

IMPACT REPORT

YOUNG WOMEN AND GIRLS

2023/25

oxfordshire
youth

SAFER RELATIONSHIPS



REDUCING HARM



REDUCING EXPLOITATION



WHY YWAG IS NEEDED

The Young Women and Girls Project (YWAG) in Oxfordshire harnesses the power of youth work approaches and, trauma-informed practices to deliver positive outcomes in partnership with the criminal justice sector.

In July 2024, the National Police Chiefs' Council found that over one million violence against women and girls related crimes were recorded in 2022-2023, equating to around 3,000 offences every day. With nearly 3/4 of all domestic abuse related crimes victims being women, this work is urgently needed to keep young women and girls safe. Only 0.4% of violent crimes against women were perpetrated by a stranger.

In line with the 2024-2029 Police and Crime Plan 'Protecting Thames Valley', we have delivered a diverse range of informal education in a youth work setting, providing essential preventative resources to young women recognised as being at heightened risk of exploitation and harm.

A PROGRAMME TO EMPOWER, EDUCATE, AND PREVENT

Young people told us that 1-1 sessions was the preferred means of support. One young person explained that it gives them freedom during the session and provides a safe space from some of the challenges she's going through.

YOUNG WOMEN AND GIRLS TOLD US THEY WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT:

- Consent
- Healthy relationships
- Conflict in relationships (signs of abuse / toxic relationships)
- Friendships and family relationships
- Sexting and online dating,
- The effects of explicit content
- Body image / self-esteem.

YOUNG WOMEN AND GIRLS ARE PRESENTING WITH:

- School attendance / School refusal
- Missing episodes
- Disordered eating habits
- Social isolation
- Risky behaviours online
- Exploitation and sexual assault
- Substance misuse
- Family breakdown
- Self esteem
- Involvement in criminal networks in the community

WHAT ARE YOUNG WOMEN AND GIRLS TELLING US?

- 100% said they were 'not at all' or 'a little bit' confident walking away from an abusive partner
- 80% said they were 'not at all' or 'a little bit' confident spotting the signs of abusive behaviour early on in a relationship
- 80% said they were 'a little bit' confident saying no to sex if they do not want it
- 80% said they were 'a little bit' confident talking to someone if they need help in a relationship
- 80% said they were 'not at all' or 'a little bit' confident making healthy relationship choices

SOCIAL IMPACT

“ This programme has been excellent (and crucial) in educating our vulnerable young women in understanding and identifying teenage abuse ”

**DELIVERY PARTNER,
SECONDARY SCHOOL**

Since the project began, Oxfordshire Youth have provided a total of 251 high quality 1-1 and group work sessions on healthy relationships, consent, body image, positive choices, sexual health, emotional wellbeing, coercion and control, decision-making, and risk-taking, gender identity and more.

56

young women referred into the YWAG programme and 28 engaged

237

1-1 support sessions delivered to 28 young women and girls

8

Year 11 girls are currently working through Escape the Trap (Teenage Relationship Abuse Programme) and will complete by end of March 2025.

of girls who completed the programme of support reported reduced gang related activity and respondents said the programme had improved their access to safe and trusted adults

100%

“ The coordinator has an excellent approach and rapport with our vulnerable students who have complex needs from their lived experiences. The pupils are already using the skills from the programme thus far, and recognise toxic relationships and potential red flags!

As a school, we wholeheartedly hope that more of our vulnerable young women/girls will be able to access this opportunity.

DELIVERY PARTNER, SECONDARY SCHOOL

THE IMPACT OF TRAINING ON PROFESSIONALS



Since 2023, Oxfordshire Youth has been delivering Exploitation and Gangs Associated Harm training workshops. It instils how to confidently identify concerns around exploitation and gang associated harms and both prevention and intervention options. As a collaborative training, designed alongside the Violence Prevention Partnership, it combines the powers and expertise of both statutory and youth work services.

425 professionals trained across 8 sessions

100% respondents said the session helped them feel supported in a peer to peer network

100% respondents said the session increased their skill and confidence in their work

77 SURVEY RESPONDENTS



Here's what attendees found most valuable

- Spotting the signs of grooming and exploitation
- Understanding current themes, language and terminology such as 'clean skins'
- Tools to have open and productive conversations with young people
- Role of social media and digital spaces
- Multi-agency and partnership working
- Clear definitions and resources

“Our partnership with OY has expanded the network and reach, raising awareness of exploitation and gang-related harms, and the support available. Professionals are given diverse yet complementary perspectives, enhancing their understanding and approach to the subject matter. Feedback has consistently highlighted the value of Oxfordshire Youth's support, underscoring its importance in our collective efforts to address these critical issues.

DELIVERY PARTNER, THAMES VALLEY POLICE



REFLECTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

INCREASING DIGITAL SAFETY FOR YOUNG WOMEN:

- As Police and Crime Commissioner Matthew Barber confirms in his 24-29 'Protecting People', a more connected world, both physically and digitally, has brought huge benefits, but it has also increased the risk of abuse and exploitation. The YWAG Project will further incorporate elements of digital safety such as online dating and relationships, and working to respond to young people's needs as they navigate the digital world.

PRIORITISING ACCREDITATION AND LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

- Ensure delivery staff are trained in Youth work, beginning with the Level 2 Accreditation to increase the youth work practices underpinning this programme.
- Create pathways for young people to achieve accredited qualifications, using existing and bespoke AQAs.

YOUTH VOICE TO INFLUENCE AND REACH MORE GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN AND BOYS AND YOUNG MEN TO ENGAGE WITH THESE ISSUES

- Work in collaboration with young people to prioritise Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. More can be done to support young women and girls from global majority backgrounds and who are gender non-conforming and identify as LGBTQIA+.
- Expand the reach of the Escape The Trap programme to include young men and boys, thereby increasing the programmes reach and impact for young people's education and empowerment.
- Increase the delivery of the programme across Oxfordshire to reach young people county-wide.

PARTNERSHIP LEARNING

- Build connections with more statutory and third sector partners to further the reach and support of the programme
- Introduce the delivery of bespoke youth work sessions to youth clubs and other organisations supporting young people, to expand partnership working and increase the accessibility of these valuable resources in youth work settings

Thank you to the funders and our partners for investing in the safer futures of girls and young women in Oxfordshire including the Community Safety Partnership, JCT, and safeguarding children in Banbury partnership

