Student Support Champions- Reducing Serious Youth Violence in Newcastle

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NORTHUMBRIA
POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER | violence reduction unit

Improving lives to prevent crime

Background

- Local authority and VRU approached by schools
  - *Lost relations with local neighbourhood police*
  - *Concerning behaviours and didn't know what to do*

- VRU developed a consortium of schools, police and LA and we helped problem solve
  - *Advice, support, guidance*
  - *Increased activity*
  - *SPOCs*

- Job description developed and agreed

- Great buy-in from schools from the beginning

- Organic…blank canvas

What is it?

- Two Student Support Champions – currently based in 5 schools each

- Bridge between Schools and Police

- Multi agency partnership – schools, local authority, police and VRU

- Offer support to:
  - *teaching staff around local youth violence issues; and*
  - *young people believed to be involved in, or at risk of becoming involved in youth violence*

- Not part of the school hierarchy

- Different approach to problem solving

- Longer term support/mentoring

- Small group/individual work
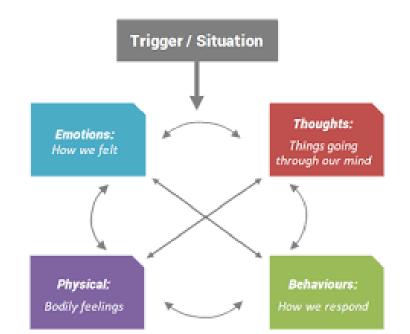
- Consistency and relationship focused

What have we done?

Since October 2022 approximately 275 children accessed SSC in either group or 1:1 basis.

6-8 sessions depending on need

Regular check ins

Anger

- What are emotions?
- Challenging thoughts/behaviours
- What anger looks like
- Triggers
- Practical strategies
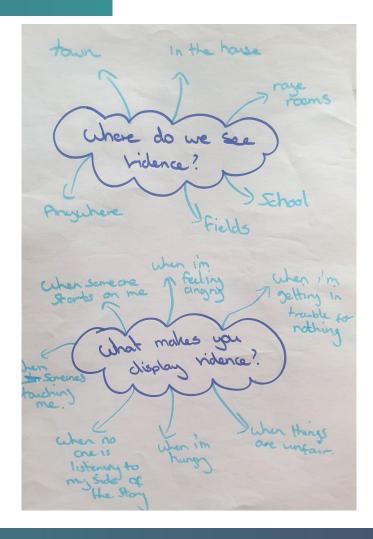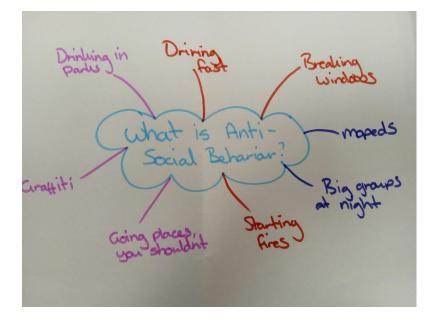- Anger driven violence and its consequences

Violence

- Dealing with conflict

- Understanding violence-what makes people display violent behaviours

- Consequences

- Calming techniques

- What does violence look like
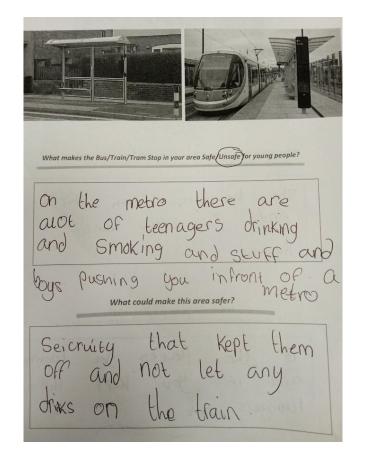
- Laws around violent crime

Risk taking and understanding consequence

- Understanding risk

- Anti-social behaviour

- Reducing risk/staying safe

- Social risk/peer pressure
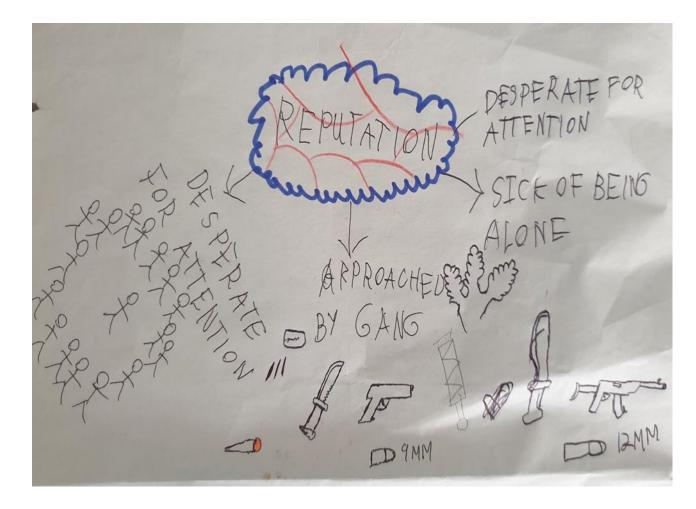
- Joint Enterprise

- Defining Crime

Community issues and gangs

- Recognising vulnerability

- Positive influences

- Peer Pressure

- Knife crime/one punch

- Why choose a gang?

- Joint enterprise

- How to access support

Mentoring
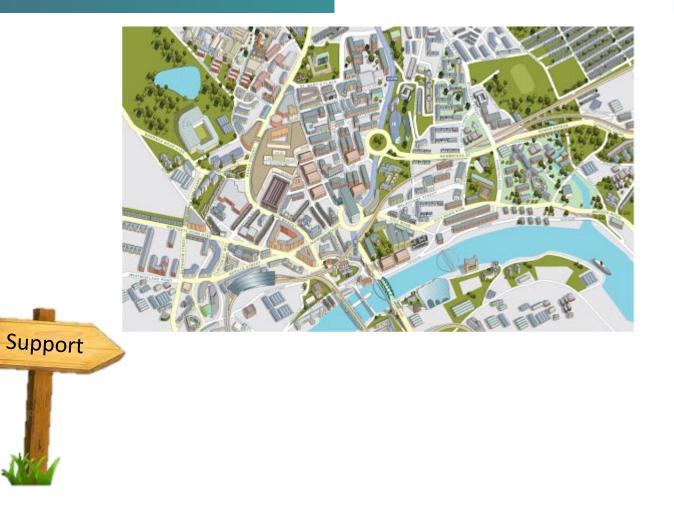
- Problem solving

- Listening Ear

- Reflection

- Meeting needs

- Safe space

- Safeguarding

All the other bits

- Contextual safeguarding/mapping

- Links with neighbourhood policing team

- Signposting/referrals to other services

- Supporting schools in delivering their curriculum around youth violence.

- Feedback/input into multi-disciplinary meetings

Support

The Evaluation

47 responses from students

- 43 (91%) agreed that hey enjoyed the work
- 32 (72%) felt better supported in school as a result
- 44 (94%) students reported they were able to describe the consequences of knife crime
- 37 (82%) substance misuse and 41 (93%) exploitation

31 responses from staff

- 24 (77%) agreed that student had actively engaged with the SSCs
- 26 (84%) agreed that the SSCs had brought new knowledge and skills to the school
- Respondents reported that there had been reductions in suspensions (n=21, 67%) and exclusions (n=16, 53%) and an improvement in school attendance (n=20, 66%)

The Evaluation

'You've got to be very good to do what [the SSC] does. I've been through loads of people, like counsellors and all that but this has probably been the most effective one that I've had.' (Student Focus Group, School F).

'The Student Support role is embedded in a particular ethos and from a particular focus and it's not where a teacher's focus is […].' (Local Authority Focus Group).

'The value-added bit is the additional networks that [the SSCs] are able to access that schools don't automatically either think about or have access to […]' (Local Authority Focus Group).

'We've had great results. […] a lad was pretty much being exploited by other children. […] his Mum was "Is this normal?" He didn't report it to the police, the child reported it to the SSC and they informed me. We spoke to the parents when he was at school, and we put a safeguarding plan in place.' (Police Focus Group).

'[…] is a completely unique role. […] Because of the violence reduction aspect to it, and because it is directly keyed into the police and all of the things that are happening in the community – there is no other role that does that. […] when [the local authority and VRU Co-ordinator] started all this, it was on the back of schools articulating their frustration, concern, panic about some behaviours they were experiencing in school that they hadn't experienced before. They didn't know who to go to, they didn't know who to report to, they didn't know what could be done' (Local Authority Focus Group).

Thank you

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