

Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP)

The Violence Reduction Network (VRN) is a wide alliance of groups, communities and organisations from across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR). We believe that violence is preventable and we share the common goal of preventing and reducing violence through understanding and tackling its root causes. One of the programmes that the VRN has invested in is **Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP)**.

MVP is a peer-led leadership and bystander programme developed in the United States by Educator, Dr Jackson Katz. Harnessing the power of peers, it trains young people as Mentors and equips them with the confidence, knowledge and skills to identify and speak out against bullying, abusive behaviour and violence. It aims to tackle the beliefs, attitudes and culture which can give the message that violence within and outside of relationships is acceptable. MVP is inclusive; drawing on a bystander approach. Mentors aim to influence, motivate and empower all young people to play their role. Ultimately MVP promotes the healthy social norms and culture which is known to prevent violence.



The VRN is initially supporting the implementation of **MVP in secondary schools** across LLR although the programme is transferable to many other settings including further and higher education, youth groups, sport clubs and the workplace. By initially investing in schools, Mentors will not only have a positive impact within their school but the wider community will also benefit as the Mentors' learning (and that of their peers) cascade into other settings and eventually into adulthood. The VRN encourages the involvement of partners and communities in supporting the implementation of MVP in secondary schools as appropriate to each school.

Within schools, MVP supports the development of safe and supportive learning environments by empowering every young person to play their role. It's inclusive and helps build healthy relationships now and in the future.

Students, usually from Year 10/11, are trained as Mentors and are provided with a toolkit to be a role model and promote discussion amongst friendship and peer groups. Topics focus on a range of social issues relevant to young people. Awareness is raised and beliefs, attitudes and culture are explored and challenged during the process of learning. Importantly, MVP seeks to inspire individual leadership around the issues being discussed.

MVP provides young people with the confidence and tools to safely act when they see or hear about anything of concern. 'Don't be a bystander, be a friend' is a mantra of MVP and the programme provides young people with a range of options to enable them to act.

MVP helps schools meet the requirements of the Department of Education PHSE programme and OFSTED to keep children safe, develop their personal well-being and equip them for adulthood. It is also sustainable; during and after their time as Mentors, young people will have a wider impact on their family, wider peer groups and communities. Younger students who have benefitted from the

Evaluation of MVP in other areas has demonstrated a positive impact on incidents of bullying and violence as well as temporary and permanent exclusions.

Implementing MVP in Schools

Any secondary school in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland can express an interest in MVP. The process for this, as well as details on the commitment required, is summarised below. There are no charges for Schools but implementation is dependent on a commitment in time from all involved.



About our Trainer

The VRN is proud to be working with Graham Goulden (BA), founder of Cultivating Minds UK, to bring MVP to Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. Graham 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.

Graham is a passionate advocate of the bystander approach. He 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 including hairdressers, dentists, vets, fire officers, police & prison officers, bar & security staff, the military as well as in local communities

Graham's role is to support the VRN Team to mobilise for MVP and provide the training and early support for Schools. He is also supporting the VRN and partners to understand the wider potential of Bystander approaches including meeting with senior leaders and our Campaigns team. In time, Graham will offer a Train the Trainers programme to our area with the aim of developing local capability and increasing sustainability.

Find out more

We recommend the following TED talk by Dr Jackson Katz:

https://www.ted.com/talks/jackson_katz_violence_against_women_it_s_a_men_s_issue

This video about MVP in a USA school is also worth a watch:

<https://youtu.be/0xu8Qf4FIM0>