

Reducing health inequalities and serious violence for women and girls across West Yorkshire and Harrogate



Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) Project, April – September 2021

Thank you for agreeing to help gather insight from the young women and girls you work with, exploring their experiences in relation to violence. We will feed back their thoughts, experiences and voices anonymously and directly to commissioners in the project's Final Report. Please do encourage the young women and girls who take part in this project to tell you about their experiences in any way they like – through answering the questions directly in the first person, through artwork, poetry, song lyrics, creative writing which describes their experiences through a character, maybe in the third person. We would like the young women and girls involved in this project to feel empowered and heard by telling us whatever they want or need to say, in the way they choose to say it.

The aims of the VRU project are to:

- Explore the different roles young women and girls have in relation to violence, through any type of involvement – bystander, family member, perpetrator, survivor
- Hear young women and girls' stories in detail, so we can fully understand their experiences
- Ensure that the feedback we receive has a direct impact on future commissioning.

Notes for session leaders

Please ensure the young women and girls you work with on this project are given time to think and respond with examples, as this will help us fully understand the answers they give and the experiences they have had

Ideally we would like feedback on all sections of the questionnaire, but please make it clear to the young women and girls involved that they can answer some, all or none of the questions. Violence can be a very difficult subject and we appreciate anything that participants feel able to share with us

If we're asking women to be involved and share their stories, we want to be able to offer something back to them. The project's funders have asked us to be clear to participants that they are not doing it only for the benefit of future generations. The final report will go directly to commissioners in September 2021, in the hope that its recommendations will be listened to and acted on immediately

Please write the actual words that the young women and girls use, rather than interpreting them – we want to hear their voices coming through

Record any common themes that start to emerge through this piece of work

Record any case studies, with the participant's permission, that you think might make commissioners sit up and listen

Please encourage every participant to complete the separate monitoring form, which will allow us to gather a lot of rich data to support the questionnaires.

Questionnaire 1 - Group Sessions

1. Can you describe a strong woman?

Notes for session leaders - additional questions you could ask:

What traits or characteristics does she have?

What does she look like? What does she wear?

Can you describe a strong woman in your own life? What makes her strong in your eyes?

Can you describe a strong woman in a film, on TV, in the news, on social media?

What makes her strong in your eyes?

Would you like to draw or paint her, create a cartoon of her, write a poem or a song about her?

2. In your opinion, what is appropriate and acceptable behaviour?

3. In your opinion, what is inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour? Have you ever experienced any?

Notes for session leaders:

This can be behaviour between anyone and in any context – at home, at school, 1:1, in groups, woman to man, man to woman, woman to woman, man to man. We would like the girls and women to say how they would like other people or themselves to behave or think they should behave, how they would like to, or think they should, be treated.

Additional questions you could ask:

Does the way you would like yourself or other people to behave match with your own experience?

Would you like to act out/role play this situation (if you're working in a group?)

Would you feel more comfortable doing a piece of writing or artwork which expresses what you would like to say?

4. Can you describe anything you do, or any preparations you make before you go out, to avoid getting into difficult or dangerous situations?

Notes for session leaders:

Here we're interested in the protective measures women and girls take to avoid violence – the things many of us do before we go out: making sure we have money for a taxi, a phone and a charger, telling people where we're going and who we're going with. Eg in the gym, some young women always make sure they are wearing headphones when they go to the weights area, as a signal to men to keep their distance.

Additional questions you could ask:

Do you avoid going out at certain times at the day or night, or to certain places?

Do you feel you have to think about what you're wearing before you leave the house to go to certain places?

What about meeting up with someone you've met online for the first time?

What protective measures do you, or would you, take in that situation?

Does alcohol play any role in the protective measures you take for yourself or your friends?

Have you ever used social media to find a friend who's gone missing on a night out, or Ask Angela in a bar?

Would you like to make a poster showing acceptable and unacceptable behaviour?

5. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your experience of violence?

This is to capture anything we have missed in the first 5 questions, anything else the young women and girls would like to say about violence in their own lives or violence they have witnessed other people experiencing and its effects on them.

Finally, don't forget to ask all participants in both Group and 1:1 Sessions to fill in a Monitoring Form!

Thank you

