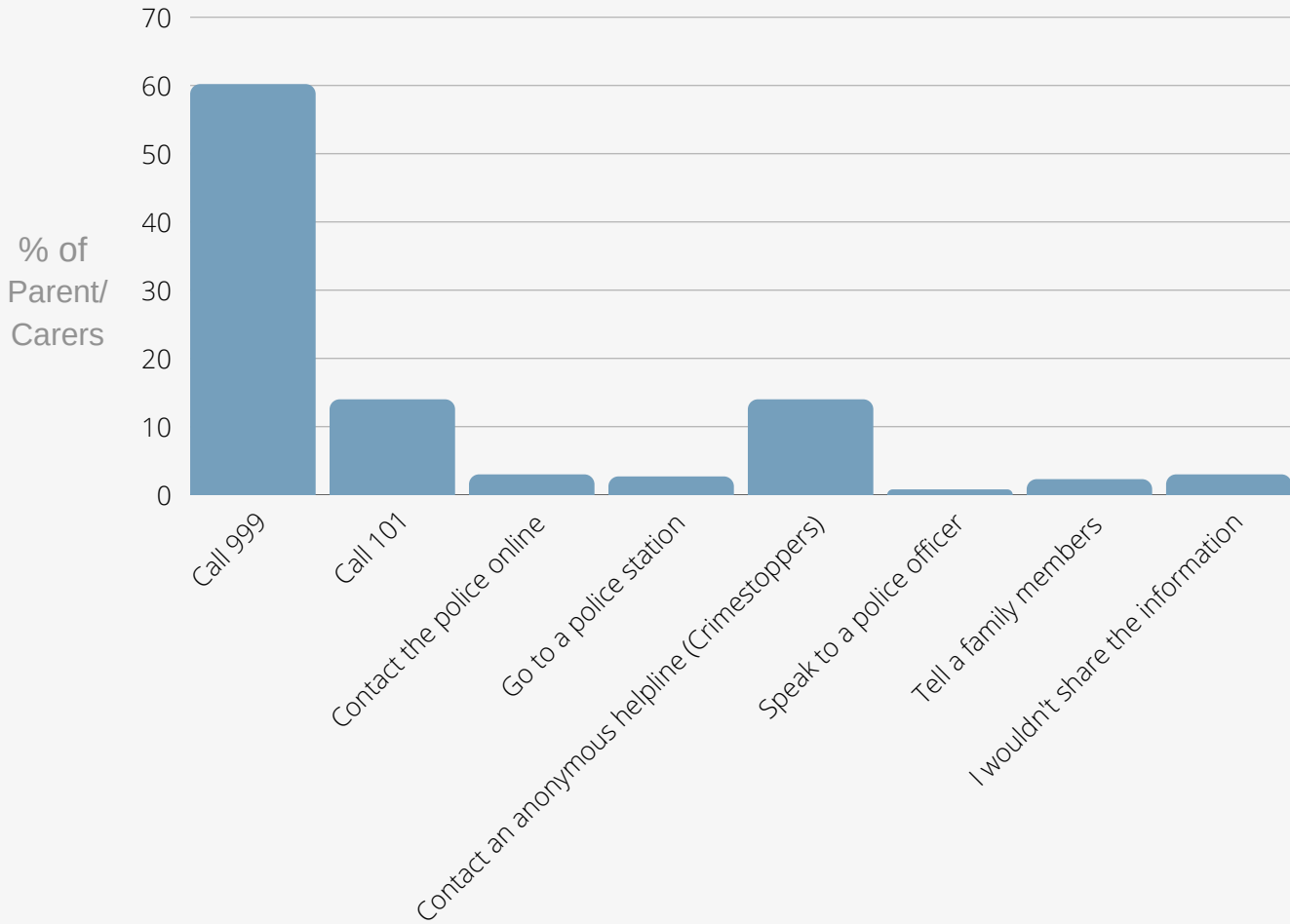
PARENTS/CARERS

SESSION 3 OF MVP FOCUSES ON 'RELATIONSHIPS'. SELECT ONE OF THE TOPICS BELOW THAT YOU FEEL YOUR CHILD WOULD BENEFIT FROM LEARNING ABOUT

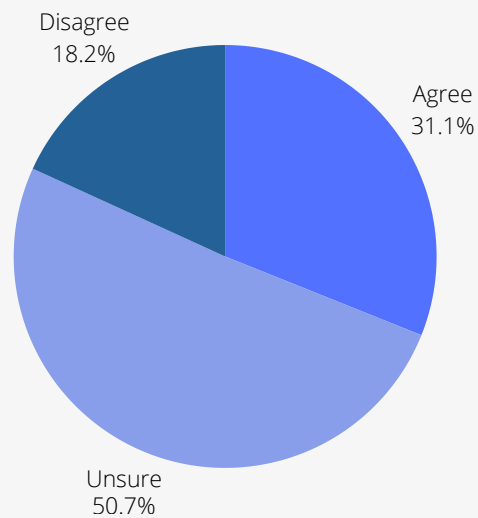


PARENTS/CARERS

IF YOU HAD INFORMATION TO SHARE ABOUT A CRIME OR ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR; HOW WOULD YOU MOST LIKELY SHARE THIS?



IS RACISM A BIG ISSUE IN LIVERPOOL?



PARENTS/CARERS

POLICING PARTNERS FUND ACTIVITIES THAT AIM TO DIVERT YOUNG PEOPLE AWAY FROM ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR, SUCH AS FOOTBALL, DRAMA, BOXING, AND ARTS PROJECTS. WHAT OTHER ACTIVITIES OR PROJECTS WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE MORE OF / INSTEAD?



Strong Demand for More Sports Variety

Many respondents want more sports options, especially beyond football and boxing. Suggestions include:

- Martial arts (karate)
- Netball, rugby, cricket, basketball
- Climbing, hiking, running/walking clubs
- Bike parks and skate parks
- Gym/fitness sessions
- Indoor free running

Sports are seen as a positive outlet for energy, confidence building, and community belonging.



High Interest in Youth Clubs & Safe Social Spaces

A major theme is the need for:

- Youth clubs (mentioned repeatedly)
- Safe places to hang out
- Social clubs, games clubs, youth centres
- Spaces with trained youth workers and positive role models

Parents emphasise that not all young people want structured activities—some just need safe, supervised places to be with friends.



Creative & Cultural Activities

Respondents suggested:

- Music sessions, DJing, concerts
- Drama, dance, arts
- Poetry, media projects, makeup/design
- Creative digital activities (e.g., coding)

These are seen as valuable outlets for expression and confidence building.

PARENTS/CARERS

POLICING PARTNERS FUND ACTIVITIES THAT AIM TO DIVERT YOUNG PEOPLE AWAY FROM ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR, SUCH AS FOOTBALL, DRAMA, BOXING, AND ARTS PROJECTS. WHAT OTHER ACTIVITIES OR PROJECTS WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE MORE OF / INSTEAD? CONT.



Outdoor, Nature & Adventure Activities

A number of parents want:

- Hiking days
- Camping, fishing
- Forest school-style activities
- Residential trips

These activities help build resilience, teamwork, and connection to nature.



Life Skills, Education & Wellbeing

Many respondents highlighted the need for:

- Life skills (budgeting, adult life prep)
- Social media education
- Wellbeing, mindfulness, holistic therapies
- Counselling for young people

Some also suggested parent-focused support, recognising family influence on behaviour.



Community Involvement & Volunteering

Several responses emphasised:

- Helping in the community (gardens, elderly support)
- Intergenerational volunteering
- Community clean-up projects
- Duke of Edinburgh-style programmes

These activities help build pride, responsibility, and connection.



School-Based or School-Time Activities

A few parents want:

- More activities delivered in school hours
- More engagement from police/youth workers in schools

PARENTS/CARERS

POLICING PARTNERS FUND ACTIVITIES THAT AIM TO DIVERT YOUNG PEOPLE AWAY FROM ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR, SUCH AS FOOTBALL, DRAMA, BOXING, AND ARTS PROJECTS. WHAT OTHER ACTIVITIES OR PROJECTS WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE MORE OF / INSTEAD? CONT.



Better Promotion of Existing Activities

Some respondents said they were not aware of any current funded activities, suggesting:

- Better advertising
- More visibility in schools and communities



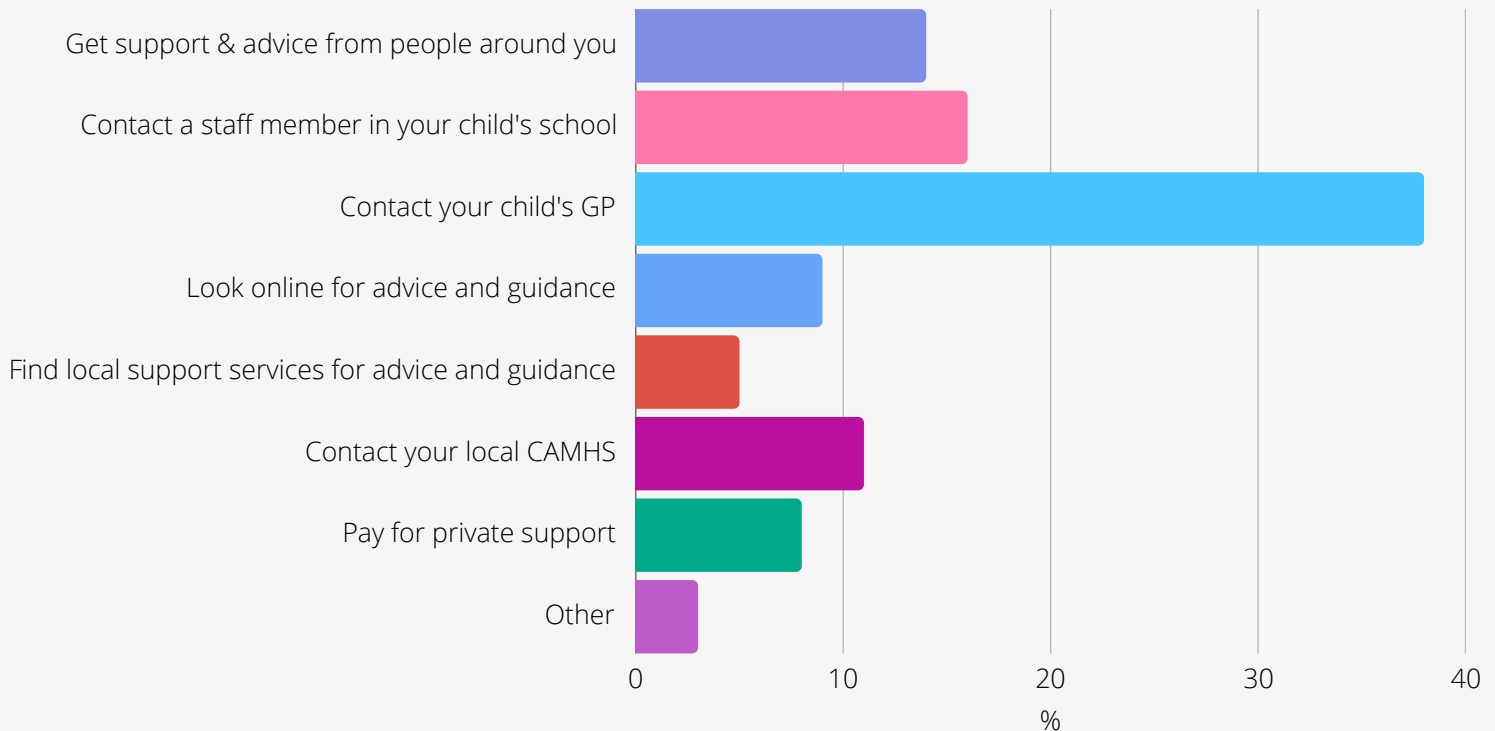
SEND-Friendly Activities

A small but important theme:

- More accessible activities for SEND young people
- More local options

PARENTS/CARERS

IF YOUR CHILD/CHILDREN WERE DISPLAYING EARLY SIGNS OF MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS, WHAT WOULD YOU MOST LIKELY DO?



Other includes:

I would try to understand what was happening with my son first, I would help him and if that didn't work I would seek therapy for him.

My eldest daughter did have mental health problems, I contacted school and my GP and she was referred to YPAS.

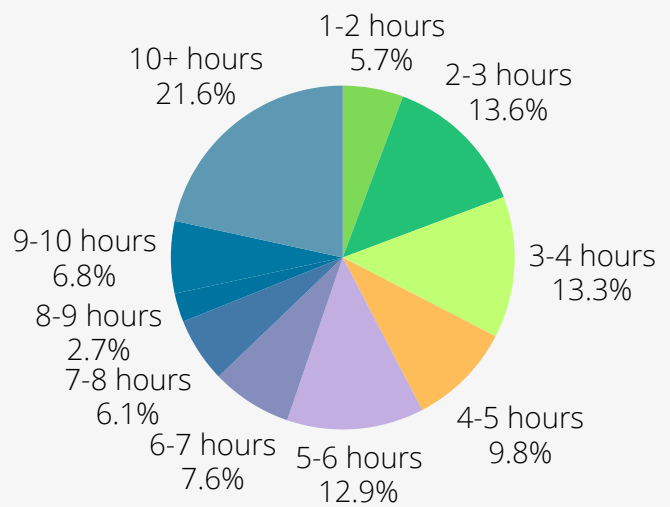
Speak to my child and see what help they would like. Failing that, make an appointment.

Talk to my child to understand if the mental health was internal or external. Would need to distinguish between anxiety, stress, worry brought on by external factors like exams, bullying, separation, which kids can get through with support or whether it was more internal chemical imbalance, clinical depression that would require clinical intervention, medication or treatment. When we discuss mental health we do not distinguish to help our children,

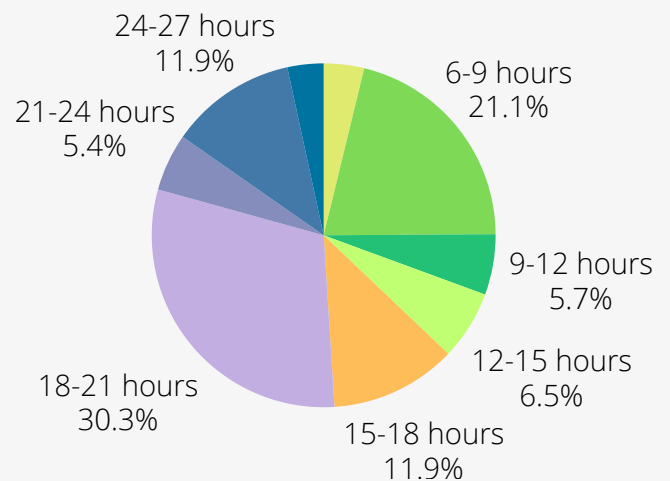
Tried reaching out to the GP, and the response was to speak to the school. I will record concerns and then speak to the school.

PARENTS/CARERS

HOW MUCH SCREEN TIME HAVE YOU AVERAGED IN THE PAST WEEK?



HOW MUCH SLEEP HAVE YOU AVERAGED IN THE LAST 3 DAYS?



PARENTS/CARERS

THINKING ABOUT YOUR LOCAL AREA/ENVIRONMENT, WHAT DO YOU FEEL ARE THE MAIN THINGS THAT HELP OR HARM PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH?



What Helps Mental Health

- Green and outdoor spaces – including parks, beaches, woods and open spaces for walking, play and exercise. Clean, safe and well-maintained environments were seen as particularly important.
- A strong sense of community – community spirit, belonging, good neighbours, faith groups and community activities were commonly reported as protective factors.
- Supportive relationships – family, friends, schools and trusted adults were viewed as central to children's wellbeing, particularly when young people feel listened to and understood.
- Activities and opportunities – sports, youth clubs, extracurricular activities, hobbies and community projects that offer structure, purpose and social connection.
- Access to services and support – schools, NHS services, charities, youth hubs and early access to appropriate support were highlighted as important.
- Feeling safe – safe neighbourhoods, safe open spaces and positive role models were repeatedly linked to better mental health outcomes.



What Harms Mental Health

- Social media and screen use – unrealistic expectations, online bullying, harmful content, comparison culture and excessive screen time were the most frequently cited issues.
- Crime, antisocial behaviour and gangs – concerns around violence, knife crime, drug use, intimidation and feeling unsafe in local areas.
- Poverty and inequality – cost-of-living pressures, lack of opportunities, unemployment and limited access to affordable activities.
- Isolation and lack of community connection – loneliness, lack of safe spaces for teenagers, and limited youth provision.
- Lack of resources and delayed access to support – insufficient mental health services, funding pressures and long waits for help.
- Bullying and discrimination – including racism, online abuse and peer pressure.
- Poor environments – litter, derelict or neglected spaces, noise and pollution contributing to feelings of stress and low wellbeing.

PARENTS/CARERS

DO YOU HAVE ANY ADDITIONAL FEEDBACK, SUGGESTIONS OR COMMENTS TO MAKE?

Also feel in the current climate of Andrew Tate that misogyny should have a high status in a boys' school. Dangerous messages are also in mainstream from Charlie Kirk et al. now regarding a woman's place, etc., lots of toxic masculinity and public expectations for boys to feel they have to live up to.

No just that most of the children will be introduced to these behaviours and crimes but most parents don't always take action in safeguarding them I take my sons phone every night and check it I also have locks for certain media apps and I also have his phone tracked

Parents are the ones who need to have these classes

This course ought to be compulsory in schools to raise awareness among children about how their behaviour and actions can impact others.

Young people are under a lot of pressure and need to have opportunities in school to grow as individuals and to express their personalities. As a parent of a young person who displayed challenging behaviour I felt he needed all my love and care and to understand what life means

Need to discuss a wide range of things, telling children to speak with parents school or friends if they are feeling low and encourage friends to speak up about their friends to an adult if their friend is low or being bullied so people can help. Manipulative and coercive behaviour in relationships / friendships is not ok. Violence and being pressured, bullying, stealing, weapons, drug and drink. Neurodivergance, not everyone looks like they have adhd autism or similar, but their brains are wired differently and thats ok, but be kind.

PARENTS/CARERS

DO YOU HAVE ANY ADDITIONAL FEEDBACK, SUGGESTIONS OR COMMENTS TO MAKE?

As a mother of daughters in the Merseyside area and working with it, VAWG, building resilience for young women and healthy relationships. For young men, healthy relationships and understanding coercive behaviours which can impact many areas for young men and women. Priority for me is understanding the importance of kindness but learning to be fair but firm.

Racism did not used to be a significant issue in Liverpool but I feel is becoming more because people are being fed a narrative that they are not questioning, and often do not understand the complexities of the issues.

I feel that negative experiences during childhood may contribute to mental health issues during childhood and beyond. This may lead to negative behaviour and violence.

Hopefully the training is being delivered across the UK. I can't imagine the training will make a massive difference. Once a year training is not enough it needs to be taught as part of school curriculum . Police need stronger powers. Schools need stronger powers. Schools need more training on autism, adhd and other behaviour issues. Youth know exactly what they can get away with and will push it to the limit. We are living in very sad times and if it ever improves, it will take many many years.

Merseyside Youth Association's

Mentors in Violence Prevention



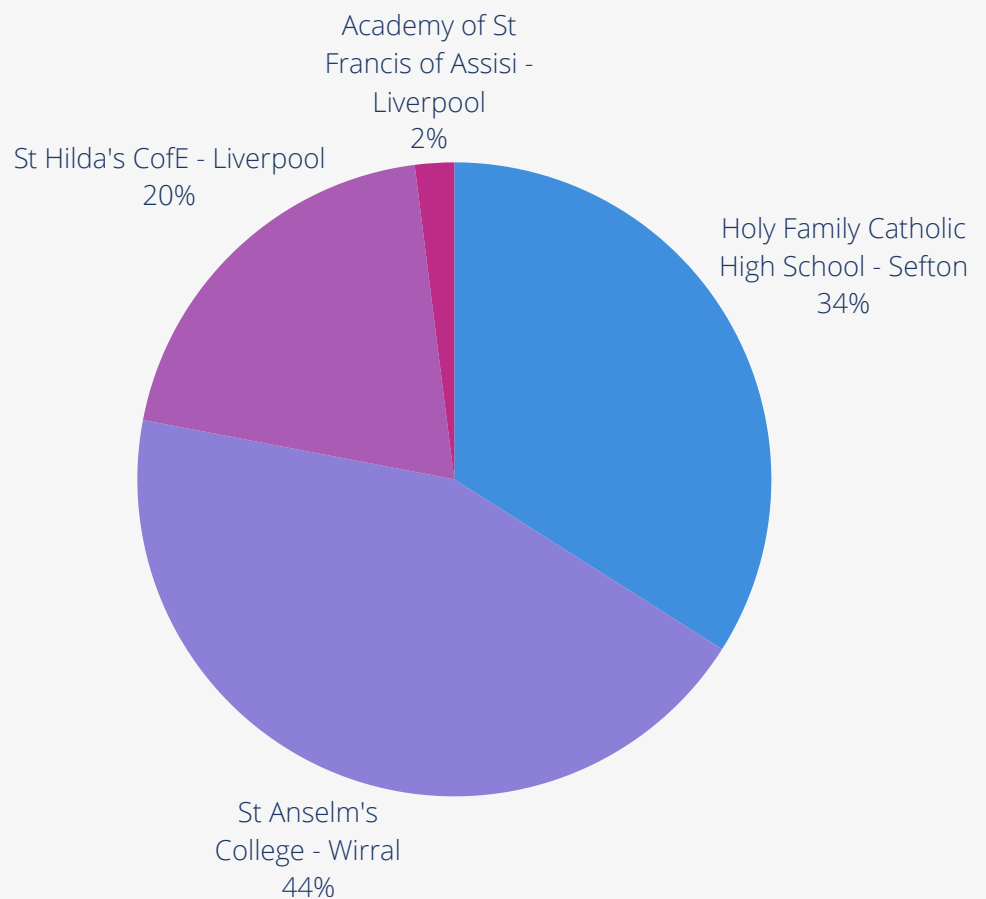
SCHOOL WORKFORCE SURVEY RESULTS



SCHOOL STAFF

SCHOOLS TAKING PART IN THE SURVEY

50 responses

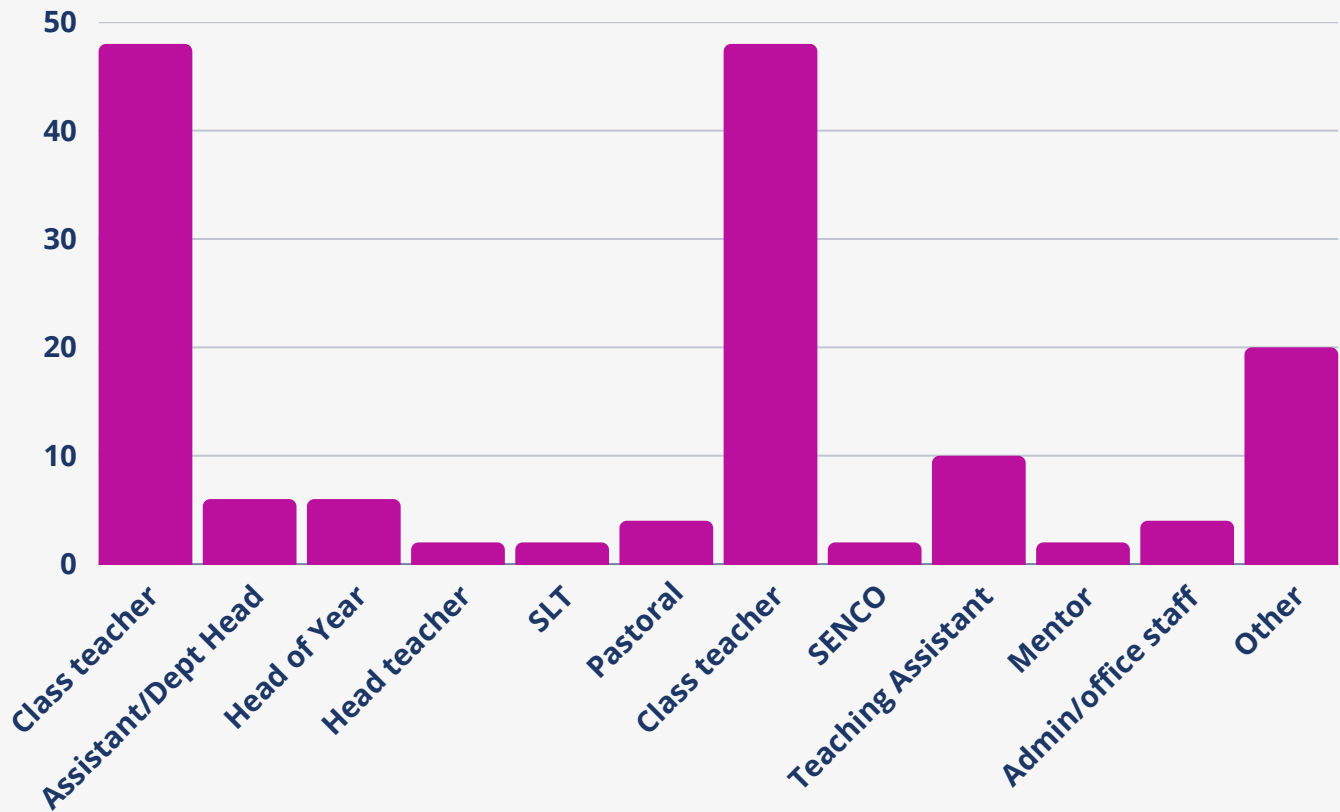


43 staff

- Exploring violence through a gendered lens.
- Developing leadership.
- Adopting a bystander approach.
- Recognising the scope of violent behaviour.
- Challenge victim-blaming.

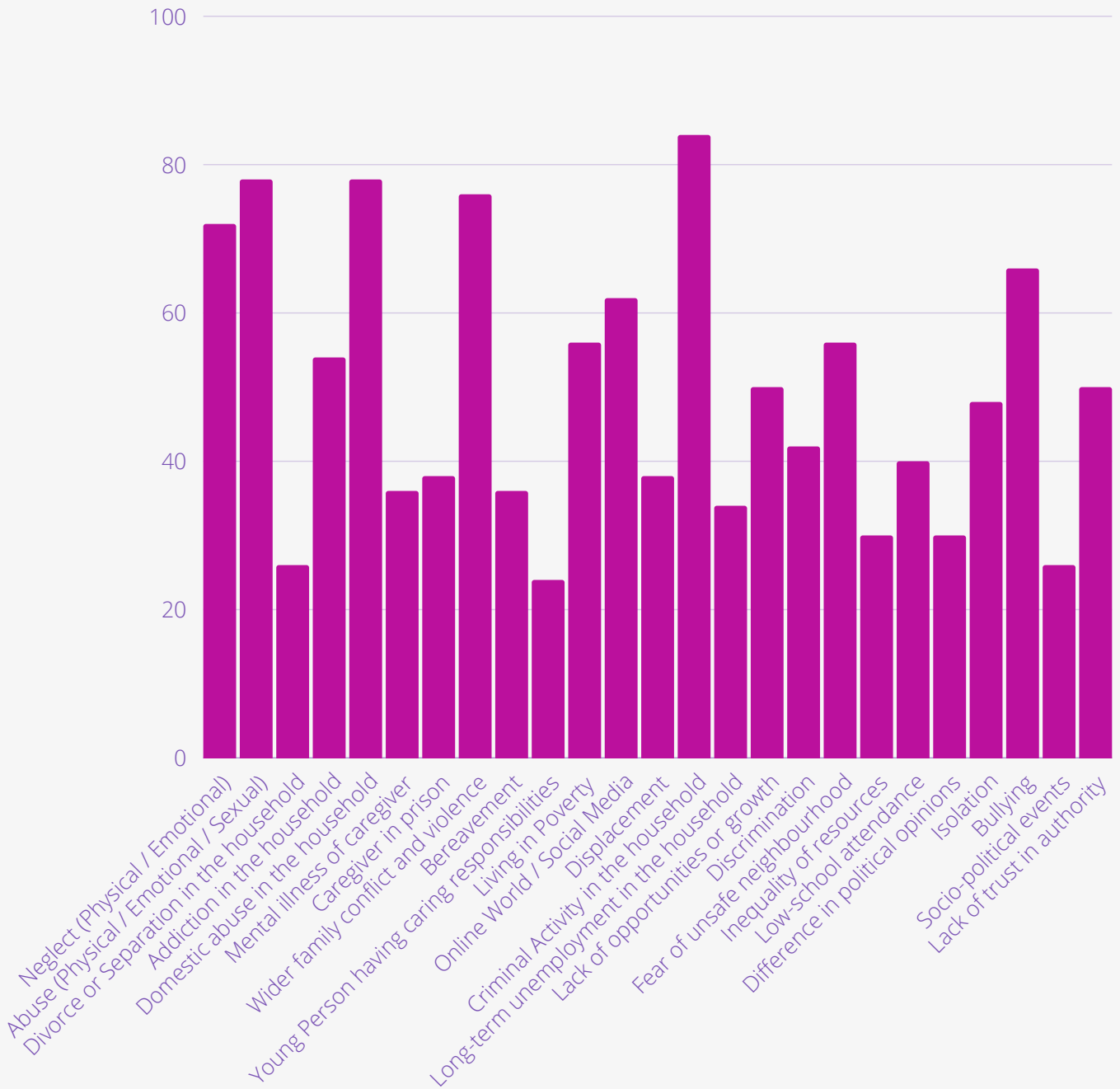
SCHOOL STAFF

ROLES OF STAFF TAKING PART IN THE SURVEY



SCHOOL STAFF

WHAT DO YOU THINK THE ROOT CAUSES OF YOUTH VIOLENCE ARE?

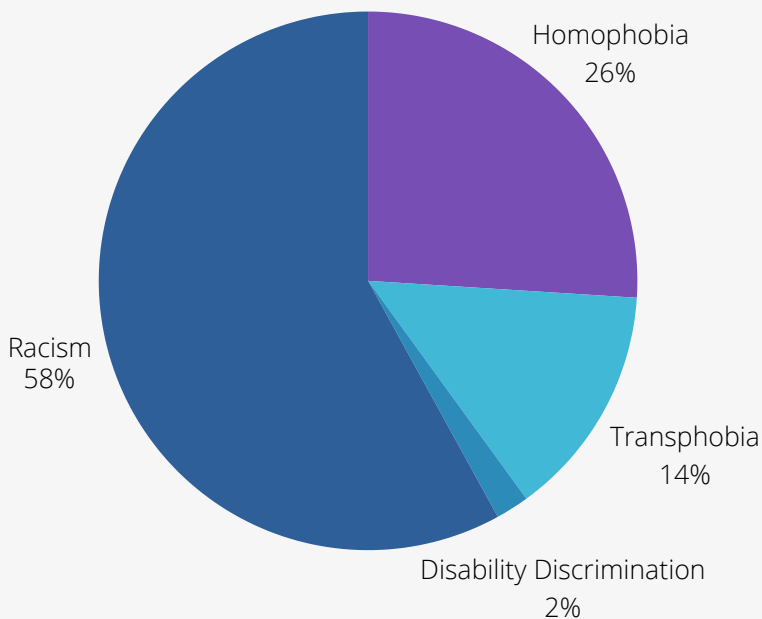
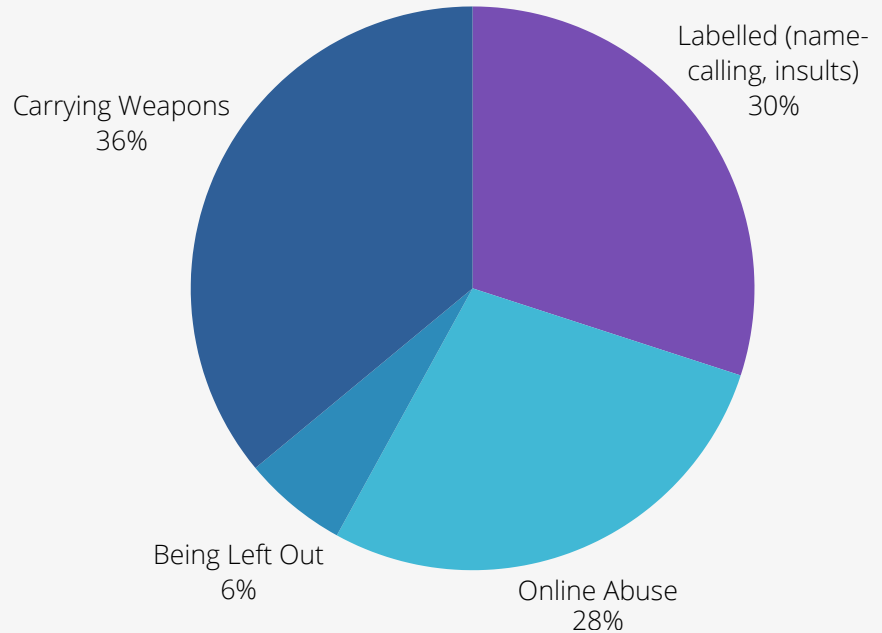


OTHER INCLUDES:

- No hands-on courses for young lads from a young age.
- Normalisation of violence in online games and access to violence online.

SCHOOL STAFF

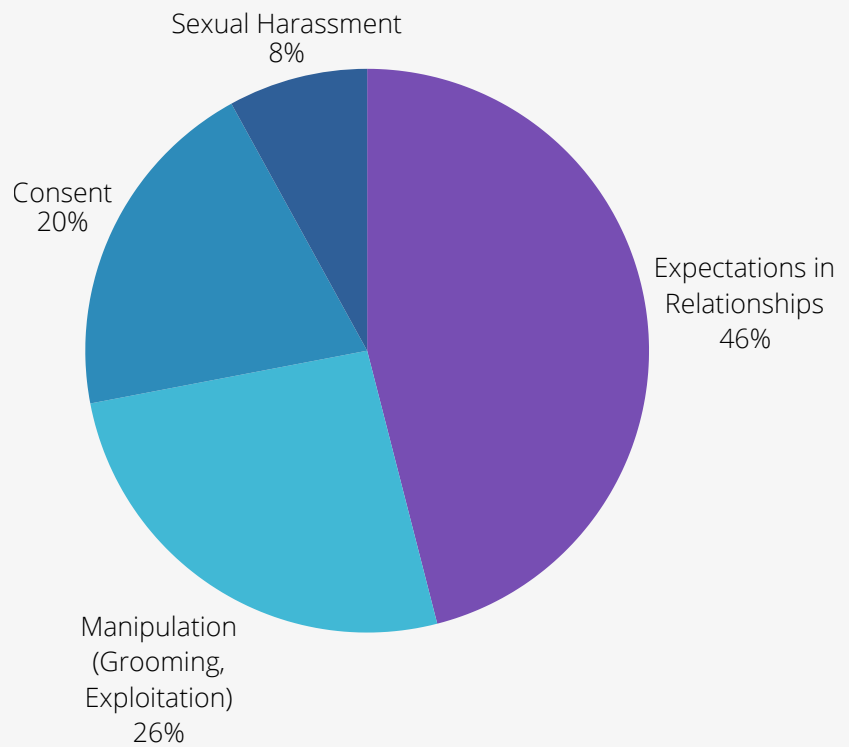
SESSION 1 OF MVP FOCUSES ON 'WEAPONS'. SELECT ONE OF THE TOPICS BELOW THAT YOU FEEL YOUR STUDENTS WOULD BENEFIT LEARNING ABOUT



SESSION 2 OF MVP FOCUSES ON 'HATE CRIME'. SELECT ONE OF THE TOPICS BELOW THAT YOU FEEL YOUR STUDENTS WOULD BENEFIT LEARNING ABOUT

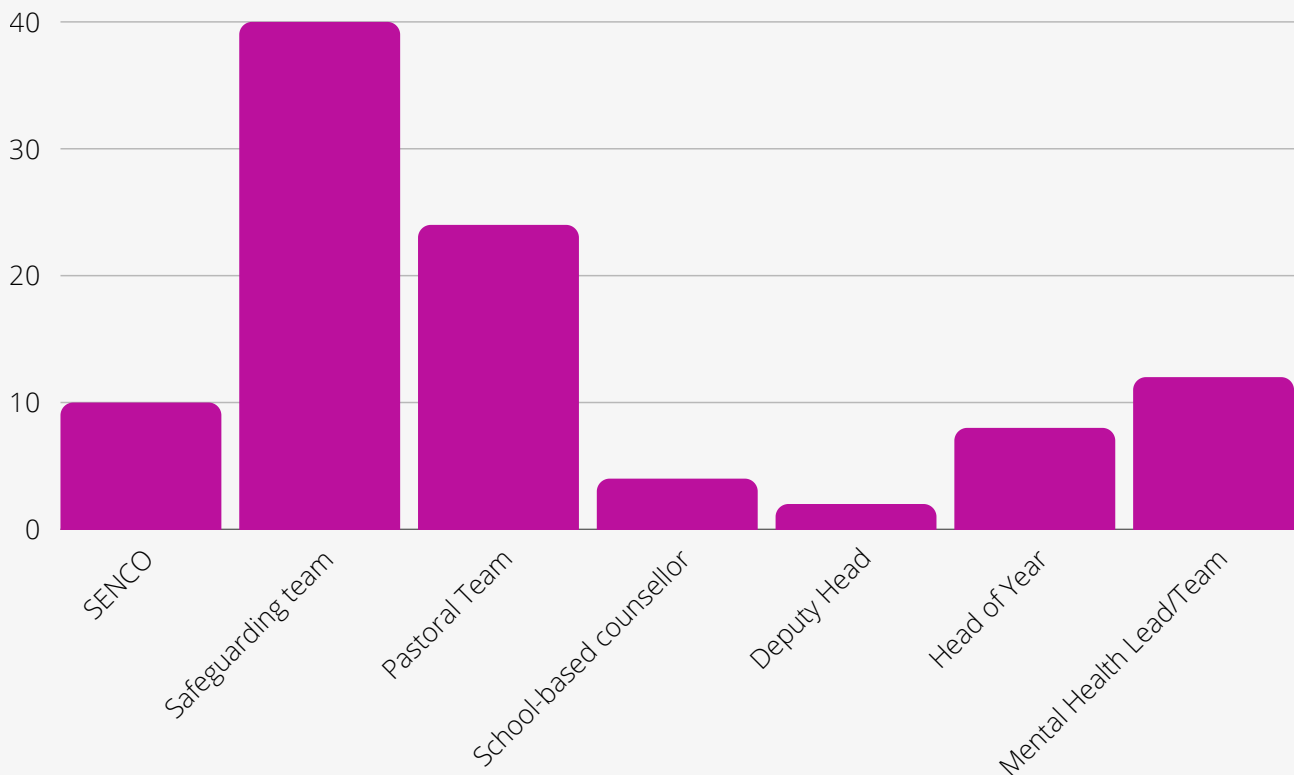
SCHOOL STAFF

SESSION 3 OF MVP
FOCUSES ON
'RELATIONSHIPS'.
SELECT ONE OF THE
TOPICS BELOW THAT
YOU FEEL YOUR
STUDENTS WOULD
BENEFIT LEARNING
ABOUT



SCHOOL STAFF

IF ONE OF YOUR STUDENTS WERE DISPLAYING EARLY SIGNS OF MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS, WHO IN YOUR SCHOOL WOULD THEY MOST LIKELY BE SIGNPOSTED OR REFERRED TO?



SCHOOL STAFF

THINKING ABOUT YOUR LOCAL AREA/ENVIRONMENT, WHAT DO YOU FEEL ARE THE MAIN THINGS THAT HELP OR HARM PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH?



What Helps Mental Health

- Safe, inclusive spaces and youth provision – youth centres, community hubs, after-school clubs and informal spaces where young people can socialise safely without pressure to participate in structured activities.
- Creative and expressive outlets – music, dance, drama, digital media, arts-based activities and other creative approaches that allow self-expression and engagement, particularly for young people who may not engage in sport.
- Outdoor and nature-based activities – forest schools, outdoor learning, fishing, walking and green spaces that promote calm, connection and purpose.
- Physical activity and wellbeing activities – sports, fitness, team-building and holistic approaches such as mindfulness and therapeutic support.
- Strong relationships and communication – trusted adults, opportunities to talk, supportive families and schools, and environments where young people feel listened to.
- Access to timely support – youth services, counselling, school pastoral teams, health services and early intervention before needs escalate.
- Routine, stability and purpose – education, employment opportunities, skill-building and activities that provide structure and aspiration.



What Harms Mental Health

- Social media and excessive screen use – online abuse, unrealistic expectations, comparison, exposure to harmful or age-inappropriate content and excessive time online.
- Crime, gangs and antisocial behaviour – knife crime, drug use, intimidation, poor policing visibility and young people feeling unsafe in their communities.
- Poverty and inequality – lack of opportunities, cost-of-living pressures, unemployment and limited access to affordable activities.
- Lack of youth provision and resources – insufficient safe spaces, limited activities for teenagers and long waits for mental health support due to funding pressures.
- Isolation and disconnection – loneliness, lack of community cohesion, limited opportunities to socialise and a sense that young people are not being taken seriously.
- Bullying, discrimination and hateful behaviour – both online and offline, including racism and other forms of marginalisation.
- Poor physical environments – neglected, vandalised or unsafe spaces that increase stress and reduce pride in local areas.

Merseyside Youth Association's

Mentors in Violence Prevention



IMPACT OF THE MENTORS' JOURNEYS



MENTOR POPULATION

Liverpool

Cardinal Heenan Catholic High School
 North Liverpool Academy
 Notre Dame Catholic College
 St Hilda's CE High School
 St Julie's Catholic High School
 St Margaret's Academy
 The Academy of St Francis of Assisi
 The Belvedere Academy
 The Blue Coat School

Knowsley

All Saints Catholic High School
 Kirkby High School

Wirral

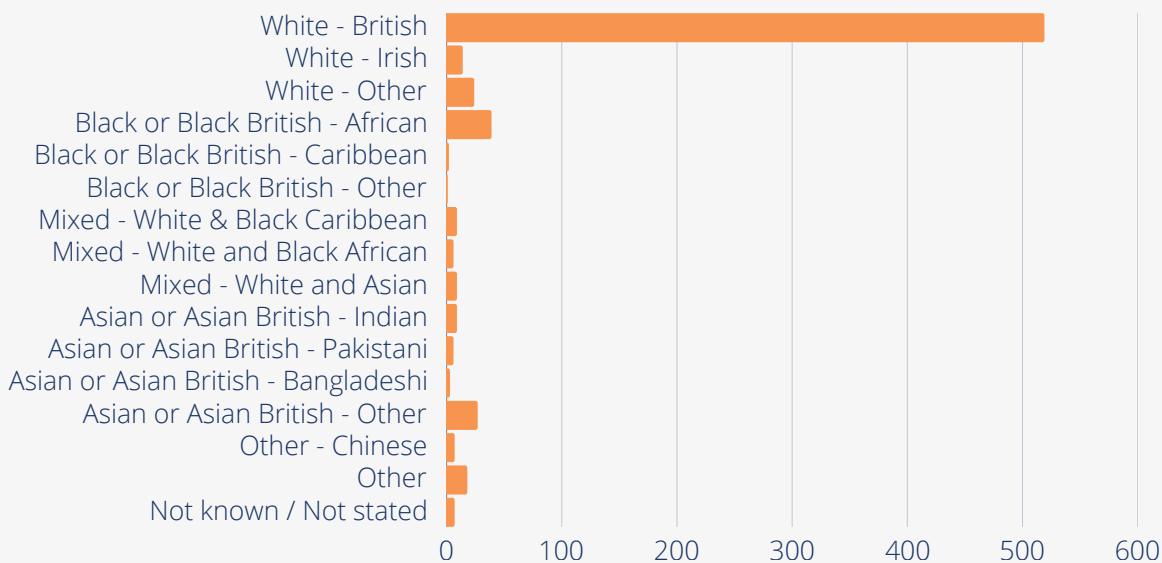
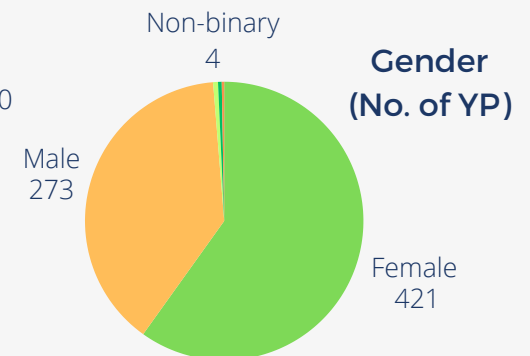
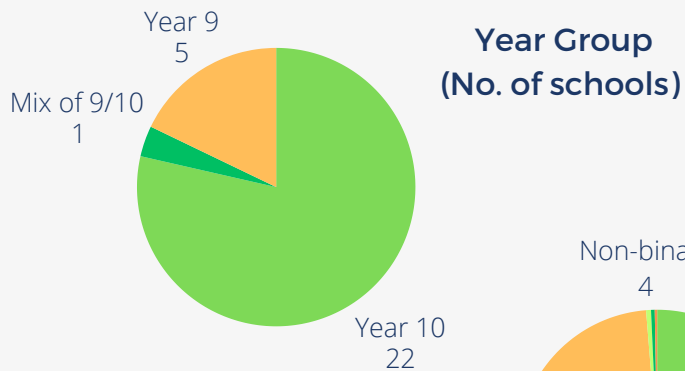
Calday Grange Grammar School
 Co-op Academy Bebington
 Pensby High School
 Ridgeway High School
 St Anselm's College
 The Oldershaw School
 Weatherhead High School
 Woodchurch High School

Sefton

Christ the King Catholic High School
 Greenbank High School
 Hillside High School
 Holy Family Catholic High School
 Litherland High School
 Meols Cop High School
 Range High School

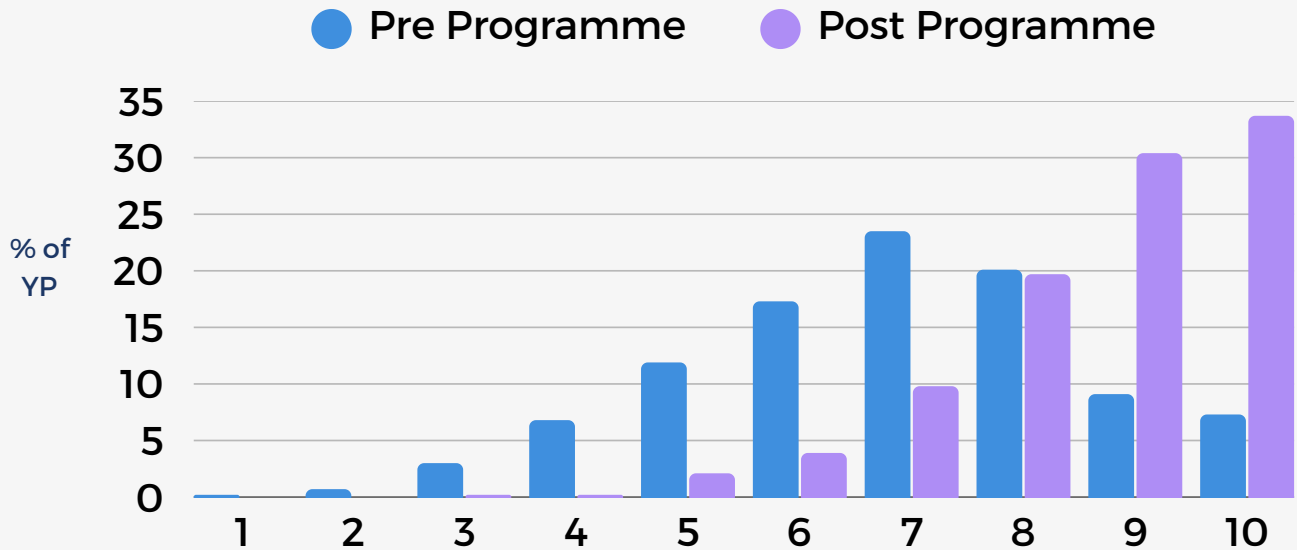
St Helens

De La Salle School
 Hope Academy

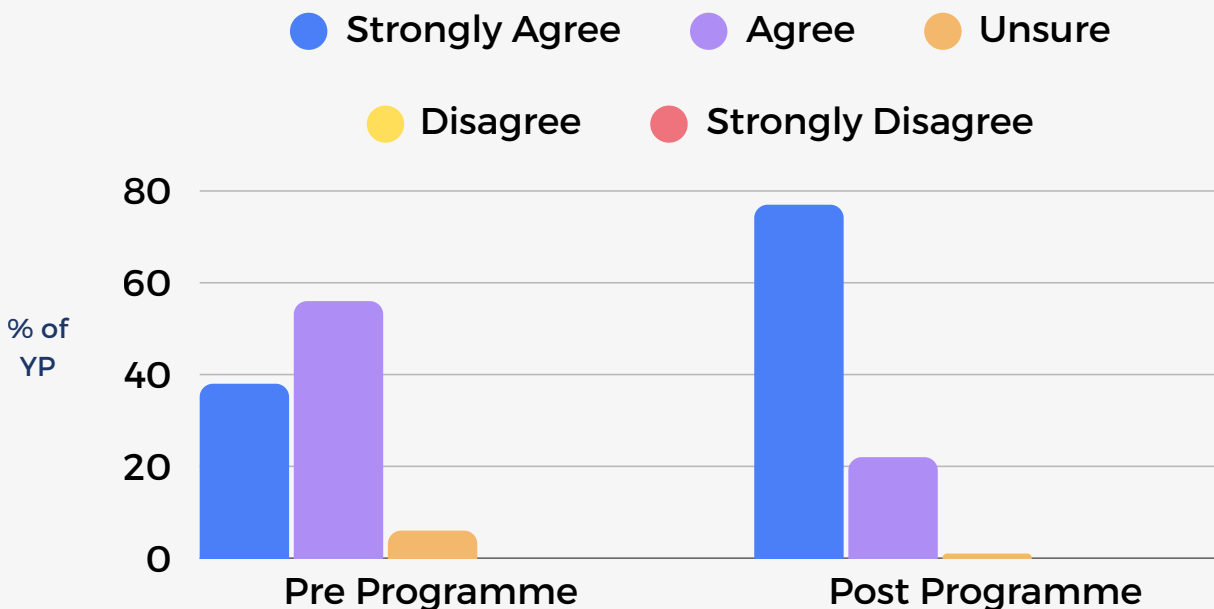


I FEEL I HAVE THE SKILLS, CONFIDENCE AND KNOWLEDGE TO INFORM MY PEERS OF HOW TO INTERVENE IN A PROBLEMATIC SITUATION

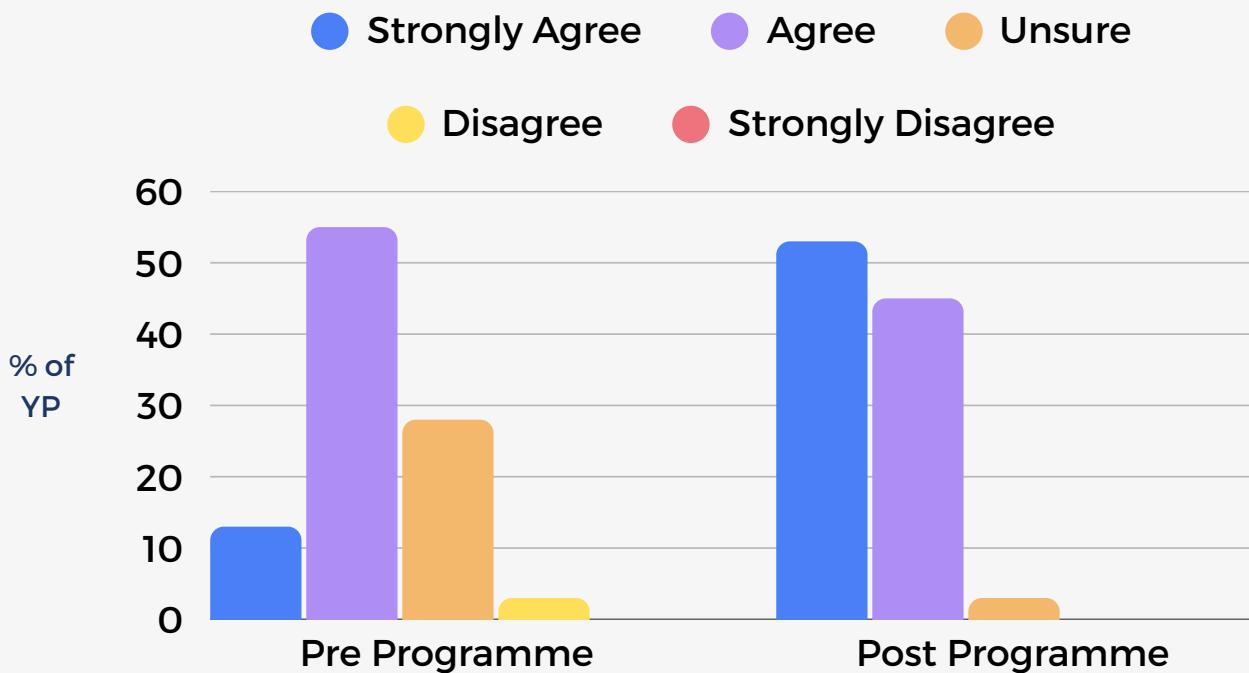
(1 = no skills, confidence or knowledge, 10 = very skilled, confident and knowledgeable)



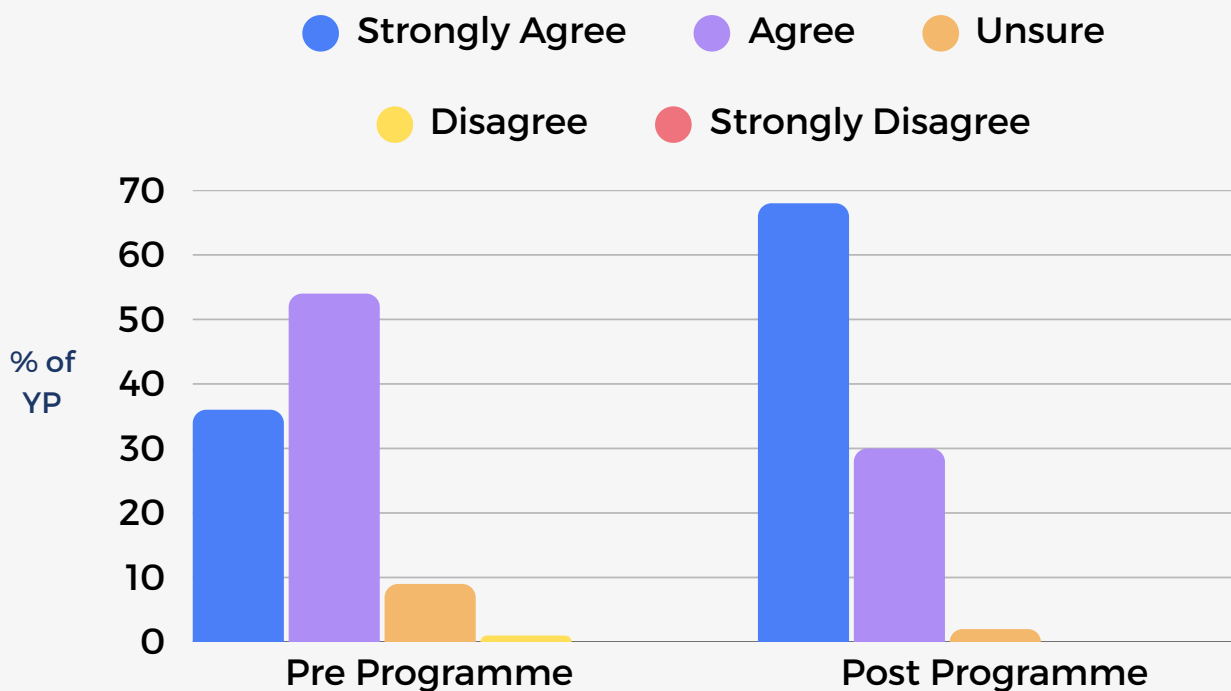
I UNDERSTAND HOW GENDER STEREOTYPES CAN CONTRIBUTE TO VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS



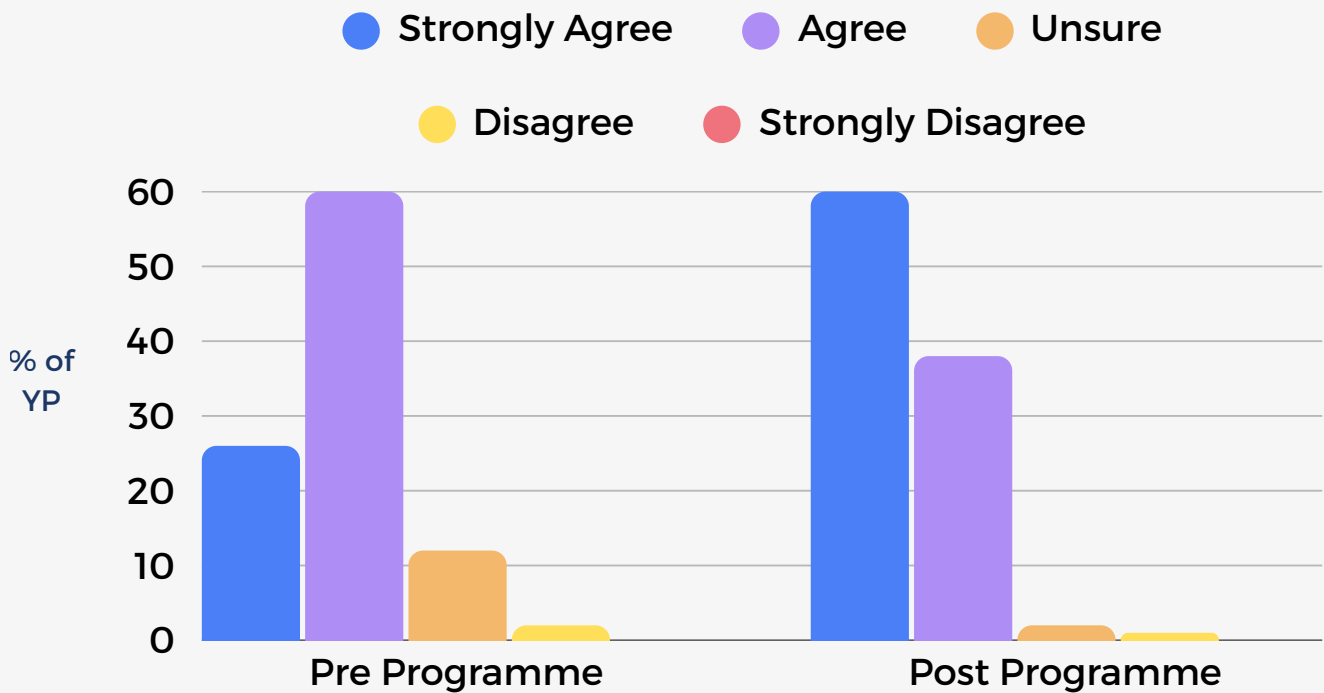
I FEEL I HAVE THE SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE AND CONFIDENCE TO INTERVENE IF I SAY / HEARD / KNEW ABOUT AN INCIDENT OF VIOLENCE



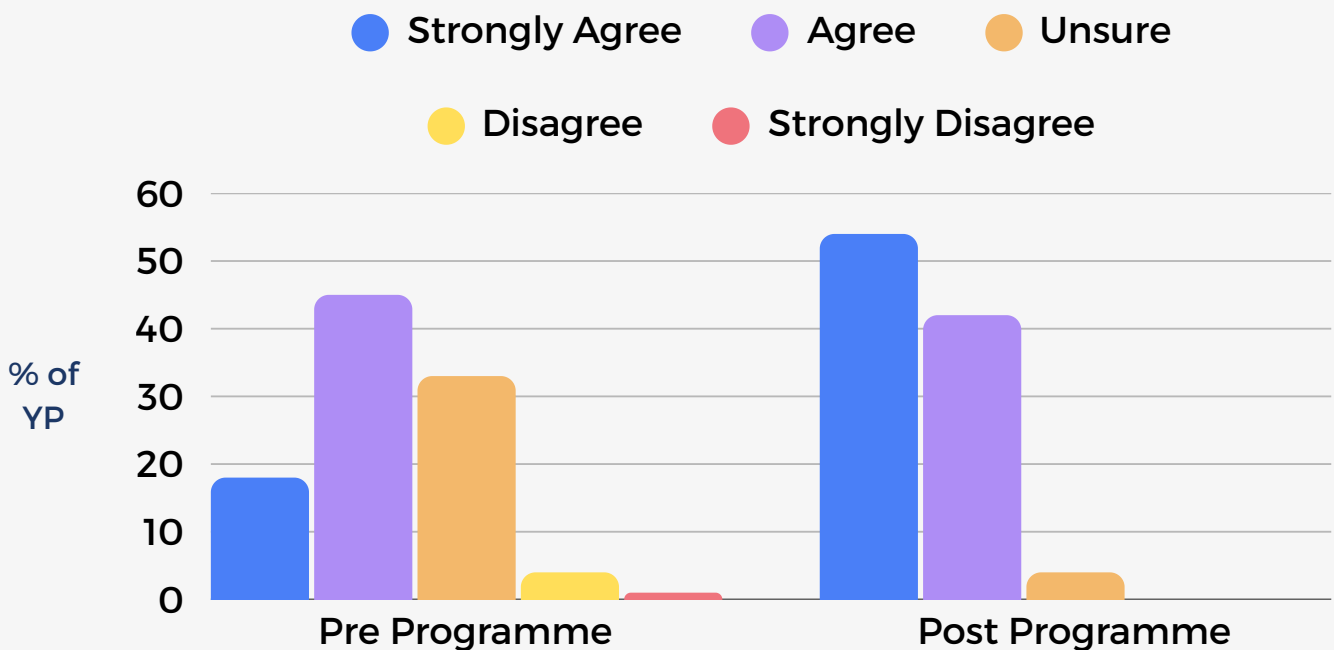
I CAN RECOGNISE HEALTHY AND UNHEALTHY BEHAVIOURS IN MY RELATIONSHIPS



I UNDERSTAND HOW MY ATTITUDES AND BELIEFS CAN BE SHAPED BY OTHERS



I KNOW WHERE TO SIGNPOST MYSELF OR OTHERS IF THEY NEED HELP



WHAT DID YOU LIKE ABOUT THE MVP MENTOR TRAINING?

Interactive Activities & Games

Participants repeatedly said they enjoyed:

Games, activities, ADUs, practical tasks

Moving around, teamwork, brain breaks

Raps, sweets, discussions

Social Benefits

Young people enjoyed:

Doing the programme with friends

Meeting new people

Teamwork

"The friends I made along the way"

Learning New Things

Young people frequently said they enjoyed:

Learning deeply about topics

Learning new skills

Understanding sensitive issues (e.g., stereotypes, respect, victim-blaming)

Gaining confidence to help others

Feeling Included, Safe & Able to share opinions

Many participants highlighted:

Being able to speak their mind

Feeling comfortable

Inclusivity

Everyone having a chance to speak

Confidence building

Participants said they gained:

Confidence in public speaking

Confidence in intervening

Confidence in helping others

Confidence to be role models

WHAT DID YOU DISLIKE ABOUT MVP MENTOR TRAINING? WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED?

Repetition of Activities

Some mentioned repeating activities, especially “ADU’s”.

Sitting Too Long / Being Stuck in One Room

A few said they didn’t like being “sat down for too long”.
One disliked being “stuck in the same classroom all day”.

Lack of Interactivity at the End of Day 1

One student wished the end of the first day was “more interactive”.

Ending Early

One comment noted the session ended early because of lessons.

WHAT IS YOUR MOST MEMORABLE MVP MOMENT?

Using data gathered at MVP Graduation 2026, here are the most insightful, meaningful and powerful moments shared by MVP Mentors.



Seeing Younger Students Grow, Trust Them & Open Up

“Watching the children become more comfortable speaking to us about their problems and issues.”

“When the year 7s trusted me.”

“Helping a year 7 with a personal problem.”

Seeing younger years adapt and learn to be better versions of themselves.”

“Knowing younger years now have someone they can go to if they need help.”



Recognising Their Own Influence as Role Models

“The year 7 pupils said, ‘Can you do more sessions please?’”

“When one of the children repeated something I taught them three lessons later – it proved they’d truly listened.”

“Being able to influence my younger peers and mentor them.”



Growth in Confidence & Leadership

“My first MVP session – I spoke out loud for the first time.”

“It helped my confidence for when I am older.”

“Standing up in front of a class and teaching them skills we learnt.”

“I learned a lot and realised what we were going to teach.”



Realisation of How Much Younger Students Need Guidance

“Helping younger years understand social issues and accept diversity.”

“Teaching students things that aren’t really talked about.”

“Showing real-life examples to understand the impact of harm.”



Recognition of Their Growth as a Cohort / Team

“When we discussed our group deal, it shaped how prepared we were.”

“Working together as a team to achieve graduation.”

WHAT IS YOUR MOST MEMORABLE MVP MOMENT? CONT.



Meaningful Emotional Moments

“A girl in the class gave us all stickers.”

“My form was so happy to see us – that made my day every time.”

“It was memorable because everyone was kind and respectful to me and my partner.”

“When younger pupils asked really good questions and engaged meaningfully.”



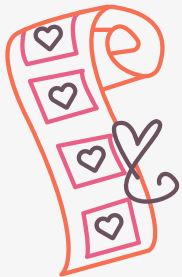
Values-Based Insights

“Helping kids understand why it’s not good to be a bystander.”

“Seeing year 8s confused about ADU and discussing why carrying weapons ‘for self-defence’ is not okay.”

“Understanding the importance of the topics we discussed and how they apply to daily life.”

Summary of Memorable Moments



Teaching and working with younger years

Games, brain breaks and interactive activities

Meeting new people and building friendships

Mentor Training Days

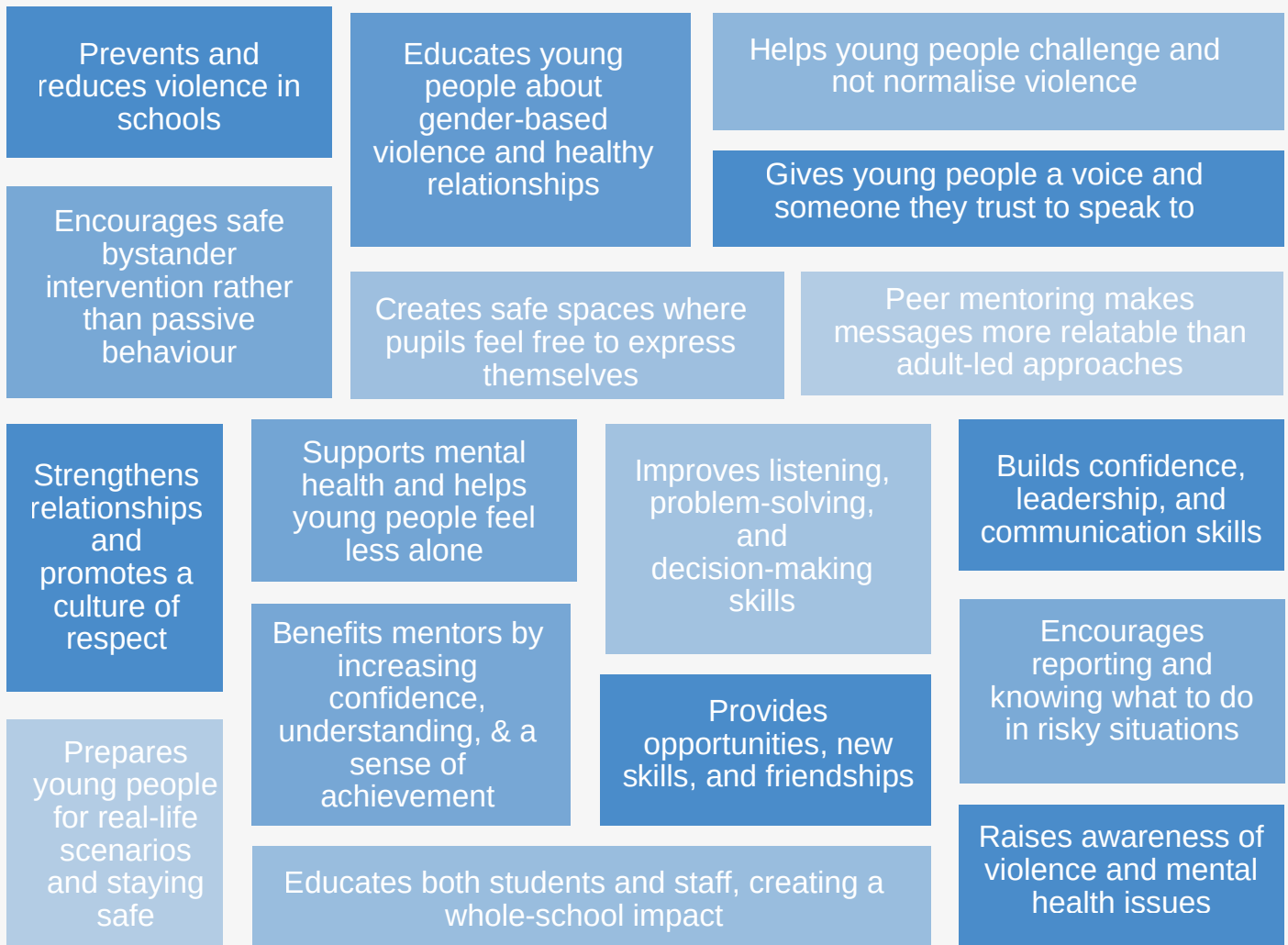
Confidence-building activities

Funny / unexpected moments

Graduation Celebrations

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THE MVP PROGRAMME/VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAMMES IN SCHOOL?

Summarised using feedback gathered from Mentors at MVP Graduation 2026.



CASE STUDY - ST ANSELM'S COLLEGE

As part of our reflection process, we also offer schools the opportunity for school-based reflection sessions to enhance learning and development of the programme in their school. Thank you to St Anselm's College for this contribution.

What are some of the key messages you learnt during the MVP programme?

Violence Prevention How to project myself and speak out in front of others Kitty's story

Interesting case studies Respect Bystander options

Victim blaming Severity of knife crime Where violence stems from

Gender stereotypes How to approach difficult situations Consent

What was your favourite part of the MVP programme?

The games and learning how to Mentor Training Lesson delivery

Teaching children Graduation Speaking in front of my peers to teach them

What could be improved about the programme?

- ▶ More training (maybe an extra day) just so future MVP Mentors are fully confident in the topics and you don't have to rush
- ▶ More sessions
- ▶ The year 8's behaviour - need more teacher support
- ▶ More in depth case studies to learn more
- ▶ More knowledge / topics to deliver
- ▶ Longer time period
- ▶ More education on sexuality
- ▶ Listening and concentration of others

CASE STUDY - ST ANSELM'S COLLEGE CONT.

Was there anything during MVP that made you think differently?

It's not always the victim's fault

The stories of victims and how they feel

Bystander options

How hurtful blaming someone for something is

Understanding gender stereotypes

How much some stuff actually happens and how it affects people

What impact do you think MVP has had on your school and the Mentees?

"Teaches people about what to do to stop violence"

"I believe the mentees had a positive impact learning about MVP"

"It improves their knowledge of mature topics"

"It helped teach younger students serious matters from students which they may find more relatable"

"How to stop any act of violence from escalating"

"I think it made them think more about how to speak out"

"It helps them understand the world around them"

SCHOOL FEEDBACK

“The boys delivered their first session today and absolutely smashed it. All the form teachers were really impressed and the mentees loved it too. I was really pleased with how successful it was.”

Cardinal Heenan

“Thank you so much for your time yesterday, your sessions were very much appreciated by both students and staff. The sessions gave a great and valuable message to the students.”

Archbishop Beck

(Bystander Approach Workshop)

Our pupils really enjoyed the day [Graduation] and are getting so much from the programme.”

Woodchurch High

“Thanks for all the time spent with our students, they will have got so much out of it and we’re looking forward to starting”

“The mentors are flying!!! I think we have the next wave of teachers on board...”

“They are smashing it! One more delivery session next week and they are done; 100% attendance to each session and they're got whiteboards with them in their lessons that they're making the Year 8s use!”

Weatherhead

“Thank you for the opportunity for our pupils to be part of this great initiative and of course for your invaluable support.

The year 9s thoroughly enjoyed the whole process and graduation and did Mrs Morse and I.”

Pensby High School

“Thanks again for delivering the MVP sessions to our students this week. The content was really relevant and engaging and the students were really challenged to reflect deeply on their skills as a potential mentor for Year 8. They are keen to get started and it is lovely to see that they also want to share with their own year group either through an assembly or through PD lessons.

I can't wait for them to deliver and already know from previous years that impact is great, giving us a common language to use as a school.

Thanks for your time!”

The Blue Coat School

Merseyside Youth Association's

Mentors in Violence Prevention



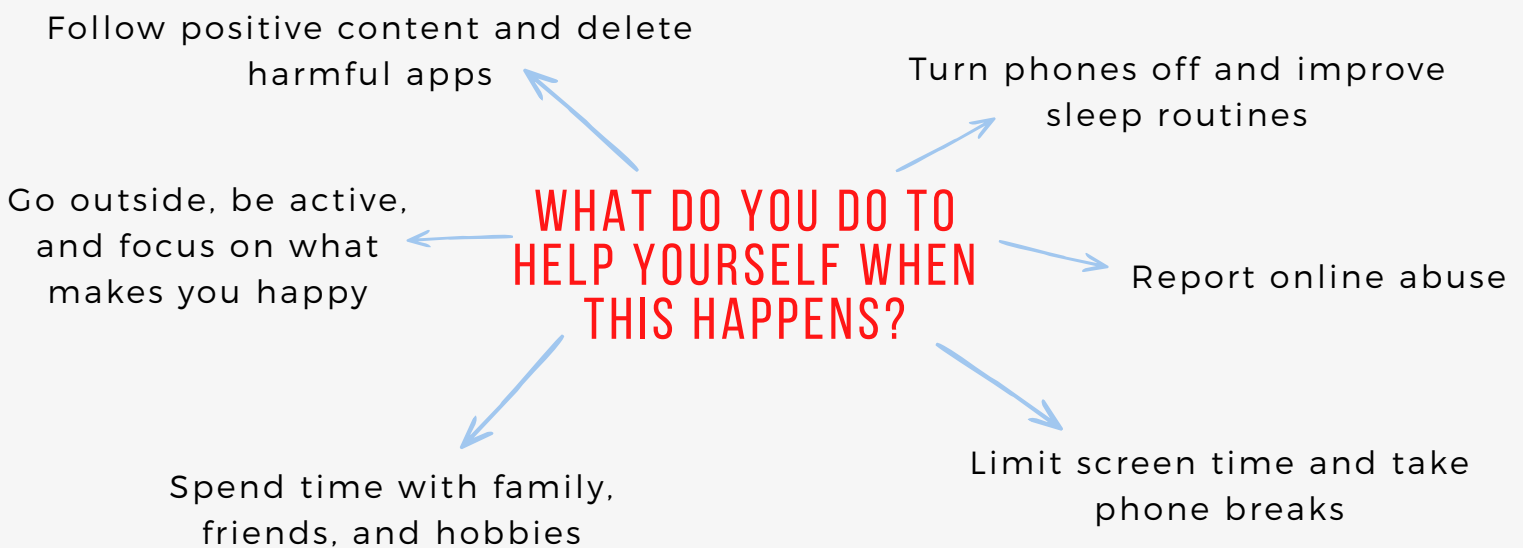
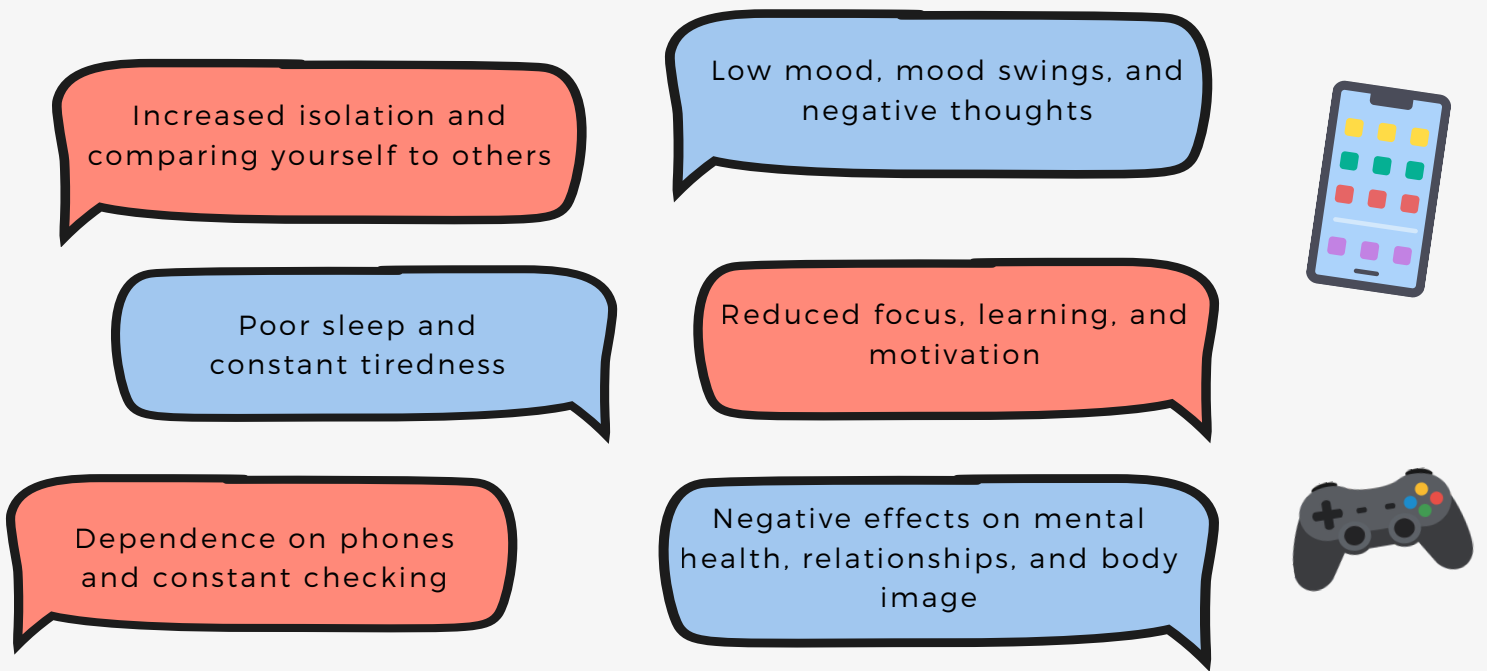
YOUTH VOICE



Each year, Mentors are given the opportunity to reflect on key social issues affecting young people and youth culture.

This feedback helps the RAISE Team and wider partners to enhance, update and create resources and support on these topics.

HOW DO YOU KNOW WHEN TIME ONLINE IS AFFECTING YOUR WELLBEING?



WHAT HELPS YOU FEEL SAFE, RESPECTED AND UNDERSTOOD IN SCHOOL?



Feeling safe through safeguarding, rules, and clear policies



Strong friendships and positive peer support



Trusted adults for support (teachers, heads of year, counsellors)



Inclusive environment where pupils feel respected and heard



Safe spaces in school (library/LRC, one-to-one support)



Clubs, activities, and peer programmes (e.g. MVP) that build belonging

HOW DO SCHOOLS CREATE SAFE SPACES FOR ALL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE?

- Strong safeguarding systems with trained staff and clear procedures
- Trusted adults available for support (teachers, heads of year, pastoral teams, counsellors)
- PSHE lessons that teach safety, wellbeing, and healthy relationships
- Clear behaviour and anti-bullying policies (no banter, no exclusion)
- Inclusive and accepting environment for all abilities and identities
- Peer support programmes such as MVP and peer mentors
- Wellbeing support including clubs, walks, counselling, and mental health weeks
- Safe routines and structures (form groups, classroom passes, phone rules)
- Physical safety measures (controlled access, door locks, fences)
- Strong friendships, clubs, and activities to reduce isolation and build belonging

WHAT COULD SCHOOLS DO TO HELP YOUNGER STUDENTS WITH TRANSITIONING TO SECONDARY SCHOOL? WAS THERE ANYTHING YOUR SCHOOL DID THAT HELPED YOU?

Emotional Wellbeing & Mental Health Support

- Worry boxes with access to therapists or one-to-one support
- Student support services and safeguarding teams
- Key workers, heads of year, form tutors, and year teams
- PSHE lessons focusing on friendships, feelings, and coping
- Relaxed lessons during early transition
- Extra support for students arriving without friends

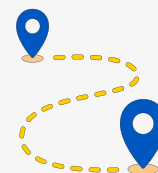


Social Connection & Peer Support

- Buddying systems and peer mentors
- Speaking to and learning from older students
- Student leadership supporting younger pupils
- Team-building and group activities
- Introduction activities focused on making friends

Familiarisation & Reducing Anxiety

- Teachers visiting primary schools
- School tours and orientation sessions
- Transition days, weeks, and taster days
- Name badges to help staff and peers learn names
- Clear systems (e.g. routines, behaviour systems)
- Assemblies led by older students or external speakers



Structure, Routine & Practical Adjustments

- Staggered starts and later form times
- Early lunches for younger pupils
- More movement time during the day
- Break lessons to explain expectations
- Clear daily routines to support adjustment

Enrichment, Engagement & Belonging

- Sports clubs and extra-curricular activities
- Team-building opportunities
- Residentials and school trips (including abroad)
- Career days and enrichment activities
- Summer schools linked to transition



WHY DO YOU THINK PEOPLE DON'T REPORT VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS? (VAWG)

(consider: the victim, bystanders, family/friends, the person who caused harm)

People are scared of what might happen if they speak up

"Afraid of backlash"

"They think it will make the situation worse"

"Fear that it will happen again"

Social pressure and stigma may discourage reporting

"Be called a 'grass' or 'snitch'"

"Embarrassment"

"Victim blaming"

People lack trust, knowledge, and support

"Don't know who to talk to"

"Limited help / resources"

"Scared of not being believed"

"Few options"

"Don't trust the police"

Harm is often normalised and minimised

"It's common in society"

"It's normalised"

"Assume someone else will report it"

WHY DO YOU THINK PEOPLE DON'T REPORT VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS? (VAWG) CONT.

(consider: the victim, bystanders, family/friends, the person who caused harm)

Gender inequality and harmful beliefs play a role

"The patriarchy"

"Women aren't seen as that important as men are"

"Men have hierarchy in society"

Victims are manipulated or silenced

"Gaslighting"

"Threatened"

"Manipulation"

"Blackmailed"

Merseyside Youth Association's

Mentors in Violence Prevention



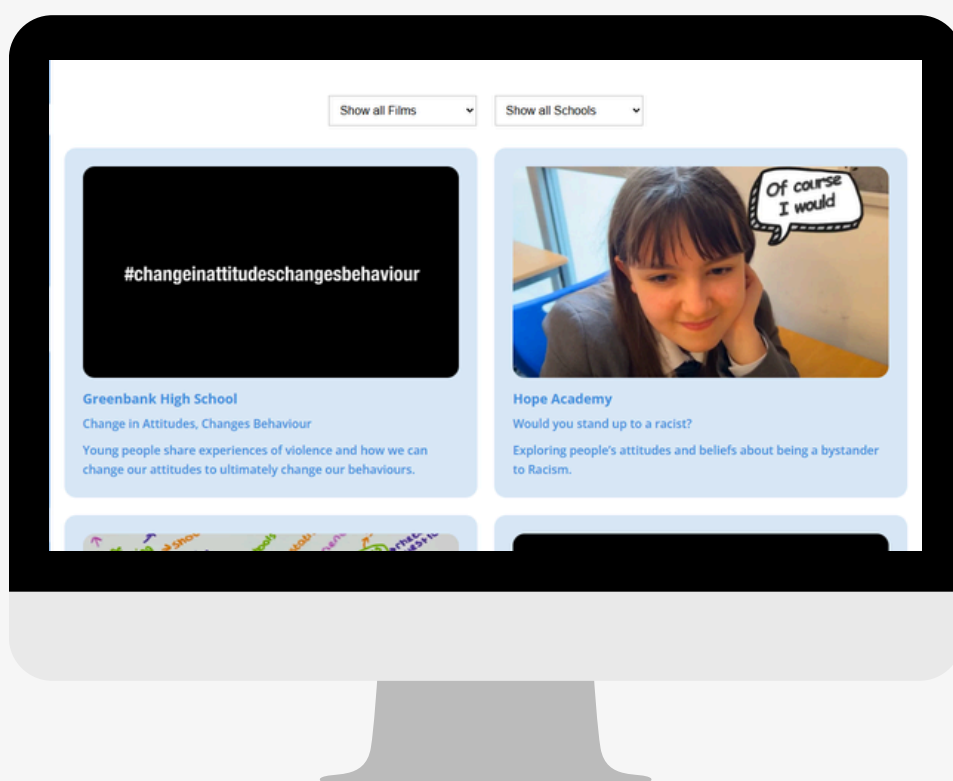
RESOURCES



EMPOWERING YOUTH VOICE: FILM GUIDANCE TO SUPPORT VIOLENCE PREVENTION




Merseyside Youth Association worked in partnership with educational media experts Collaborate Digital, to help young people make short films as part of the Mentors in Violence Prevention programme.



We have collated these films into a library accompanied with a guidance document to enhance the use of these films, and support parents, carers and professionals to develop conversations with young people around serious violence.

Each film is summarised, age-rated and accompanied with conversation starters and support services to make preventing violence everyone's business.

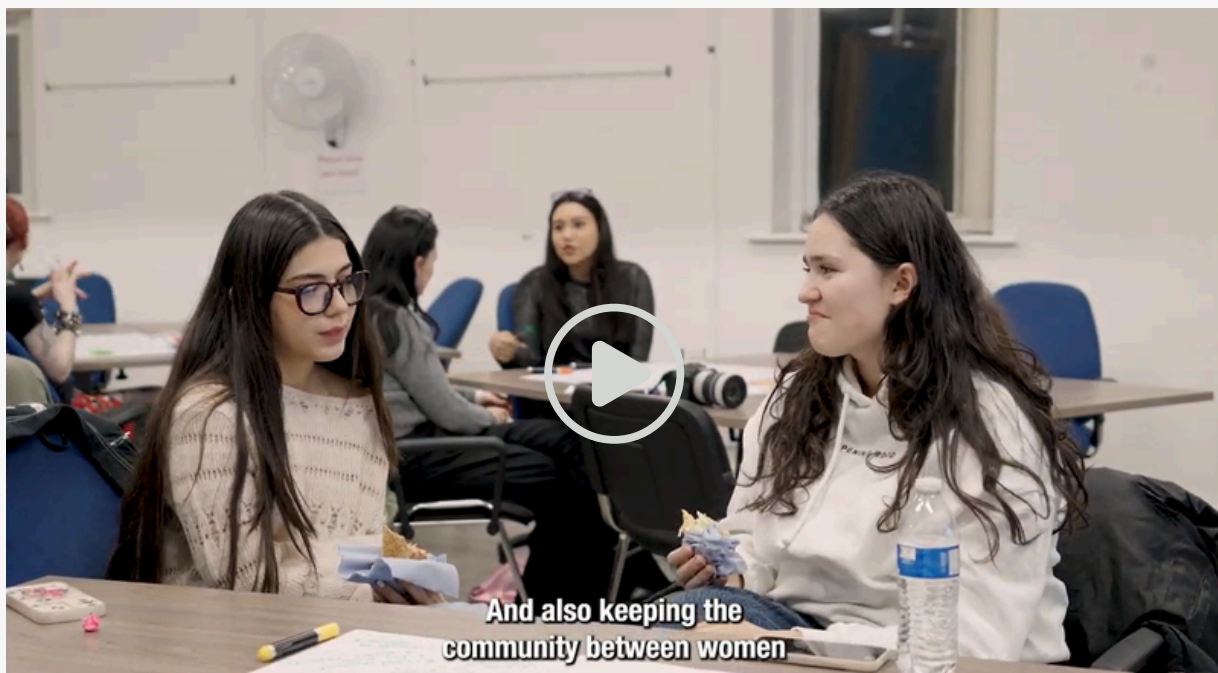
 [Click here](#) to view the range of films that young people in schools participating in the programme have produced.

YOUTH VOICE WORKSHOP: VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN & GIRLS

Delivered by the MYA RAISE Team, funded by The Merseyside Police and Crime Commissioners Office and Merseyside Violence Reduction Partnership, two youth voice workshops were held during the 16 Days of Activism Campaign to end violence against women and girls (VAWG).



The sessions brought together young people, youth workers and professionals within the field of VAWG and violence prevention to explore young people's perception and understanding of VAWG and ensure their voice is embedded into upcoming strategies - something which has not been done previously.

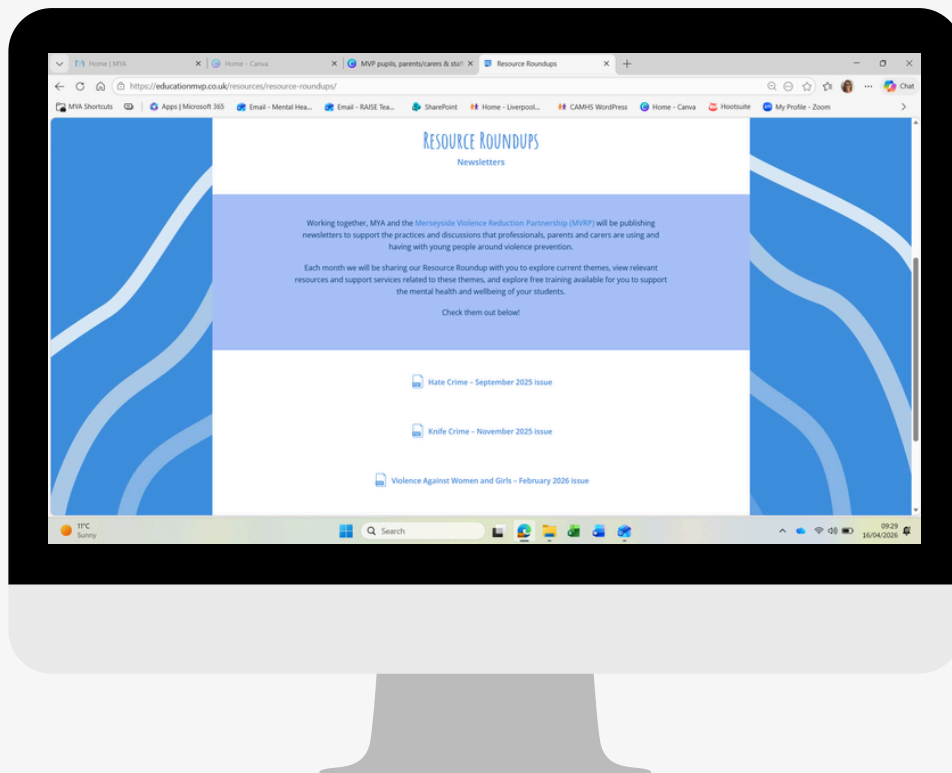


➤ [Click here](#) to view the report which showcases key outcomes from activities, pre and post measures of understanding around VAWG, and Q&A responses from PCC Emily Spurrell and Director of the MVRP Georgina Garvey.

RESOURCE ROUNDUPS

Working together, MYA and the Merseyside Violence Reduction Partnership (MVRP) will be sharing bi-monthly newsletters to support the practices and discussions that professionals are using and having with young people and their families around violence prevention.

Each Resource Roundup will explore current themes, view relevant resources and support services related to these themes, and explore free training available for you to support the mental health and wellbeing of your students.



 [Click here](#) to view the Resource Roundup website.



Merseyside Youth Association's

**Mentors in
Violence
Prevention**



GRADUATION 2026



GRADUATION CELEBRATION

Each year, mentors are invited to a Graduation Celebration event to reflect on and celebrate their journey through the programme.

This year's event was held at the historic St George's Hall, where schools had the opportunity to meet each other, have fun, and even participate in a courtroom trial.

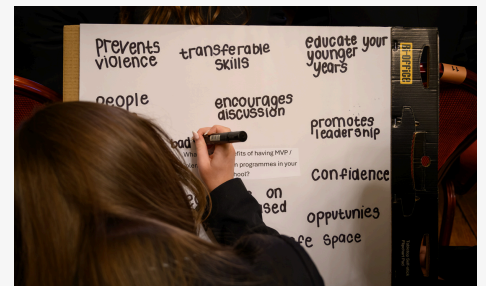
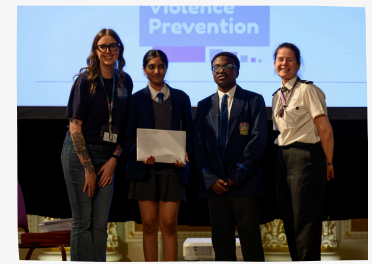


Photo credit: Dave Brownlee Photography



CONGRATUATIONS GRADUATES!



Merseyside Youth Association's

Mentors in Violence Prevention



educationmvp.co.uk



The Mentors in Violence Prevention programme is delivered by Merseyside Youth Association, and funded by the Merseyside Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP).

