

Mentor in Prevention Violence

### Target population

Local authority and secondary school leaders, teachers, support staff, parents and community partners who work with young people.

The Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) programme also makes use of young people within the school to act as peer mentors who deliver MVP sessions to younger peers in the school.

### Delivery organisation

MVP is one of the original gender violence, sexual harassment and bullying prevention programs. It was first developed as a sports culture initiative in 1993 by Dr. Jackson Katz and his colleagues at Northeastern University's Center for the Study of Sport in Society. MVP was first brought to Scotland in 2011, and is currently operating in more than 20 local authorities across Scotland by the Scottish Violence Reduction Unit ([www.actionviolence.org](http://www.actionviolence.org)) and in partnership with Education Scotland.

### Mode and context of delivery

MVP motivates everyone to get involved in safely challenging abuse. It is initially delivered by adults to the young people they work with, but as the programme sees students as a school's greatest resource, teachers then train senior pupils to act as peer mentors by delivering sessions to the younger students in the school.

MVP aims to empower students to safely speak out against all forms of violence from rape and sexual harassment to bullying and abusive behaviour, through group sessions within educational settings. To note, MVP has been developed more recently to be tailored to pub and club settings, as well as employment settings.

### Level/Nature of staff expertise required

For adults working with children, there are three training options:

- Option one – a two-day MVP mentor support team training

This training is intended for any new school intending on implementing the MVP programme. New schools are asked to commit to training a core group of staff and partners before implementation. This two-day training allows time to practice using the MVP materials in a supportive environment as well as time for implementation planning within your school groups.

- Option two – a one day capacity building

This training is for schools to grow their MVP team and build capacity within their schools. This is a great opportunity to build partners into your MVP delivery as well as additional school staff interested in becoming involved. The range of partners is not exhaustive and may include local youth work provision, anti-bullying and violence against women organisations, police, sports coaches amongst others.

- Option three – a two-day training for trainers

This training is for experienced MVP staff to become Local Authority MVP trainers. Any future training opportunities will be circulated via Local Authority MVP coordinators.

Within MVP training attendees will be introduced to the MVP Programme with a particular focus on the 5 Core Components of MVP:

- Exploring violence through a gendered lens
- Developing leadership
- Using a bystander approach
- Recognising the scope of violent behaviour
- Challenging victim blaming

### Intensity/extent of engagement with target group(s)

Adults trained to deliver MVP are encouraged to spread the MVP messages to as many pupils as possible. Pupils are required to engage with two core sessions and a total of 16 topics, as well as a number of mentor training films.

### Description of intervention

MVP is designed to train students to speak out against rape, dating violence, sexual harassment, bullying and all forms of violent and abusive behaviour. It focuses on an innovative 'bystander' approach that empowers each student to take an active role in promoting a positive school climate. Within the MVP Programme young people are identified not as victims or perpetrators but as empowered bystanders able to support and even challenge abusive and bullying peers. Young people are provided with a range of safe options which can prevent situations from escalating.

The heart of the training consists of role plays which allow students to construct and practice viable options in response to incidents of harassment, abuse or violence before, during or after the incident occurs. Students are able to identify dangerous behaviours as forms of violence and learn that there is not just one way to confront violence and develop valuable skills to build their personal resolve and act when faced with difficult situations.

There are 16 topics to be explored in MVP:

- Insults – name calling
- Group chat – online abuse
- Left out – isolation
- Rumours – nasty gossip

- Corridor – domestic violence in relationships
- Text messages – controlling behaviour
- Pressure sexting – coercion
- Photos sexting – images
- Labelled – shaming
- Knife – carrying of weapons
- Words – homophobic language
- Names – Transgender bullying
- Exposure – viewing pornography
- Exploitation
- Expectations – impact of pornography on relationships
- Party

There are also 15 downloadable mentor training films to use within the sessions:

- Break The Box
- Dover Dashcam
- Katz and bystander
- Miss Representation
- South Africa social experiment
- St Columbas S6
- Tea and Consent
- Tough Guise
- Who are you – MVP
- Katz Involving Men
- Katz: use of language
- Liverpool Street Station
- MVP Leadership
- MVP violence pyramid
- Tough Guise for mentees

## Evaluation

The most recent evaluation of MVP was conducted between 2017 and 2018. It is estimated that 2080 mentors were trained which is an increase of 500 from the previous year.

The evaluation question “*What has been the impact of MVP on your senior mentors and the wider school community?*” was asked to 75 MVP trainees. A total of 43 participants responded, with most noting increased mentor confidence (44%) and increased pupil leadership (23%), and a further 23% commenting on the positive impact of the programme on building relationships within schools, both between senior and younger pupils, and between staff and pupils. Fourteen percent of respondents led to an increase in bystander intervention or reporting of incidents.

*“The personal and social development the senior mentors encounter is amazing. It is awesome to see how they grow in skills and confidence. The relationship between SM, YP and staff is excellent.”*

*“Mentors have intervened in fights/arguments between younger pupils.”*

Thirty-eight participants answered the question *“In what ways, if any, has MVP contributed to the ethos and culture of your school?”*. Of these, 18% commented on the way that MVP contributes to implementing their school values, with one participant suggesting that through MVP, pupils were empowered to challenge these. There were also positive comments about the perception of programme impact on wider school ethos and culture.

*“It has helped raise the implementation of the school values. It has also changed the attitudes”*

*“We are able to reference it in a variety of discussions with pupils as they go through the lessons. Pupils are inclined to challenge behaviour (most often by telling an adult).”*

Participants also gave a number of examples of how young people have taken action since being involved with the MVP programme.

*“My social ed class pupil said 'snitches get stitches'. Rest of class told him he was wrong and he had a responsibility.”*

*“There was an incident on a school bus that was witnessed by a MVP mentor who dealt with it there and then. She felt really pleased she had the MVP knowledge to sort it out.”*

Further positive findings, as well as an outline of challenges, can be found at the reference below.

### References

Violence Reduction Unit (2018). *MVP Scotland mentors in violence prevention*. Retrieved from Action on Violence: <http://actiononviolence.org/resources>

[www.actiononviolence.org/resources](http://www.actiononviolence.org/resources)

### Contact details

[www.mvpscotland.org.uk](http://www.mvpscotland.org.uk)