

Preventing youth violence and gang involvement

Practical advice for schools and colleges



Home Office

Using this document

This advice is for leaders, their senior teams and staff in schools or colleges in areas affected by gang or youth violence. When developing an approach, it is recommended that schools and colleges discuss ways to address youth violence with local police and community safety partners, as well as other local educational institutions.

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Introduction

The vast majority of young people and education establishments will not be affected by serious violence or gangs. However, where these problems do occur there will almost certainly be a significant impact.

Schools, both primary and secondary, and colleges have a duty and a responsibility to protect their pupils and students. It is also well established that success in learning is one of the most powerful indicators in the prevention of youth crime.¹ Dealing with violence also helps attainment.²

While pupils and students generally see educational establishments as safe places, even low levels of youth violence can have a disproportionate impact on any educational establishment. Schools and colleges are places where important interventions can take place to prevent negative behaviour, such as young people carrying a knife.

Primary schools are also increasingly recognised as places where early warning signs that younger children may be at risk of getting involved in gangs can be spotted. Crucial preventive work can be done at this stage to prevent negative behaviour from escalating and becoming entrenched. Programmes such as Families and Schools Together, Positive Action or the Good Behaviour Game are aimed to improve social and emotional skills, understanding risk, exploring how to stay safe and make safe choices.

Whilst schools and colleges may face different specific challenges and operate in different contexts, many of the issues they face will be similar.

In schools specifically, one of the four key judgements that Ofsted inspectors will make is on the behaviour and safety of pupils. In order for a school to be judged 'outstanding', all groups of pupils must:

- feel safe at school all the time;
- understand very clearly what unsafe situations are; and
- be highly aware of how to keep themselves and others safe.

Inspections will include a consideration of pupils' ability to assess and manage risk appropriately. This explicitly includes online safety, substance misuse, knives and gangs, and relationships (including sexual relationships).

Ofsted inspectors also judge schools on pupils' behaviour towards, and respect for, other young people and adults. This includes freedom from bullying, including cyber-bullying, harassment and discrimination. Assessment of schools will focus on bullying related to special educational needs, sexual orientation, sex, race, religion and belief, gender reassignment, or disability, as defined in the Equality Act 2010.

Preventing violence in schools and colleges can require a mix of universal, targeted or specialist interventions. School and college leaders should be able to:

- develop skills and knowledge to resolve conflict as part of the curriculum;
- challenge aggressive behaviour in ways that prevent the recurrence of such behaviour;
- understand risks for specific groups, including those that are gender-based, and target interventions;
- safeguard, and specifically organise child protection, when needed;
- carefully manage individual transitions between educational establishments, especially into Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) or alternative provision; and
- work with local partners to prevent anti-social behaviour or crime.

Crucial preventive work can be done at this stage to prevent negative behaviour from escalating and becoming entrenched, such as programmes aimed to improve social and emotional skills or programmes which help children understand risk and make safe choices.

This guidance, which has been produced as part of the cross-Government work on Ending Gang and Youth Violence³, is intended as a resource upon which schools and colleges can draw. It includes:

- advice on the support available to address problems of youth violence or gangs;
- a summary of what works in preventing violence;
- some considerations when commissioning programmes to improve outcomes for young people; and
- a set of resources and practical checklists.

The guidance signposts school and college staff to resources:

- providing the skills and support to help young people to resist becoming involved in violence;
- identifying young people in need of help; and
- working with other agencies to tackle violence.

What does the law say about youth violence and teachers' powers?

Teachers have a range of powers in relation to discipline. These are there to protect teachers as they tackle problems, including violence, in the school environment. Such powers cover disciplinary actions, the power to restrain violent pupils, and the power to search pupils for prohibited items.

There are also some legal issues that teachers should be aware of that relate to gang membership, in particular concerning the potential criminal liability of young people whose presence or actions lead to a crime, even if they did not commit the crime themselves ('joint enterprise'). This highlights the risks for young people of gang involvement, even if they think that they have not directly committed any crimes.

An overview of the relevant powers and legislation is attached at [Resource A](#).

Preventing violence

In order to tackle violence affecting schools or colleges and the community, it is important to:

- understand the problems that young people are facing both in school/college and in their local community;
- consider possible avenues of support; and
- work with local partners (who may have valuable information, resources or expertise).

Leaders and senior teams in schools and colleges should also recognise that 'early intervention' includes anti-bullying and a curriculum that ensures that young people develop the social and emotional skills they need in order to meet their full potential. For example, the curriculum should include teaching conflict resolution skills, understanding risky situations, and violence and abuse should be clearly defined so that young people know when to seek help.

Understanding the issue

It is important to understand fully the issue or issues that affect the local area. In-depth analysis of the issues should highlight areas for action by bringing together information about:

- the scale and nature of youth violence;
- who is involved;
- what may already be in place to help young people; and
- where there may be gaps.

Engaging with the local community safety partnership, the youth offending team, the Safer School Partnership officer or the neighbourhood police team can assist schools if there is a gang or youth violence problem in their area.

Working with local partners will help to achieve a full understanding of the context that school and college staff work in, especially how community issues affect behaviours in the school or college. Additionally, school councils may offer an opportunity to engage with pupils on this issue.

As part of their emergency management planning, schools should have in place systems for targeting and responding to individual or group violence. Even if violent incidents themselves do not appear to be an immediate concern, there may be a need to build resilience to such problems for the future.

Seeking support

Parents, carers, family members and other adults in children's lives such as teachers have an incredibly important role to play in helping protect them from gangs and to keep them away from violence. But it can be difficult to know what to do.

Anyone worried about a child or young person involved in, or at risk from, gangs can call the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000. Helpline practitioners have been trained as part of the Home Office Ending Gang and Youth Violence programme, and can offer advice, support and information on what action to take to help young people who are in, or at risk from, a gang.

Local headteacher networks are the most common way to share ideas, practice and support. Schools can link with local support groups and specialist agencies with experience in dealing with gang-related issues. If the school or college is in an 'Ending Gang and Youth Violence' priority area⁴, there is likely to be someone with a role in relation to gangs who will be in a position to provide specialist support within either the local authority or the police. Please see the information on community safety partnerships in 'Working with other local partners to address the issue' below.

There is also a range of resources on what works. These are outlined below in the section on **Sources of Evidence**. The Department for Education (DfE) has published a range of advice on behaviour, attendance and bullying. For example, the Government's former expert adviser on behaviour, Charlie Taylor, has produced a checklist on the basics of classroom management.⁵ Teachers can use this to develop between five and ten essential actions to encourage good behaviour in pupils.

The Department for Education has produced advice for parents (November 2014) on how to protect their child from being cyber-bullied. It provides advice and information about how they can protect their child from cyberbullying and how to tackle it if it happens.

The DfE has also produced advice on bullying in 2011 and this was updated in 2014.⁶ The advice summarises:

- schools' legal obligations and powers;
- the general principles adopted by successful schools; and
- specialist organisations that can provide help.

There is also a range of resources available to address wider violence issues that affect young people, such as 'sexting' and relationship abuse. These are listed in **Resource C** under 'Other resources for schools'.

Working with other local partners to address the issue

Dealing with gang or youth violence issues in an area is a shared responsibility for the community and partner agencies. Schools or colleges affected by these issues will be able to draw advice and support from their local partners, such as the police, youth offending teams, other local authority teams or the voluntary and community sector. The Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) may also have a strategy to address these issues.

The work of the local community safety partnership will provide key support. For example, the partnership may be able to:

- give advice on whether there are any safer communities' activities currently underway and what the school or college might do to complement, support or interact with them;
- keep schools/colleges informed about the numerous ways that gang members can control, intimidate and or influence pupils in the school/college environment;
- identify young people who are subject to court orders and what schools/colleges may need to know;
- manage an 'alert' system on local problems that may affect the school/college or put young people at risk;
- offer specialist advice on particular problems, for example, gang-associated girls;

- share relevant information about pupils/students outside of the school or college environment (for example, whether they are displaying any risky behaviours that have come to the attention of the wider partnership);
- support the provision of effective early help, promote the welfare of pupils and students, and protect them from harm;⁷ and
- develop a multi-agency response.

If the school or college is in an 'Ending Gang and Youth Violence' area, the Community Safety Manager will be able to put school/college staff in touch with the local agency that takes the lead on gathering information about the gangs operating in the area.

Primary schools and early intervention

Evidence shows that early-stage intervention is an effective strategy for preventing children becoming involved in violence, crime or antisocial behaviour later in life.

Primary schools, working with local partners, can play an important role in understanding and spotting the warning signs amongst younger children. Where appropriate, head teachers may find it useful to engage with local early help/early intervention teams in order to discuss concerns about pupils and plan appropriate interventions. Early intervention teams are based in every local authority. Their role is to work with safeguarding teams to identify early signs of problems and work with children and families to prevent problems from escalating.

Providing the right support whilst a child is still in primary school can protect those vulnerable to exploitation by older gang members and those who are at risk of being drawn further into violent or negative behaviour over time. It is good practice for schools to work together to take preventative measures to support the younger siblings of gang members. It is also advisable for primary schools in areas affected by gang and youth violence issues to work with younger children to strengthen social and emotional skills, build resilience to negative influences, and develop an ability to understand risk and risky situations.

Example programmes are available from the Early Intervention Foundation. These include the PATHS Curriculum, which is a school-based programme that aims to improve emotional and social competencies in primary school children. More information on early intervention strategies to prevent gang and youth violence is available from the Early Intervention Foundation at Resource C or www.eif.org.uk/social-and-emotional-learning/.

Risk Factors

Primary school teachers will wish to be aware of some of the most significant risk factors for primary school age children. The Early Intervention Foundation have looked at the quantitative data around risk factors and identified the factors at different ages that are the most predictive of a) youth violence and b) gang involvement, and we have summarised these in the table below.

*Risk factors **strongly** associated with youth violence, gang involvement and factors that overlap in their association with youth violence and gang involvement*

Factor	Strong risk factors for youth violence (age group)	Strong risk factors for gang involvement (age group)
Child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Troublesome (7-9; 10-12) • High daring (10-12) • Positive attitude towards delinquency (10-12) • Previously committed offences (7-9) • Involved in anti-social behaviour (10-12) • Substance use (7-9) • Aggression (7-9) • Running away and truancy (7-9; 10-12) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marijuana use (10-12)
Child's Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disrupted family (7-9; 10-12) • Poor supervision (10-12) 	

Factor	Strong risk factors for youth violence (age group)	Strong risk factors for gang involvement (age group)
School		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low academic achievement in primary school (10-12) • Learning disability (10-12)
Child's peer Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peers involved in crime and/or anti-social behaviour (7-9; 10-12) 	
Community		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marijuana availability (10-12) • Children and young people in the neighbourhood involved in crime and/or anti-social behaviour (10-12)

The table is designed to highlight potential risk factors but it still depends on the individual circumstances and development of the child. There may be other factors present that determine whether that particular child will become involved in gang or youth violence. Similarly a child may be subject to some of the risks factors that have been identified, but they do not become involved in gang or youth violence because of other influences in their life.

What works in preventing violence in schools and colleges

Young people's involvement in violence is not a new problem. Lots of approaches to tackling this issue have already been tried, and some have been successful. Knowing about these can help leaders and managers of schools and colleges to decide how to prevent the problem, while achieving maximum value for money (based on evidence of what works) and improving the chances of success.

Who to involve

A key issue before choosing a programme is whether to aim it at all pupils/students, at a small group, or at individuals. It is important to understand any specific issues and recognise that different groups (for example, boys and girls) can experience violence in different ways. While a universal programme may be simpler to implement, it may miss some of the more nuanced aspects of violence that affect particular groups or individuals. Some approaches may also be more suited to a targeted approach than others (for example, cognitive behavioural therapy versus social development programmes), which might shape considerations.

Evidence on general approaches

Some approaches to preventing violence have been extensively evaluated, but others have less evidence of effectiveness and so should be approached with caution. Mentoring, anti-bullying

programmes, improving social skills, involving parents and cognitive behavioural therapy all have good evidence of success when applied appropriately. [Resource B](#) provides a summary of the evidence, highlighting approaches that have worked and those where the evidence of success is more limited.

Sources of evidence

There is a range of sources that provide details of the many particular programmes that might be used to tackle violence and problem behaviour in schools and colleges, see [Resource C](#). The websites also provide information on a number of programmes that are currently being evaluated, and so do not yet have results. The approaches included below indicate the effectiveness of some of the main types of programme.

Assessing specific programmes

Educational establishments may have to assess evidence from specific programmes that follow one or more of the general approaches above in order to choose one that is likely to be successful for them. There are a number of key questions to consider when assessing whether particular programmes have been effective.

- what is the specific outcome needed for this group or individual?
- what evidence is there that a programme has achieved this outcome?
- what preparation work, parental permission and follow-up work will be needed?

A simple checklist of questions to ask is attached at [Resource D](#).

Targeting a programme, or developing a new one

There may be a need to tailor a more general approach or even commission a programme that does not have a clearly established history of success in order to address a specific problem. But even where there is little research to go on, there are still some key aspects to consider, including:

- identifying a specific issue;
- targeting the right ages/stage of development; and
- understanding the causes of the problem.

Resource E includes a simple checklist.

Resource A: Legal powers

Staffⁱ powers

Teachers have a number of legal powers to manage pupils' behaviour and impose discipline. The main ones are listed below.

- A statutory power to discipline pupils, which includes the power to issue detentions and to confiscate inappropriate items (Education and Inspections Act 2006). The Department for Education's (DfE's) advice for head teachers and school staff on the power to discipline can be found via the following link: www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/behaviour/behaviourpolicies/f0076803/behaviour-and-discipline-in-schools-a-guide-for-headteachers-and-school-staff
- A statutory power to use reasonable force to control or restrain pupils (Education and Inspections Act 2006). The DfE's advice to schools on this power is available via the following link: www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/behaviour/behaviourpolicies/f0077153/use-of-reasonable-force
- A power to search pupils without consent for a number of 'prohibited items'. These include:
 - knives and weapons;
 - alcohol, illegal drugs and stolen items;
 - tobacco and cigarette papers;
 - fireworks;

ⁱ 'Member of staff', in relation to a school, means any teacher who works at the school and any other person who, with the authority of the head teacher, has lawful control or charge of pupils at the school as defined in the Education Act 1996 (www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/section/550A)

- pornographic images;
- any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage to property; and
- any item banned by the school rules that has been identified in these rules as an item that may be searched for.

The DfE's advice to schools on the power to search can be viewed via the following link: www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/behaviour/behaviourpolicies/f0076897/screening,-searching-and-confiscation

- A power for schools and local authorities to use parenting contracts and seek court-imposed parenting orders relating to children's behaviour (strengthened by the Education and Inspections Act 2006). Advice on this issue is included in the DfE's advice on school attendance (link below) www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/behaviour/attendance/a00216341/advice-on-school-attendance.

Joint enterprise

If a child's presence or actions lead to a crime they could be charged with the same offence as the main offender. For example, if the child provided support or encouragement to a fellow gang member who committed a robbery or killed someone, they too could be charged with murder. Further support is available from the Home Office and details are provided in [Resource C](#).

Gangs, firearms and knives

For more information about the law, visit the gov.uk websites at:

www.gov.uk/find-out-if-i-can-buy-or-carry-a-knife
www.gov.uk/import-controls-on-offensive-weapons

The law focuses on criminal behaviour. If an offender was or is part of a group or a gang, this may lead to a longer sentence.

- It is illegal to carry a knife in a public place, even if it belongs to someone else.
- It is also illegal to carry a folding pocketknife if the edge of the blade exceeds 3 inches (7.6 cm).
- It is illegal to carry a pocketknife if the blade can be locked.
- It is illegal to carry any knife, including folding knives, if there is intent to use it as a weapon, even if it belongs to someone else.
- The maximum sentence for possessing a knife in a public place without a good excuse has been increased from two to four years.
- It is illegal to keep any prohibited firearm, or to carry any firearm – including an imitation – in public, even if it is being carried for someone else.
- The minimum sentence for unlawful possession of a prohibited firearm is three years for 16- to 17-year-olds and five years for adults, with a maximum sentence of 10 years.
- Police can and will search someone if they believe they are carrying a gun, knife or other weapon.
- Police and school staff can also search young people for weapons at school.

Resource B: What works in preventing violence and aggressive behaviour?

Approaches with strong evidence of success⁸

Mentoring

Mentoring (where a mentor works closely with an individual to give advice, and help to identify and solve problems) can prevent future behavioural problems, if it is done well

- More regular contact, longer contacts, and combining with other supportive interventions appear to make mentoring more effective.⁹
- However, the research suggests that caution should be taken when implementing mentoring programmes. Poorly implemented mentoring programmes (for example, unstructured mentoring, or with unmotivated or otherwise unsuitable mentors) can make things worse.
- The Early Intervention Foundation, in collaboration with the Home Office, has published advice on mentoring. The 'Advice for Those Commissioning Mentoring Programmes', provides practical, evidence-based guidance for commissioners and practitioners to maximise the positive impact of any local mentoring provision, and minimise the likelihood of ineffective or unintentionally harmful practice.

Bullying prevention

Anti-bullying programmes (for example, the Olweus Bullying Prevention Programme and KiVa¹⁰) can reduce reported victimisation

- There are many elements of different anti-bullying programmes that are seen as effective, and strategies such as proactive peer support and reactive anti-bullying school-based strategies have been rated as moderately effective by practitioners.
- The most successful programmes include: involving parents; using disciplinary methods; and high duration and intensity programmes.
- However, some types of peer involvement (peer mediation, peer mentoring or peer group pressure as bystanders) as part of an anti-bullying programme may actually increase victimisation.¹¹

Improving social skills

Improving social skills can strengthen school attachment and raise achievement, and can also reduce anti-social/aggressive behaviour and prevent future violence

- Social development programmes can involve managing anger, modifying behaviour, adopting a social perspective, moral development, building social skills, solving social problems, and resolving conflicts.¹² Examples include the Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS) programme¹³ and the Second Steps programme¹⁴, which promote emotional development, self-regulation, and social problem-solving skills.
- Targeted social skills training (such as Participate and Learn Skills) involves helping children to use their time constructively, increasing self-esteem and providing positive role models.¹⁵
- Other examples of social skills programmes with evidence of effectiveness include the 'Good Behaviour Game',¹⁶ the 'Anne Frank' programme,¹⁷ 'It's not OK!'¹⁸ and the SEAL curriculum materials.¹⁹

Involving parents

Programmes that work with both parents and young people have been shown to be successful in reducing behavioural problems and preventing violence

Examples include:

- Home–school partnership programmes that promote parental involvement in their children’s education;
- Multi-systemic therapy, an intensive therapy-based programme provided in the home that works with children and parents to increase young people’s engagement in education or training;²⁰
- Parenting programmes that try to enable carers to fulfil their role effectively (effective for younger children, 3–12 years).²¹

Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT)

Well-administered CBT (for example, anger-coping skills training, problem-solving skills training) has been shown to be effective in addressing aggression and conduct disorders in pre-adolescents

- CBT aims to change the way that young people think and act around a particular issue, and typically involves a range of procedures and exercises in individual or group sessions. It sometimes also involves the family or school in therapy.
- CBT programmes should be organised with the help of a trained professional.²²

Approaches with more limited evidence of effectiveness

Knife arches/ knife wands

- The evidence is unclear on whether routinely searching students for weapons on their entry into school, for example, by installing knife arches or using knife wands, has an impact on levels of violence.²³
- However, making ‘safe spaces’ (that is building an educational environment that young people feel is well monitored/controlled, with harassment and victimisation actively prevented) in general may be one way to address violence in educational establishments.
- Safe school environments can improve academic achievement, reduce weapons-carrying and prevent violence in general.²⁴ Knife arches may have a part to play in this.

Education/ attitude change programmes

- There are a number of school-based education programmes targeted at reducing youth violence and gang membership, or changing attitudes to gangs, guns and knife crime. However, few have been evaluated and it is uncertain whether they have a long-term impact on behaviour. The ‘Realising Ambition’ project is currently evaluating a number of such crime prevention interventions, and they are in the process of obtaining more data on the outcomes of these programmes. The evidence will be published regularly until the end of the programme in 2017 (see [Resource C](#)).

Extra-curricular activities

- There is some evidence to suggest that extra-curricular programmes that provide well structured, youth-led activities (for example, sports, art, music, drama) may have a small positive effect on self-esteem and risky behaviour.
- However, it is not clear whether any particular activities are more or less effective than others.
- Some studies suggest that loosely structured activities may actually make things worse (possibly because unstructured clubs mean that young people will be meeting peers who may frequently engage in crime).
- Whatever the specific activities, the research suggests that programmes should be comprehensive (addressing a range of risk factors for violence, for example, social skills, behavioural control and peer networks), age/development appropriate, long term, and that they should attract, retain and build good relationships with young people who are genuinely at risk of offending.²⁵

Conflict resolution

- Conflict resolution programmes typically include a series of steps to help individuals to develop non-violent responses to conflict: setting ground rules; listening; finding common interests; brainstorming solutions to the problem; and discussing solutions.²⁶
- A survey by Goldsmiths College for the Anti-Bullying Alliance, commissioned by the Department for Education in 2011 reported a high degree of teacher satisfaction in using restorative approaches to resolve conflict.²⁷
- Evidence about the effectiveness of conflict resolution is limited. The studies that have been done show mixed results, although some positive outcomes have been reported.²⁸

Approaches with a lack of evidence

Ex-gang member testimonials

There are multiple examples of former gang members visiting schools to talk about their experiences in the gang and why they left. However, there is insufficient evidence to say whether this is an effective approach to tackling youth violence.

Drama education programmes

Such programmes use plays or films to show the impact of violence in order to change the attitudes of the audience. There is insufficient evidence to say that this is an effective approach to tackling youth violence.

Some other interventions can be ineffective or even have a negative impact, for example, ‘scared straight’ style programmes that look to deter young people from crime by taking them on visits to prisons. The World Health Organization report into violence and health contains more details of what programmes might have an adverse impact.³⁰

Resource C: Repositories of evidence (evaluated and new/developing programmes) and other resources for schools

Details	Types of programme	Access	Quality criteria ⁱⁱ	Number of programmes ⁱⁱⁱ
<p>Blueprints for Healthy Youth Development</p> <p>(www.blueprint-sprograms.com)</p>	<p>Multiple child outcomes – education, health, youth justice and social care activities.</p>	<p>Open access</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>56 to date (March 2015). All are underpinned by the highest standards of evidence.</p> <p>The Social Research Unit at Dartington is collaborating with Blueprints for Success to bring this database to the UK and Europe.</p> <p>http://dartington.org.uk/projects/blueprints-for-success/</p>

ii Some of the repositories have quality criteria that help to give confidence that any claimed benefits for programmes are robust.

iii At time of writing (May 2013).

Details	Types of programme	Access	Quality criteria ⁱ	Number of programmes ⁱⁱ
Early Intervention Foundation Guidebook: http://guidebook.eif.org.uk/	Early interventions for children and young people between 0 and 19 in nine key domains, including preventing crime, violence and ASB.	Open access	Yes	50 at date of publication (March 2015), but this number will increase during 2015-16 as reviews into a) what works to prevent gang and youth violence and b) what works to help children develop social and emotional skills conclude.
Centre of Analysis for Youth Transitions (CAYT) repository of impact studies (www.ifs.org.uk/centres/caytRep-Publications)	'Youth interventions' relating to behaviour programmes, school attendance, educational attainment, and employment.	Open access	Yes	13 (4 related to violence).
Project Oracle (www.project-oracle.com)	Interventions broadly related to improving outcomes for young people, specifically in London.	Membership required (Free)	Yes	

Details	Types of programme	Access	Quality criteria ⁱ	Number of programmes ⁱⁱ
<p>Safer Colleges www.safecolleges.org.uk/guns-gangs-knives/introduction</p>	<p>Provides case studies, guidance and tools to help further education colleges address violence.</p>	<p>Open access</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>9 case studies, 2 good practice reports.</p>
<p>Arts Alliance Evidence Library www.artsevidence.org.uk</p>	<p>Provides a catalogue of research evidence related to effective arts programmes that are used in the criminal justice sector.</p>	<p>Open access</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Over 70. These cover 11 different participant types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • offenders (48); • detainees (1); • Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) (2); • families of offenders (4); • ex-offenders (1); • prison staff (3); • public audience (1); • young people at risk (1); • school pupils (7); • staff (3); • non-offenders (1).

Details	Types of programme	Access	Quality criteria ⁱ	Number of programmes ⁱⁱ
Local Government Authority (LGA) Knowledge Hub – Gang and Youth Violence Special Interest Group	Online forum through which practitioners involved in tackling gang and youth violence can share and discuss good and promising practice.	Membership required (Free)	No	100 in total, with 40 good and promising practice case studies.

Other sources of what works

Allen G, (2011) Early Intervention: *The Next Steps – An Independent Report to Her Majesty’s Government*. London: Department for Work and Pensions. Available at: www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/early-intervention-next-steps.pdf. Review of existing early-intervention projects rather than a repository of violence prevention interventions. The report identifies the most effective early-intervention programmes according to three levels of evaluation quality.

Realising Ambition: Information about 25 ‘proven’ and ‘promising’ interventions currently (May 2013) being replicated across the UK, as part of a £25 million Big Lottery Fund investment. All interventions are designed to target risk factors associated with subsequent involvement in the criminal justice system. Available at: www.catch-22.org.uk/Realising-Ambition.

The education endowment foundation website:
<http://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/toolkit>

Department for Education (2011) *The use and effectiveness of anti-bullying strategies in schools*, a report by Goldsmiths, University of London, April 2011. Examines strategies that schools (in England) use to deal with episodes of bullying. London: Department for Education. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-use-and-effectiveness-of-anti-bullying-strategies-in-schools>.

Evaluation approaches

Many of the websites in the table above have information on how to evaluate programmes. There is also a useful introduction to evaluation provided by the **Web Centre for Social Research Methods**: www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/intreval.php.

Goldacre, B. (2013) *Building Evidence into Education*. Sets out how teachers in England can build evidence-based practice in education. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/building-evidence-into-education>.

Other resources for schools and colleges

The **Safer Colleges** website includes a range of self-assessment, guidance and case studies to help college leaders and their senior teams 'to consider the issues of gangs, guns and knives within their college and community. Available at: www.safecolleges.org.uk/guns-gangs-knives/introduction.

Teachers TV is now closed, but there is a range of non-exclusive distribution agreements that will ensure that the 3,500, 15-minute programmes in the archive are still available to watch online. See: www.education.gov.uk/schools/toolsandinitiatives/teacherstv.

BBC Three's schools series *My Murder*. Available at: www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b01f6qz1.

Joint Enterprise training pack and DVD. A Home Office education training pack and DVD to increase young people's awareness of the law on joint enterprise, which allows for group members involved in an offence to be liable for the main offence. Overall aims are to illustrate the further risks of gang involvement through highlighting the fact that it is possible to be convicted of a serious offence, such as murder or another violent offence, without striking the fatal blow or, in some cases, even physically

taking part. The training packs will be available shortly to order, free of charge, from the Home Office storage and distribution centre. To order: email homeoffice@prolog.co.uk

Brook Traffic Light Tool (www.brook.org.uk/traffic-lights) is a Department for Education funded online resource to help professionals who work with children and young people to identify, assess and respond appropriately to sexual behaviours. The tool enables professionals across different agencies to work to the same criteria when making decisions, to protect children and young people with a unified approach.

This is Abuse (<http://thisisabuse.direct.gov.uk>) is a Home Office campaign that challenges young people's acceptance of sexual and relationship abuse, encouraging victims to seek help and perpetrators to change their behaviour. The campaign includes a number of powerful videos aimed at young people. Materials are available for teachers from:

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97773/teen-abuse-toolkit.pdf or by emailing VAWGCampaign@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk.

'Sexting' in schools: advice and support around self-generated images provides practical advice about how schools should respond to a 'sexting' incident, including how to support a child whose image has been shared and whether or not devices can be searched. Available at: www.securus-software.com/DownloadableContent/sexting.zip.

Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP)

Think You Know. Available at: www.thinkuknow.co.uk/Teachers and www.thinkuknow.co.uk/backtoschool CEOP provides training and education resources to use with children and young people to increase their (and their parent's) understanding of online safety, including sexting and cyber-bullying.

Ending Violence Against Women Coalition Resources for preventing violence against women and girls in schools. Available at: www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk/resources-for-preventing-vawg-in-schools. A list of resources and examples of work in schools to tackle domestic abuse, sexual abuse and honour-based violence.

NSPCC

Available at www.nspcc.org.uk. The NSPCC has expanded their helpline to provide advice to parents or other adults worried about a young person at risk of gang involvement. www.nspcc.org.uk/fighting-for-childhood/news-opinion/gangs-helpline-service-launches/

Fearless

Available at www.fearless.org. A website where young people can access non-judgemental information and advice about crime and criminality. The site also provides a safe place to give information anonymously about crime.

Resource D: How do you know if a programme has been effective in the past?

Key questions to ask	Be confident if...	Be wary if...
1) What is the programme specifically trying to achieve?	There is a clear link between what is being done and what outcomes are expected/claimed.	The way that benefits will be achieved is unclear, or seems far-fetched.
2) How is 'success' measured?	Objective outcome measures are used, looking specifically at the targeted group or characteristics (for example, age, gender, specific behavioural issues).	Improvements are presented 'as fact' with no supporting evidence, or do not seem relevant to the group or characteristics of interest. Outcome measures are perception-based, and may not reflect the real situation.
3) Who has the programme helped?	The sample of individuals who feature in the report seem representative of the total group of interest.	The report seems to 'cherry-pick' people to look at, or there is a good reason to believe that the people in the report may show more benefit than others.
4) Is any change seen really due to the programme?	A comparison group has been identified, so an analysis can be done of what would have happened had the programme not been in place.	Analysis only looks at before-programme versus after-programme – something else could be responsible for any changes.

Key questions to ask	Be confident if...	Be wary if...
5) Are any claimed benefits sustained?	Benefits have been noted over a reasonable time period, not just immediately after the programme.	The time period when benefits have been claimed seems short, or is unclear.
6) Would this work in my school or college?	There is enough information for you to say that you could replicate success in your specific context, or the programme was implemented in an environment similar to yours.	The problem being tackled is very different from the one you are facing, or the programme was put in place in a very different context.

Resource E: What if there is no specific evidence, or the programme is new?

Try to...	Because...
1) Identify and then address a specific issue	Successful approaches tend to address particular issues, are shaped to fit particular contexts, and are based on a thorough understanding of the problem. For example, research in schools suggests that violence programmes with an anti-gangs focus that followed a formal needs assessment (based on data to identify areas for improvement) were associated with better methods, involved more students, and achieved a higher level of use. ³¹
2) Target the right age group	While you may need to address a specific problem immediately with an older age group (for example, knife carrying), generally there is better evidence of improvements across a range of outcomes for early-stage interventions. Early-stage interventions may prevent problems that lead to an individual becoming involved in violence.
3) Consider the causes of violence	Research has identified factors that tend to be associated with violent victimisation or offending, although no single factor 'causes' violence. ³² In addition to contextual elements, key factors relate to the individuals themselves (for example, whether they have mental health or substance abuse difficulties), their relationships (poor parental support, problematic peer networks), and their community (high crime levels, local drug markets, difficulties in accessing victim care services). To prevent violence, you could look for evidence of problems across the risk factors above, and try to target them with a range of programmes.

Try to...	Because...
4) Work in partnership	Working in partnership with other organisations can help you to understand and address contextual factors (for example, violent events, availability of weapons) that might be encouraging violence in your educational establishment.
5) Evaluate what you have done	<p>Evaluation promotes accountability, helps to establish what has been achieved, and can inform the development and improvement of the programme in the absence of initial evidence.</p> <p>A good evaluation plan will have a set of questions that need to be answered and a clear process identified for addressing them, including the kind of information that will be needed, where and how it will be obtained, and what 'success' will look like. You may want to consider tracking your programme using records held by your establishment (for example, attendance, attainment, behaviour), attitude surveys (for example, learners, staff, parents, community), and information from local partners (for example, police data).</p>

Endnotes

- 1 See, for example: www.yjb.gov.uk/Publications/Resources/Downloads/Risk%20Factors%20Summary%20fv.pdf
- 2 See, for example: **Walker, H. M.** and **Gresham, F. M.** (1997) 'Making schools safer and violence free', *Intervention in School and Clinic*, vol. 32 (4), pp 199–204; **Small, M.** and **Dressler Tetrick, K.** (2001) *School Violence: An overview*. Washington DC: US Department of Justice; **Justino, P., Leone, M.** and **Salardi, P.** (2013) 'Short- and Long-Term Impact of Violence on Education: The Case of Timor Leste', *World Bank Economic Review*; **Duttweiler, P. C.** and **Smink, J.** (1997) 'Critical strategies for effective dropout prevention', *School Safety Journal*, pp 4–9; and **Howell, J. C.** (1998) *Youth gangs: an overview*. Washington DC: US Department of Justice.
- 3 See, for example: www.gov.uk/government/news/ending-gang-and-youth-violence and www.gov.uk/government/policies/reducing-knife-gun-and-gang-crime
- 4 For more information see: www.gov.uk/government/publications/ending-gang-and-youth-violence-provisional-funding-allocations.
- 5 Available at: www.education.gov.uk/a00199342/getting-the-simple-things-right-charlie-taylors-behaviour-checklists.
- 6 See: www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/behaviour/bullying/f0076899/preventing-and-tackling-bullying.
- 7 **Department for Education** (2008) *Information Sharing: Guidance for practitioners and managers*. London: Department for Education. This guidance supports frontline practitioners working in child or adult services who have to make decisions about sharing personal information on a case-by-case basis. The guidance can be used to

supplement local guidance and encourage good practice in information sharing and is available at: www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/strategy/integratedworking/a0072915/information-sharing. Also **Department for Education** (2013) *Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children*. London: Department for Education. Available at: <https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DFE-00030-2013>.

- 8 The evidence presented here is an indication of the research, rather than an exhaustive list, and many of the approaches have other benefits across a range of risky behaviours. It should be noted generally that the strongest evidence of effectiveness is for early-stage interventions. A useful source of further information is **Gottfredson, D. C., Cook, P. J. and Na, C.** (2011) 'School-Based Crime Prevention'. In *The Oxford Handbook of Crime Prevention*, Welsh, B. C. and Farrington, D. P. (eds). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- 9 **Jolliffe, D. and Farrington, D. P.** (2008) *The Influence of Mentoring on Reoffending*. Stockholm: National Council for Crime Prevention; **DuBois, D. L., Holloway, B. E., Valentine, J. C. and Cooper, H.** (2002) 'Effectiveness of Mentoring Programs for Youth: a meta-analytical review', *American Journal of Community Psychology*, vol. 30 (2), pp 157–197; **Jekielek, S. M., Moore, K. A., Hair, E. C. and Scarupa, H. J.** (2002) *Mentoring: A promising strategy for youth development*. Washington DC: Child Trends.
- 10 The Olweus Bullying Prevention Programme was developed in Norway and involves activities at the school, classroom and individual levels. These activities include assessment of the nature and prevalence of bullying in a school, defining school rules against bullying and interventions with students with a history of bullying and/or victimisation. KiVa is a bullying prevention programme developed in Finland. KiVa involves a universal, school-wide component that aims to

change norms about the acceptability of bullying amongst pupils and to support students and intervene when bullying occurs. KiVa also involves a targeted component where dedicated KiVa teams work with identified bullies, see, for example, **Salmivalli, C., Kärnä, A. and Poskiparta, E.** (2009) 'Development, evaluation, and diffusion of a national anti-bullying program (KiVa)'. In Handbook of youth prevention science, Doll, B. Pfohl, W. and Yoon, J. (eds). New York: Routledge.

- 11 **Farrington, D. P. and Ttofi, M. M.** (2009) 'School-based programs to reduce bullying and victimization', Campbell Systematic Reviews; **Ttofi, M. M., Farrington, D. P. and Baldry, A. C.** (2008) Effectiveness of Programmes to Reduce School Bullying: A Systematic Review. Stockholm: Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention. Ttofi et al. identified the most effective elements of anti-bullying programmes as parent training, improved playground supervision, disciplinary methods, school conferences, information for parents, classroom rules, classroom management, and videos; **Thompson, F. and Smith, P. K.** (2011) The Use and Effectiveness of Anti-Bullying Strategies in Schools, DfE Research Brief DFE-RB098. London: Department for Education. Available at: <https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/DFE-RB098.pdf> – a survey of schools and local authorities in England. Practitioners rated proactive peer support and reactive anti-bullying school-based strategies as moderately effective.
- 12 **World Health Organization** (2010). World report on violence and health. WHO.
- 13 See, for example, www.promoteprevent.org/publications/ebi-factsheets/promoting-alternative-thinking-strategies-paths

- 14 See, for example, www.promoteprevent.org/publications/ebi-factsheets/second-step-violence-prevention-curriculum
- 15 **Beelmann, A.** and **Lösel, F.** (2006) 'The effectiveness of programmes for the prevention of aggression, violence, delinquency and crime in childhood and adolescence: A critical overview', *Zeitschrift für Politische Psychologie*, vol. 14, pp 313–330. Cited in World Health Organization (2009) *Violence prevention: the evidence*, WHO. Note that social skills training may be considered a type of cognitive behavioural therapy.
- 16 A classroom-based management strategy used by teachers to socialise young school-age children and reduce aggressive and disruptive behaviours. This has been extensively studied (for example, **Barrish, H. H., Saunders, M.** and **Wolf, M. M.** (1969) 'Good behaviour game: effects of individual contingencies for group consequences on disruptive behaviour in a classroom', *Journal of Applied Behavioural Analysis*, vol. 2 (2), pp 119–24.
- 17 This draws on the life story of Anne Frank and her diary to: challenge prejudice; reduce racial and ethnic hatred; encourage individuals to embrace democracy, positive attitudes and citizenship; and encourage respect for others, thus preventing a move towards hate-related offending. Other issues covered include identity, stereotyping and diversity. It has been assessed in an unpublished thesis **Fraser, P.** (2011) *Does Holocaust Education Impact upon Children's Attitudes Toward Others? A study examining the impact of learning about Anne Frank's life on eleven and twelve year olds, implicit and explicit attitudes toward out-groups*, Thesis Part 2. Also see: www.ifs.org.uk/caytpubs/CAYT_Rep13.pdf.
- 18 A group of violence-prevention interventions that aim to change young people's attitudes towards key issues, such as alcohol use, racism, homophobic violence, arson and other anti-social behaviour, abusive relationships and guns and

gangs. The programme has a dual aim of changing young people's attitudes towards problematic issues as well as increasing attainment by supporting the national curriculum so that students become more engaged. See: www.arieltrust.com/detail/Its_Not_OK/186/82/staff.aspx (there is also a link on the page to a review of evaluations of the programme).

- 19 Available at: www.teachfind.com/national-strategies/seal-curriculum-materials-year-year.
- 20 **Ross, A., Duckworth, K., Smith, D. J., Wyness, G. and Schoon, I.** (2011) *Prevention and Reduction: A review of strategies for intervening early to prevent or reduce youth crime and anti-social behaviour*. London: Department for Education; **Greene, J. and Pranis, K.** (2007) *Gang Wars: The failure of enforcement tactics and the need for effective public safety strategies*. Washington DC: Justice Policy Institute.
- 21 See, for example, www.whatworksforchildren.org.uk/docs/Nuggets/pdfs/parenting%20nugget.pdf.
- 22 For further details, including the contact details of organisations that may be able to help with setting up such a programme, see, for example: www.barnardos.org.uk/cognitive-behaviour-therapy-for-behavioural-problems-and-conduct-disorder-in-pre-adolescence-2.pdf.
- 23 **Sethi, D., Hughes, K., Bellis, M., Mitis, F. and Racioppi, F.** (2010) *European Report on Preventing Violence and Knife Crime among Young People*. World Health Organization.
- 24 **World Health Organization** (2010) op. cit., endnote 12.
- 25 **World Health Organization** (2010) op. cit., endnote 12; **Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. P. and Pachan, M.** (2010) 'A meta-analysis of after-school programs that seek to promote personal and social skills in children and adolescents' *American Journal of Community Psychology*, vol. 45, pp 294–309. Drama programmes have also been associated with anger reduction in adult offender populations, see **Blacker,**

- J., Watson, A. and Beech, A. R.** (2008) 'A combined drama-based and CBT approach to working with self-reported anger aggression', *Criminal Behaviour and Mental Health*, vol. 18, pp 129–137.
- 26 **Crawford, D. K. and Bodine, R. J.** (1996) *Conflict Resolution Education: A guide to implementing programs in schools, youth-serving organizations, and community and juvenile justice settings*. Washington DC: US Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; and US Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program.
- 27 **Department for Education** (2011) *The use and effectiveness of anti-bullying strategies in schools*, a report by Goldsmiths, University of London, April 2011. Examines strategies that schools (in England) use to deal with episodes of bullying. London: Department for Education. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-use-and-effectiveness-of-anti-bullying-strategies-in-schools>.
- 28 For example, **Shuval, K., Pillsbury, C. A., Cavanaugh, B., McGruder, L., McKinney, C.M., Massey, Z. and Groce, N.E** (2010) 'Evaluating the impact of conflict resolution on urban children's violence-related attitudes and behaviors in New Haven, Connecticut, through a community–academic partnership', *Health Education Research*, vol. 25 (5), pp 757–768.
- 29 The Gang Resistance Education and Training (GREAT) programme in the US has been evaluated and showed some short-term improvements in attitudes and behaviours, see **Esbensen, F.-A., Osgood, D. W., Taylor, T. J., Peterson, D. and Freng, A.** (2001) 'How great is G.R.E.A.T.?: Results from a quasi-experimental design', *Criminology and Public Policy*, vol. 1, pp 87–118; **Esbensen, F.-A., Peterson, D., Taylor, T. J., Freng, A., Osgood, D. W., Carson, D. C. and Matsuda,**

K. N. (2011) 'Evaluation and evolution of the Gang Resistance Education and Training (GREAT) Program', *Journal of School Violence*, vol. 10, pp 53–70.

30 **World Health Organization** (2010) op. cit., endnote 12.

31 **Goldstein, A. P. and Kodluboy, D. W.** (1998) *Gangs in Schools: Signs, Symbols, and Solutions*. Champaign, Illinois, US: Research Press.

32 **Sethi et al.** (2010) op. cit., endnote 24; **Bellis, M., Hughes, K., Perkins, C. and Bennett, A.** (2013) *Protecting People, Promoting Health: A public health approach to violence prevention for England*. North-West Public Health Observatory/Department of Health.

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