Mentors in Violence Prevention

Thames valley

GRAHAM GOULDEN

CULTIVATING MINDS UK

**The Mentors in Violence Prevention Programme (MVP)**

***“Building relationships, supporting learning, reducing violence”.***

This briefing is intended to communicate the potential to implement the Mentors In Violence Prevention (MVP) Programme in Thames Valley.

This briefing will outline both the rationale for implementation and provide some further background to the MVP Programme.

It would be the intention to hold a briefing event to discuss the MVP Programme and how it could be embedded in the area. This briefing can be attended by interested schools, those working in education and partners who have an interest in supporting a community approach to reducing violence.

**WHY MVP?**

Levels of violence in England are rising. Apparently fuelled by an increase in knife related crime, overall violence in 2018 rose by 19% to almost 1.5 million crimes. Homicides increased by 14%. Police in England recorded nearly 40,000 knife offences.

Sexual violence and harmful sexual behaviour are also of concern across the UK. The impact of modern technology: phones, laptops and tablets provide another medium for sexual offences to take place. In 2018 Childline reported an increase in the number of young people seeking help over peer on peer sexual abuse, with a 29% jump in demand compared to 2017.

Furthermore, Childline warned that the problem is likely to be much worse, as many children and teenagers do not understand that what has happened to them is abuse.

A survey carried out by the charity, Plan International UK suggested more than a third of adolescent girls in the UK have been sexually harassed out in public while wearing school uniforms.

Domestic Abuse continues to blight communities with year on year increases in reported incidents. Abuse in teenage relationships is also an emerging issue. Domestic Abuse is also a major demand on police and other services. It’s important that efforts to reduce incidents continue.

**WHAT IS MVP**

The MVP Programme is a leadership and bystander programme developed in the United States by US Educator Dr Jackson Katz. MVP offers excellent opportunities to discuss a range of current social issues within an educational framework where positive relationships, Health and Wellbeing are key.

Violence is a complex issue and one which is very often not fully understood by the many who are responsible for tackling it. We often try to deal with the violence that we see and do not tackle the culture, the beliefs and the attitudes which may result in the physical act itself.

The introduction of Bystander training within the educational setting will start to tackle the culture, the beliefs and the attitudes that say violence is acceptable. The approach will also allow discussions on domestic abuse, bullying, harassment, sexual violence, weapons carrying, CSE and different forms of hate crime as well as the influence of the modern media in shaping our society.

The MVP Programme places young people within realistic and relevant scenarios. The aim of these scenarios is to:

* Raise Awareness (of the issue)
* Challenge thinking (around the issue)
* Open Dialog (within peer groups), and
* Inspire individual leadership (around the issue)

The discussions created within MVP permit young people to share, the often, healthy norms that most of them believe in. These discussions also aim to reassure young people. A simple but effective toolkit is shared to individuals allowing them to be the friends they want to be.

It is clear from the above information and from the regular media stories relating to violence, that young people are scared and fearful. This fear is likely to have an impact on learning and attainment. Whilst responses to violence in schools often involve increased security, the building of healthy relationships in our schools is key.

A young person feeling safe and supported in any learning environment, will attain. MVP places healthy relationships within all discussions. The benefits of healthy relationships in our communities will lead to less violence and reduced demand on already over-stretched services.

**MVP - WHAT IS THE EVIDENCE**

**IN THE UNITED STATES**

In 2000-2001, schools in the Sioux City District of Iowa started to implement the MVP Programme. Findings revealed that students exposed to the MVP Model are more likely to identify abusive behaviours as wrong and were more likely to intervene then students not exposed to the programme. A continued downward trend in school related violence has been seen since implementation (<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1077801211409725?legid=spvaw%3B17%2F6%2F684&rss=1&patientinform-links=yes>)



Ongoing evaluation findings in Iowa indicate MVP training significantly increases attendees understanding of bullying, sexual and domestic violence, decreases adherence to established rape myths, and beliefs, and increases confidence levels in ability to integrate bystander programming and messaging into professional and work life.

Heisterkamp, A. & Fleming, W.M. (2016). *Center for Violence Prevention Semi-Annual Report to the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH Grant No. 5888RPO3)*.

A 2-3 year follow-up study of approximately 100 participants in the MVP Train the Trainer platform found ongoing impact of the training with:

* + 96% of the respondents indicating the information was important for the participants to know
  + 91% indicating the training increased awareness about gender violence
  + 93% indicating they had gained valuable skills that have helped in their life and relationships
  + 91% indicating they feel more prepared to intervene in situations with friends, colleagues and peers
  + 91% indicating they would recommend the training to friends and colleagues

Heisterkamp, A. & Fleming, W.M. (2017). *Center for Violence Prevention Semi-Annual Report to the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH Grant No. 5888RPO3)*.

Since the implementation of MVP in Iowa, a number of schools across the state have begun to implement MVP. Current data continues to mirror the findings from the original project.

**IN SCOTLAND**

To support a Scotland wide violence reduction strategy the MVP Programme was implemented by the Scottish Violence Reduction Unit in 2010.

Three schools were used in the initial pilot and a study carried out by St Andrews University (Williams, D. and Neville, F. (2107) Qualitative Evaluation of the Mentors in Violence Prevention Pilot in Scottish Schools. Psychology of Violence. Vol. 7, No. 2, 213-223).

A mixed-methods survey was carried out using; pre and post survey, semi-structured focus groups with mentors/mentees and interviews with staff

Results from quantitative research were limited however a shift in attitude towards women by both male and female participants (less traditional and more progressive views) was identified.

Better findings were evident within the qualitative part of research:

* Evidence for attitude change and intended behaviour change in both mentors, mentees and in some cases in staff
* Mentors reported they were more aware of what was going on, more likely to see it as a problem and more likely to do something.

Ongoing evidence suggests similar findings to the US data with MVP students more aware of problematic behaviours as well being more likely to intervene in situations. Furthermore, stories of change from MVP schools confirm these findings.

Similar to the US MVP has been able to scale up its reach within the Scottish High School system. It’s links to the Scottish Education curriculum have demonstrated its ability to support the building of healthy relationships as well as a tool to discuss violence in these settings.

Out of 32 Scottish Local Authorities MVP is being implemented in 26 authority areas. Many of these authority areas have their own MVP trainers able to maintain capacity and extend into other schools. The number of schools involved in MVP has steadily risen year on year. From the initial 3 schools involved in 2010, 161 schools are now involved in delivering MVP.

In both the US and Scotland, a train the trainer model has supported the spread and the development of the programme.

**TRAINER BIOGRAPHY**

Cultivating Minds UK was developed by Graham Goulden, simply to create much needed conversations around issues that can impact negatively on learning, on business and sports success.  Graham Goulden, BA, is an experienced and committed leadership and violence prevention trainer.  For thirty years he was a Scottish police officer and Chief Investigator specialising in criminal investigation, drug investigation, training and crime prevention.

For the last eight years of policing career he was a Chief Inspector and a key member of the [Scottish Violence Reduction Unit](http://www.actiononviolence.org.uk/). Respected across the world for its work in reducing violence, this innovative organisation brought a new approach to an age-old problem.  It was during this time that Graham was able to **put right** what had become an occurring issue for him during his policing career. Often, when interviewing people who had witnessed abuse and violence, Graham was met with the words, “I knew something was going to happen”.  His work now supports him to develop approaches and programmes that help create conditions where good people can do good things when faced with challenging situations.

Graham is a passionate advocate of the [**bystander approach**](https://grahamgoulden.com/bystander-approach/) to help develop personal and organisational leadership to help create safe and supportive learning environments, workplaces and performance teams.   All of these environments face challenges which, if unchecked, can impact detrimentally on performance and reputation.

Empowering individuals within these settings to act, presents a great opportunity for any business, school, university or sports team to maintain focus on values and goals.  As they say the team that collectively is heading in the same direction will be the successful team.

Graham has delivered bystander prevention trainings in many different settings including high schools, colleges universities, in work places, in prisons, with military and police and with professional and amateur sports in the UK and United States.  Graham has worked with many different individuals and groups using bystander activities to develop personal leadership.  Graham has worked with hairdressers, dentists, vets, fire officers, police & prison officers, bar & security staff, the military as well as in local communities.

In addition, Graham has conducted numerous trainings and keynote speeches in Scotland, England, Wales, Sweden, and in the United States.  In addition to conducting bystander trainings, Graham has expert knowledge and experience in embedding violence prevention programmes within local government.  He has been able to build sustainable models for the longer term.

Graham holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Criminal Justice Studies and a Certificate in Training from Napier University, Edinburgh.  He lives in the Scottish Borders with his wife Allie and their dachshund Dolly.

Graham is also an associate trainer with

* [heroicimagination.org/](http://www.heroicimagination.org/)
* [mvpstrat.com/about/mvp-staff/](http://www.mvpstrat.com/about/mvp-staff/)

What people say about Graham’s training –

***‘Graham has provided schools / partners in the West Midlands robust training on all aspects of the MVP programme. He has a wealth of knowledge that he can draw upon within a range of settings.***

***I have found this invaluable to the future development of the MVP Programme in the West Midlands. His use of resources and innovative training methods stimulates discussion and embeds MVP thinking into the team to enable them to shape and develop within their individual school settings. His passion is infectious and helps engage teachers who often suffer from programme fatigue. His training approach supports many different learning styles.***

***I look forward to working further with Graham as this work spreads’.***

**Sarah Dorsett**

**Coordinator**

**West Midlands Violence**

**Prevention Alliance.**

***Graham has been working with us for several months now and has played a key role in raising awareness of sexual harassment with all of our team. Graham brings a unique training delivery style and keeps his content engaging. He has an extensive knowledge and experience across all of the topics that he trains. A pleasure to work with and helps add real value to the workplace!***

Hazel Goodfellow

Head of People

Scottish Events Campus (SEC)

***Graham has been working with us here at the University of Edinburgh for over a year, and he has recently trained 600 student leaders in leadership and the bystander approach. This is a crucial element of our learning and development programme, which in itself forms a central part of our strategy to tackle gender-based violence and sexual violence within the University community. Graham has many skills- he has the ability to inspire and engage participants in this incredibly important subject area, and he is able to make this personal for us so that we can see clearly our own role in being part of the change. Feedback from student leaders on Graham’s training has been overwhelmingly positive- he is helping us to develop confident student leaders, and to build a strong platform for facilitating significant culture change.***

Andy Shanks

Director of Student well-being

University of Edinburgh

***We were delighted that Graham was able to be part of our ‘launch’ day where we as a school began to consider our vision and values as we move forward.  Graham spoke to our staff about ACEs – a new topic for many of the audience – and the ‘Demise of Guys.’  His contribution was fantastic and identified by all as a real strength of the day.   His presentation style was interesting, relevant and backed by strong statistics.  His thought-provoking insights have already inspired better understanding and change in practice for many of our team.***

Lisa Coffey

Deputy Head Teacher

Balerno High School.

For further information on what Graham has to offer see his website

<https://grahamgoulden.com/>