West Yorkshire
Violence Reduction
Partnership

Delivered by
West Yorkshire Combined Authority | Tracy Brabin Mayor of West Yorkshire

PhotoVoice.

In July 2024, the West Yorkshire Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP) launched its Child First Framework which was co-produced with 455 children across West Yorkshire.

Leeds Youth Service played a huge role in creating the framework, with over 100 children and young people taking part in the co-production sessions. We are keen to make sure that the Child First Framework is embedded into all our work.

The 2024 UK Youth Parliament Make Your Mark report indicated that the main concern for children and young people in Leeds was Crime and Safety. With participation and empowerment being one of the key pillars of Leeds' vision for youth work, this gave us an exciting opportunity to try something new! We wanted to capture young people's views on safety in an innovative, fun and engaging way – and **PhotoVoice** was born!

All quotes used throughout this photo book are taken directly from the children and young people involved in the project.

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Foreword

PhotoVoice is a creative research methodology that uses photography to gather the views of communities. To do this, James and his fantastic youth work team engaged with young people from six areas on this project, giving out disposable cameras and tasking them with taking photos that answered the following questions:

1. **What makes you feel safe in your community?**
2. **What do people in your community think about young people?**
3. **What would you like people in your community to think about young people?**

After taking the photos, Georgia from the VRP spent time with each group to explore the narrative behind their photos. Young people then worked with photographer Daniel Wheeler from Take It Easy Lab to design their exhibition and choose which photos to include.

Throughout this photo book you will see the photos selected by young people and the meaning behind them. Key themes emerging from the project include:

- The value of youth workers in young people's lives.
- The importance of physical safety features in communities.
- Availability of positive activities for young people.

These are just some of our reflections, but we would love to hear about your takeaways!

This project has been a fantastic experience, allowing us to try out new and creative ways to capture children and young people's views. We hope you enjoy this photo book and reflect on how we can all learn from their insights.

We would like to thank everyone who has helped make this project a reality, especially all the children and young people who chose to take part, and we're excited to see what comes next!

Georgia Watkinson
Research & Evaluation Specialist
West Yorkshire Violence Reduction Partnership

James McCarthy
Manager
Leeds Youth Service

“Photographs are amazing things in terms of allowing us to see our own social environments and the way we see the world.”

– **Dan Wheeler**, Take it Easy Lab

Swarcliffe

"Graffiti is very inappropriate and makes our community look scruffy."

"I think graffiti is bad because people are ruining the property."

"Taking photos of cameras making sure everything's ok, taking pictures of lamp posts to find your way."

"I don't like the ginnels because they scare me and they are dark."

"Alleyways are scary because I feel like I get followed."

"Teens on bikes are intimidating."

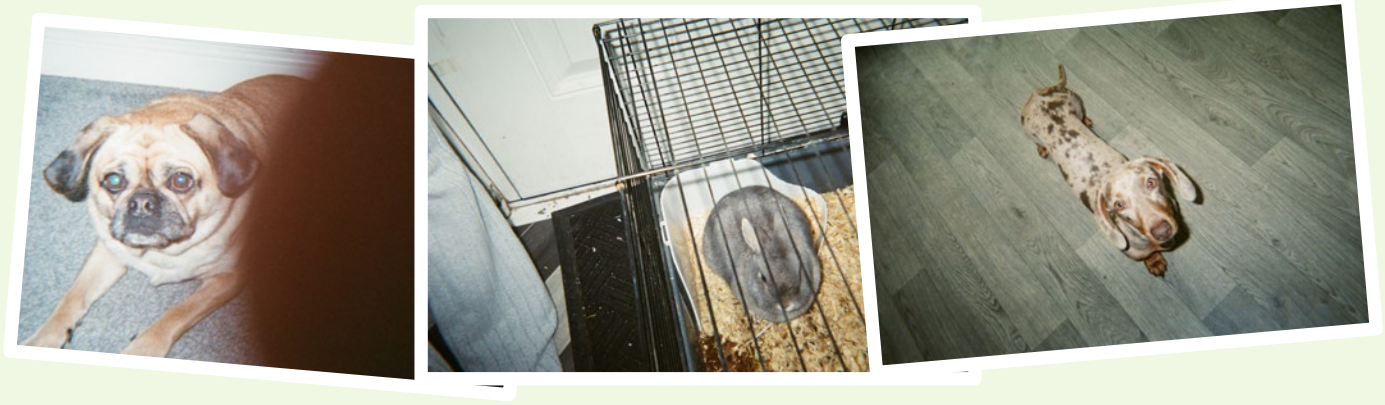
"Making the environment really bad for us and ruining property."

"Causing pollution when people put loads of rubbish on the street."

"I think they should fill the potholes in because you can trip over them."

Swarcliffe

"Makes me happy."



"Comforter - makes us feel safe."

"Gives me a responsibility."

"My school is amazing always someone to talk to without being judged and love to help out."

"School is ok when teachers are nice to you and help you."

"The police officers make me feel safe because they ride round and since I came to youthie I know them really good."

"I like PCSOs coming to youth club."

"What I like about youth workers is I can express my feelings when I am angry or sad."

"I enjoyed going out with Deeta to take the photos."

"They make me feel safe."

"They show respect."

Swarcliffe

“I don’t feel safe on the streets because there are no crossing places.”

Richmond Hill

I was so close to death but somehow,
I survived the fall.

I fell through the glass, 30ft down.

I fractured my pelvis,
ripped my leg and ingers open,
but somehow managed to walk out.

Being so close to death made me
realise how important life is
and something should be done
to protect young lives.

My name is Kav, and this is my story!

EEP

Richmond Hill

Horsforth & Seacroft

"Mostly safe, close, local."

"Sometimes people do stupid things."

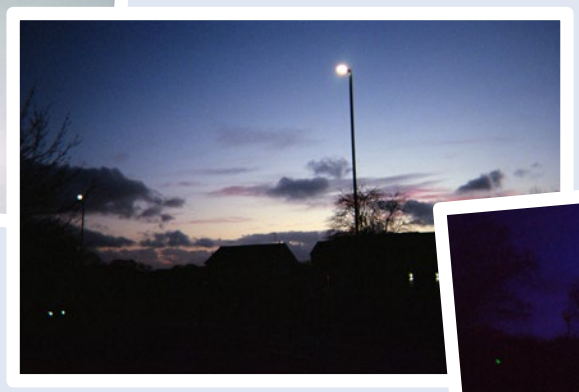
"The media doesn't give people a choice, they only print negative stuff."

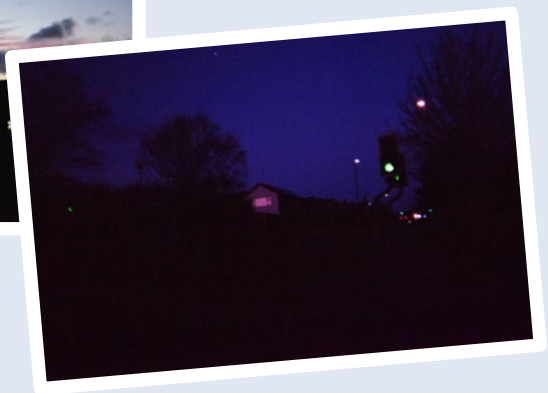
"There's loads of positive stuff but they don't print that."

"Young people are on the front page, but the MP story is in the middle."

“I feel safe in all of Horsforth,
it’s a pretty safe space.”

“This is on my walk home from school.”





Horsforth & Seacroft

"It's not actually anti-social, we're just in groups."

"People automatically think they're doing something wrong."

"Perception that it's anti-social teenagers, but they're not giving us any space to do things."

"Graffiti can be a good part of community."

"But not on cars."

"Can ruin reputation."

"Makes you think people are doing bad things there."

"Litter is pretty rubbish!"

"Weapons are unsafe – people use them for the wrong reasons."

"It can be scary to see people get arrested."

"Tons of people hang out at Alfie's bench."

"It keeps his spirit alive."

Horsforth & Seacroft

"Makes our town more interesting."

#SPEAK UP
UNITED
TO END
VIOLENCE
AGAINST
WOMEN &
GIRLS

Halton Moor

"We can see that there is a camera and a light so that means you can be safe and if it is dark you can see stuff."

"Camera – this makes me feel safe because if anything happens that is there to help you and you can get police involved."

"This is so that you can cross the road safely and I feel safe around here because there is a lot of schools around and cameras."

"No light when it is dark so they might not feel safe."

"My dog makes me feel safe."

Halton Moor

"Walking in the valley in the dark is scary."

"Unsafe because it looks scary but I won't walk by myself."

"Youth club is a safe space because we can speak to our youth workers."

"Chelsy makes me feel safe, I can trust her and she helps me."

“Graffiti could be dangerous because it could say bad/offensive things.”

Halton Moor

"Always cameras on buses, bus driver can see people on cameras, you can see yourself and others around you."

"Don't feel safe when it's getting darker."

"I like painting so I feel relaxed."

"My house make me feel safe."

"Family, here to support you."

City Centre

Golden Fisheries
HIRST'S YARD
LS1
THE SPACE
ULTRA
THE END
DIAMOND VAPES

Thank You

We would like to say a huge thank you to all the children and young people involved in the project, through taking pictures, talking to us about their meaning and designing the exhibition!

Thank you to all the youth workers for delivering the sessions and enabling young people to participate. It was clear from the photos that you are all so valued!

Finally, thank you to Take it Easy Lab for running some fantastic workshops and for their developing and printing!

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LEEDS YOUTH SERVICE

Take It Easy

“Youth club is a getaway from bad stuff.”

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