

Virtual Decisions – Annual Report 25-26

Introduction

Virtual Decisions is an innovative virtual reality (VR) education programme aimed at supporting children and young people who are at risk of criminal exploitation and offending. Virtual Decisions films enable participants to experience multiple dilemmas that illustrate the impacts of different choices. The ‘choose your own path’ format provides over 3,000 different paths for a user. Participants can experience the consequences of their decisions using virtual reality headsets which incorporate social interactions. The virtual reality experience promotes awareness, empathy, and critical thinking. The programme aims to empower young people to make informed decisions and take positive action, contributing to a safer, more inclusive community.

The virtual reality films are supported by interactive workshops that explore the topics in more depth, allowing children to reflect on their personal journey within the virtual reality scenario and discuss it with others to share and learn from each other’s experiences.

Objectives of the programme

- To educate young people on social issues and risk-taking behaviour
- To reduce youth crime, youth violence, and child criminal exploitation
- To empower young people to make informed decisions and take positive actions, contributing to a safer, more inclusive community

For the 2025-26 year, the West Yorkshire Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP) piloted having a dedicated delivery partner to extend the delivery of the programme across the region. The successful delivery partner was a collaboration between Goshukan Karate Academy’s Project On Guard and the Bradford Youth Development Partnership. Delivery took place in mainstream schools, alternative provision, colleges, youth centres, and voluntary, community, and social enterprise organisations. Over the year, the partner delivered five different virtual reality films – knife crime, gangs, identity, influence and anti-social behaviour.

Key Findings

- 126 workshops were held by the delivery partner across the year reaching over 1,100 children in Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees and Leeds.
- The knife crime and influence films were the most common films used.
- Increases in knowledge were evident for all of the topics and most pronounced for the gangs film. This is likely because this topic is less familiar with a younger age group.
- Across all the films, children felt that virtual reality was a good way of teaching them about these topics and found the discussions interesting.
- Children felt the identity film helped them to tell the difference between good and bad traits in people.

Key Quotes

“I found the workshop really interesting, and the VR part was such a good way to understand how serious gangs and crime actually are, it’s not just about looking cool or fitting in, it’s something that can really affect your life and the people you care about. We got to talk about how to handle certain situations and what to do if you ever feel pressured. It felt like a proper safe space where people could actually open up, I even got to talk about some of my own stuff and got some really good advice and support. That made a big difference for me” – (Child, 14)

“Make good decisions, just because something seems good doesn't mean it is good for you. Do not be influenced by what is on social media” – (Child)

“Never be in a gang, never carry a knife, and never get involved with crime” – (Child)

“How serious knife crime can be and the trouble it can get you in. It also showed us the reality and what actually happens in real life” – (Child)

“Workshops like these are game-changers. They build empathy, challenge dangerous beliefs, and create safe spaces for young people to open up and have honest conversations. When supported by youth workers and follow-up support, this kind of intervention has the power to truly change lives and steer young people towards safer and more positive futures.” – (Staff)

Recommendations

- Expand the programme to an introductory session focused on the virtual reality film, supported by extended follow-up sessions/delivery to support long-term behaviour change
- Support the necessary relationship and trust building between the facilitators and children, especially those of high need through additional sessions, one-to-one support offer, and established referral pathways
- Introduce sessions using the anti-social behaviour films with younger age groups to address harmful content they are exposed to online and their limited understanding of consequences and accountability
- Develop more structured one-to-one support, as the demand for these has grown, especially amongst vulnerable young people
- Adapt the current evaluation methods and explore how these could be better integrated into sessions to capture insights from all children, especially those with additional needs in a non-onerous way
- Virtual Decisions should consider updating the language used in the films as the slang and lingo being used by children is ever-changing and the current language could easily become outdated

Delivery Partner

The first quarter of delivery, June until September 2025, focused on building local capacity and strengthening partnerships across education and community settings. This included meeting with Youth Justice Service leads to identify high-risk children and partnering with local programmes to reach specific cohorts of children in-need. Between October and December 2025, the delivery partner focused on extending their reach in Leeds and this period marked an important expansion of the programme. Project On Guard partnered with Leeds City College to deliver sessions across three of their sites, choosing children with complex needs to take part. In the final quarter of delivery, Project On Guard focused on targeted, demand-led intervention within areas of highest need. Within this quarter, the movement of children and young people beyond the workshops into positive pathways including signposting to local youth provision, mentoring, and sports programmes was a focus.

During the delivery, the partner was responsible for addressing a number of ingrained ideas and beliefs amongst the children and young people. For example, the “snitches get stitches” code was addressed using the Project On Guard’s ‘Flip the Script’ approach which encouraged participants to consider the impact of silence, shifting the focus from loyalty to protection to instil deeper empathy.

Another issue encountered was the misinformation children had encountered about carrying weapons and using these in self-defence. Many children felt that carrying a weapon for protection was acceptable and the films and subsequent workshop helped them understand the legal and emotional consequences, learning safer alternatives such as avoidance, help-seeking and de-escalation.

The delivery partner reported the impact of the sessions on the children taking part. The workshops helped young people to recognise emotions such as fear, anger, and pressure and develop emotional control and stronger decision-making skills.

A key learning from the delivery partner was the negative impact the VR films had on some of the children, and this was also reported by children themselves in their evaluation responses. For some children the headset experience was overwhelming due to sensory sensitivity and anxiety. It was also felt that the style of the film was difficult for some children as the characters appear quite close to their face which felt intimidating. This was addressed by Project On Guard by offering the flat screen version to all children allowing those who may experience sensory overload to choose this option.

The delivery partner also identified the importance of leaving space for one-to-one conversations following the workshops so children could speak to the facilitators privately if they did not feel comfortable sharing with the group. During these conversations children shared personal experiences, concerns around policing, arrest, and past interactions with officers, highlighting the importance of trusted adults and safe spaces for children in need.

Over the year, Project On Guard were receptive to any challenges encountered adapting their planning, process, and delivery to ensure the best workshop was ran for the children attending. For example, early in the delivery the briefings received were inconsistent meaning that essential information about children’s needs or behaviour was not always shared beforehand.

To address this the delivery partner introduced a mandatory pre-session briefing conversation to ensure the facilitators could plan appropriate adaptations to the programme that met the needs of the children in the group.

Delivery Overview

Project On Guard started delivery in June 2025 finishing in March 2026 – this report covers this period of delivery. Across the year, the programme was delivered in mainstream schools, alternative provisions, faith organisations, mosques, youth centres, and community organisations. The delivery partner is required to complete quarterly monitoring under their grant agreement with the VRP. The quarterly monitoring includes the number of children reached, the demographic breakdown, and a narrative report¹.

126 workshops were delivered across Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, and Leeds. The majority of sessions were delivered within Bradford due to the delivery partners presence and existing partnership arrangements in this district, but good reach was achieved in Leeds as well.

	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total
Bradford	2	4	9	5	11	5	2	14	8	7	67
Calderdale	0	2	0	7	2	0	0	0	0	0	11
Kirklees	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	6
Leeds	0	0	0	0	0	14	11	0	1	16	42
Total	2	8	9	12	15	19	13	14	11	23	126

Table 1 - Number of sessions delivered by district

Five films from Virtual Decisions were used by Project On Guard – knives, gangs, identity, influence and anti-social behaviour.

The Knives film explores the reasons why young people carry knives, the implications of carrying a knife and how social pressure impacts choices, decisions, and behaviour.

The Gangs film helps children to recognise the signs, and understand the dangers, of child criminal exploitation, youth violence and coercion.

The Identity film aims to reduce health inequalities and helps young people to reflect on their own attitudes and behaviours by exploring addictive behaviours, mental health, and healthy relationships.

The Influence film explores the influences at play in the lives of children and helps them to recognise the signs of exploitation.

The Anti-Social Behaviour film helps children understand what anti-social behaviour is, the effect it has on individuals and communities and explores ways to prevent it.

Half of the workshops delivered used the knife crime virtual reality film (50%), followed by the influence film (19%), then anti-social behaviour (18%), identity (9%), and gangs was used the least often (4%).

¹ All the data included in the delivery overview has been taken from the delivery partners quarterly monitoring submission. A full data breakdown is included in Appendix B.

1,142² individual children took part in the Virtual Decisions programme. The demographic breakdown is shown below. The majority of children reached were aged 16-18 which is a slightly higher age demographic than the films are intended for. 64.4% of the children who took part were boys, which aligns with evidence about those vulnerable to criminal behaviour. The films successfully reached children from different ethnic groups.

Category			
Age	0-11	104	9.1%
	12-15	511	44.7%
	16-18	527	46.1%
Gender	Boys	736	64.4%
	Girls	402	35.2%
	Trans	1	0.1%
	Non-binary	1	0.1%
	Prefer not to say	2	0.2%
Ethnicity	White	478	41.9%
	Mixed/multiple ethnic groups	94	8.2%
	Asian/Asian British	387	33.9%
	Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	109	9.5%
	Other Ethnic Group	64	5.6%
	Prefer not to say	10	0.9%

Table 2 - Demographic breakdown of children reached

² The numbers included throughout the report may differ as not all children completed the evaluation forms. Every effort was taken to support children to complete the pre and post survey but there were time restrictions and some children faced personal barriers to completing the survey given its formal nature, their literacy levels, or additional needs.

Evaluation

The children taking part in the Virtual Decisions workshops are supported to complete two surveys – one before and one after watching the film. The pre survey measures the children’s level of knowledge about the Virtual Decisions topics and asks what they are looking forward to about the workshop. The post survey measured knowledge gained from watching the film, the impact of taking part in the workshop, and what their key takeaway was.

Pre survey

1,096 children completed the pre-survey prior to watching the Virtual Decisions films.

Children were asked to rate their knowledge on the topics of the Virtual Decisions films. Children’s knowledge was highest for influence and anti-social behaviour with 36% and 37% respectively saying they know a lot about the topics. Knowledge was lowest for identity with 17% of children saying they knew nothing about the topic.

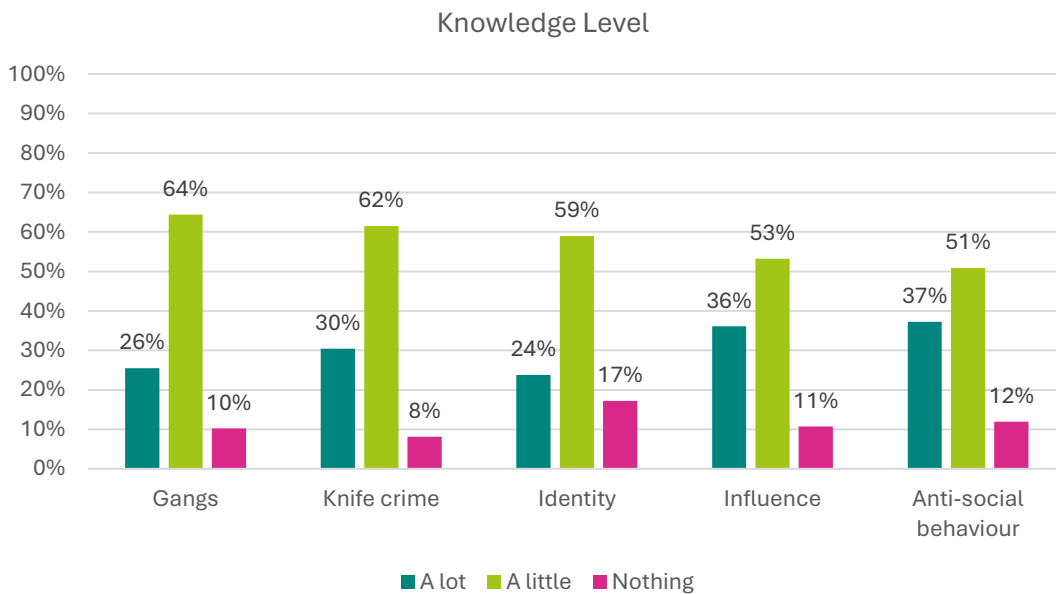


Figure 1 - Children's knowledge level before watching the virtual reality films

Children in Bradford reported the highest level of knowledge about gangs, knife crime, identity, and anti-social behaviour, whilst children in Leeds reported the highest level of knowledge about influence.

Children were asked to share what they were most looking forward to about the films. Some children were uncertain about what the films and the session would involve. Overwhelmingly, the children were looking forward to experiencing virtual reality and seeing how realistic and immersive the films were. Children mentioned ‘*trying the headset for the first time*’, ‘*seeing how real it is*’, and ‘*feeling like I’m there*’.

Another major theme in the children’s responses was learning about knife crime, gangs, consequences and safety. Children were looking forward to learning how to keep themselves safe, seeing the dangers of knife crime, and understanding why crime happens. This new way of

Post survey

1,074 children completed the post-survey after taking part in a Virtual Decisions workshop. The district representation is shown below.

District	Number of children	%
Bradford	517	48.1%
Calderdale	86	8%
Kirklees	59	5.5%
Leeds	412	38.4%

Table 3 - District representation of completed surveys

Knife crime

The knife crime film was delivered in Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, and Leeds to 585 children³. After watching the knife crime film, **62.1%** said they knew a lot, **35.9%** said they knew a little and **2.1%** said they knew nothing about knife crime. This is a 107% increase compared to knowledge before watching the film.

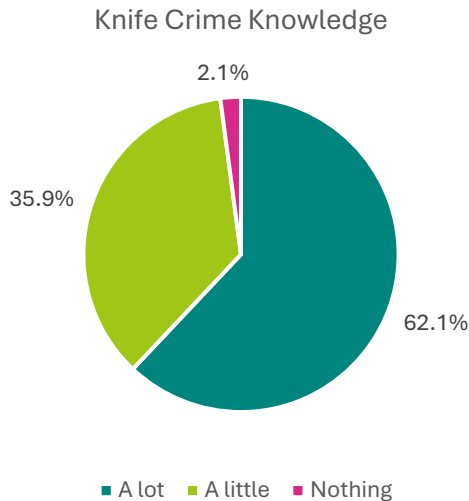


Figure 2 - Children's knowledge of knife crime after watching the film

Children's self-reported knowledge after watching the knife crime film differed slightly by district. Children in Leeds reported the highest level of knowledge (65.4% knew a lot) and Kirklees reported the lowest level of knowledge (43.3% knew a lot). A small number of children in Bradford, Calderdale, and Leeds reported that they still knew nothing about knife crime.

³ Number of children reached – 225 in Bradford, 44 in Calderdale, 30 in Kirklees, and 286 in Leeds

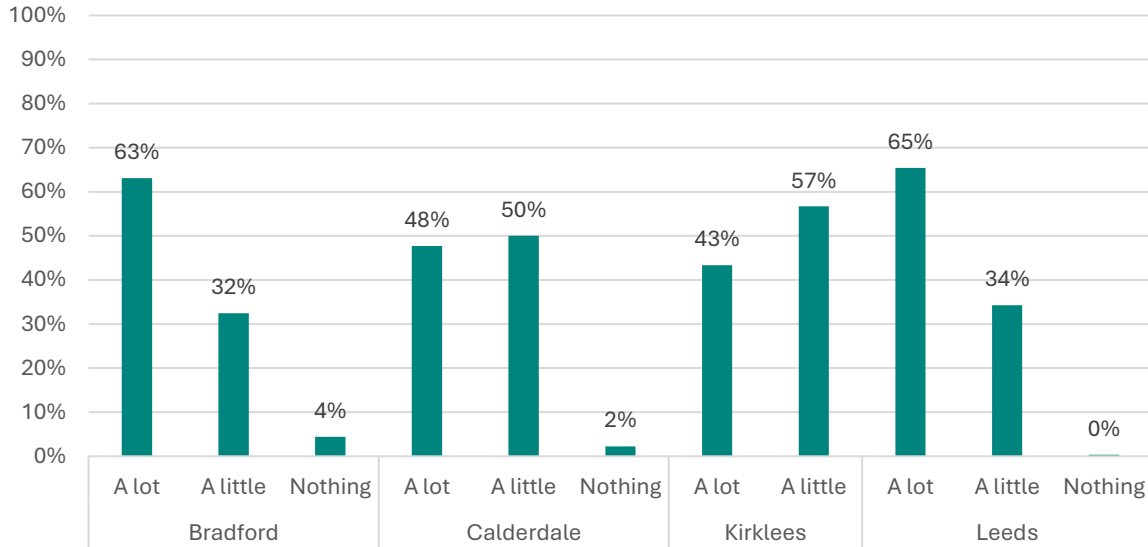


Figure 3 - Difference in knife crime knowledge by district

As shown in the chart below, children who watched the knife crime film most strongly agreed with 'I think virtual reality is a good way of teaching people about these topics' (52%) followed by 'The discussion was interesting' (48.9%). The statement with the highest level of uncertainty from children was 'If you knew someone who was carrying/had a knife, would you tell a trusted adult' with 26.5% of children saying neither agree nor disagree. This statement also had the highest amount of disagreement from children.

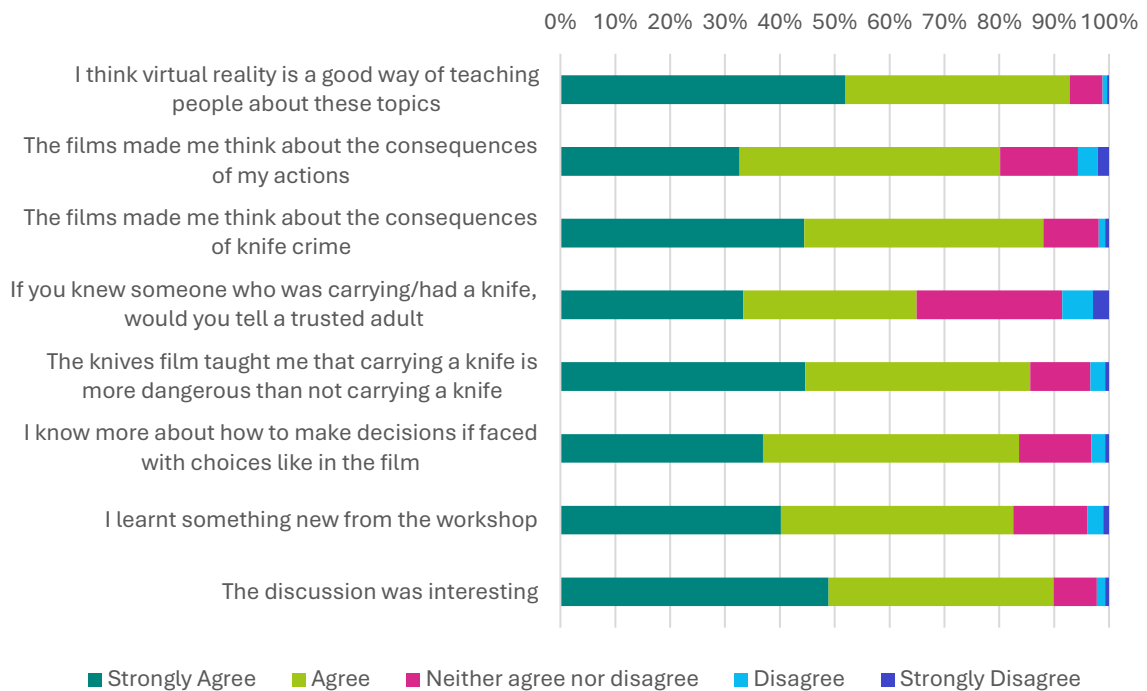


Figure 4 - Children's learning from the knife crime film

Children in Calderdale were most confident that if they knew someone who was carrying/had a knife that they would tell a trusted adult in comparison to children in the other districts. It would be interesting to understand whether this is related to the delivery of the content or whether the children who took part have established, trusted relationships with adults. Children in Kirklees were slightly less confident than children in the other districts in their ability to make decisions if faced with choices like in the film, with only 16.7% saying they strongly agree with this statement. These children may need to be provided with additional content to support them to make positive decisions in difficult situations.

Gangs

The gangs film was delivered in Bradford and Calderdale to 43 children⁴. After watching the gangs film, **67.4%** said they knew a lot and **32.6%** said they knew a little about gangs. This is an increase of 159.2% compared to knowledge before watching the film.

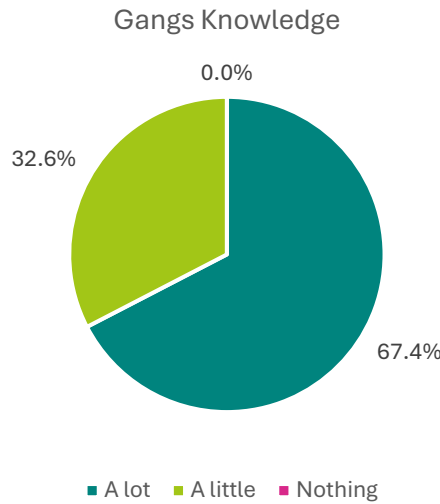


Figure 5 - Children's knowledge of gangs after watching the film

Children's self-reported knowledge after watching the gangs film differed slightly by district. 100% of children in Calderdale said they knew a lot about gangs compared to 66.7% of children in Bradford, but this can be attributed to the small number of children taking part from Calderdale.

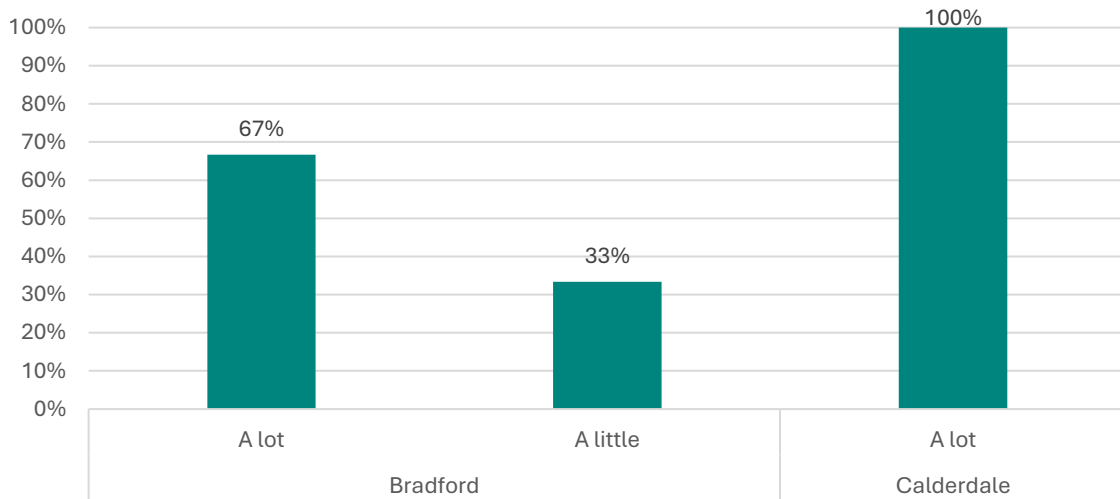


Figure 6 - Difference in gangs knowledge by district

As shown in the chart below, children who watched the gangs film most strongly agreed with 'I think virtual reality is a good way of teaching people about these topics' (74.4%) followed by 'the discussion was interesting' (69.8%). The statement with the highest level of uncertainty from

⁴ Number of children reached – 42 in Bradford and 1 in Calderdale

children was 'If you saw a physical assault like the one in the film, would you tell anyone' with 16.3% of children saying neither agree nor disagree. This statement also had the highest amount of disagreement from children.

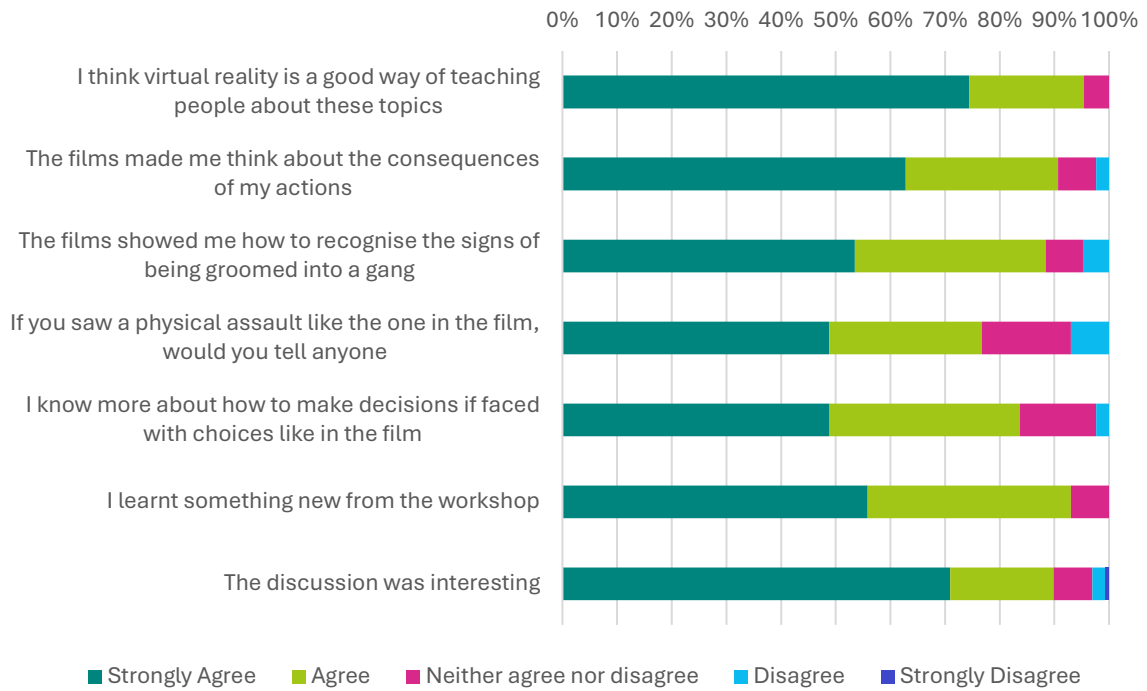


Figure 7 - Children's learning from the gangs film

It is challenging to make district-level comparisons about how children from different districts responded to the gangs film as only one child from Calderdale completed the survey.

Identity

The identity film was delivered in Bradford and Calderdale to 75 children⁵. After watching the identity film, **53.3%** said they knew a lot, **40%** said they knew a little, and **6.7%** said they knew nothing about identity. This is a 122% increase compared to knowledge before watching the film.

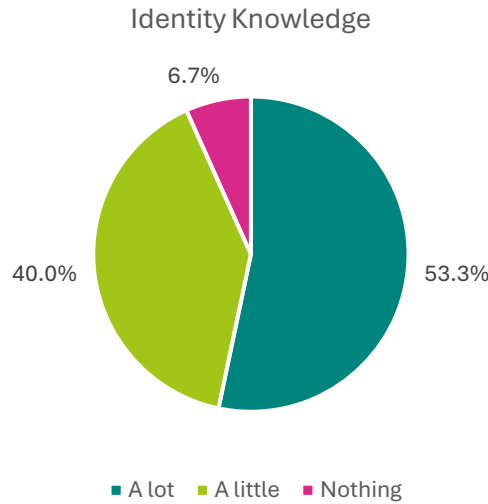


Figure 8 - Children's knowledge of identity after watching the film

Children’s self-reported knowledge after watching the identity film differed slightly by district. 57% of children in Bradford reported knowing a lot about identity after watching the films compared to 42% of children in Calderdale. Children in Calderdale were significantly more likely to say they knew nothing about identity 15.8% of children compared to 3.6% in Bradford.

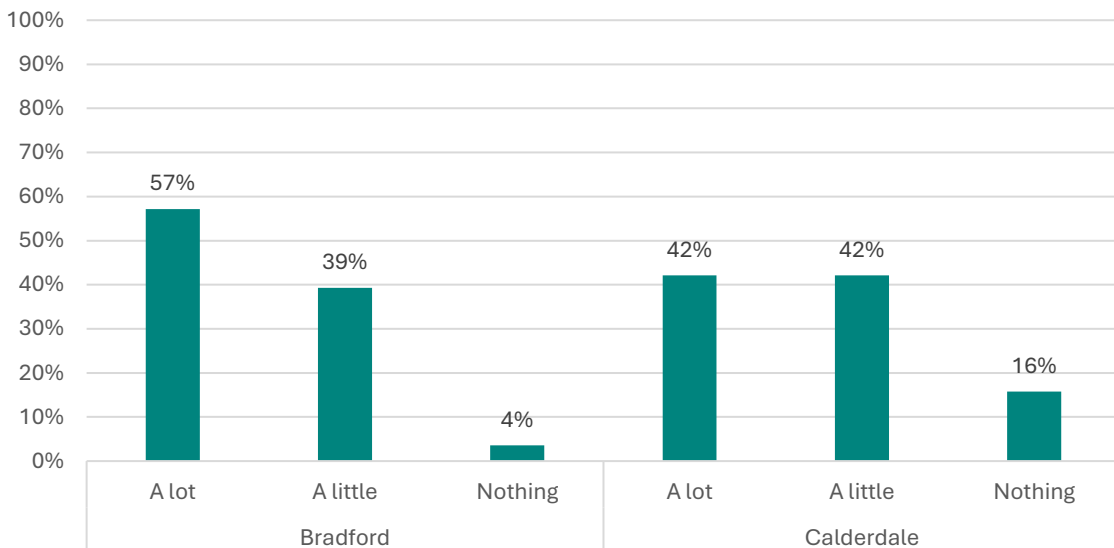


Figure 9 - Difference in identity knowledge by district

⁵ Number of children reached – 56 in Bradford and 19 in Calderdale

As shown in the chart below, children who watched the identity film most strongly agreed with *'I think virtual reality is a good way of teaching people about these topics'* (56%) and *'I know how to tell the difference between good traits and bad traits'* (52%). The statement with the highest level of uncertainty from children was *'I know more about how to make decisions if faced with choices like in the film'* with 20% of children saying neither agree nor disagree.

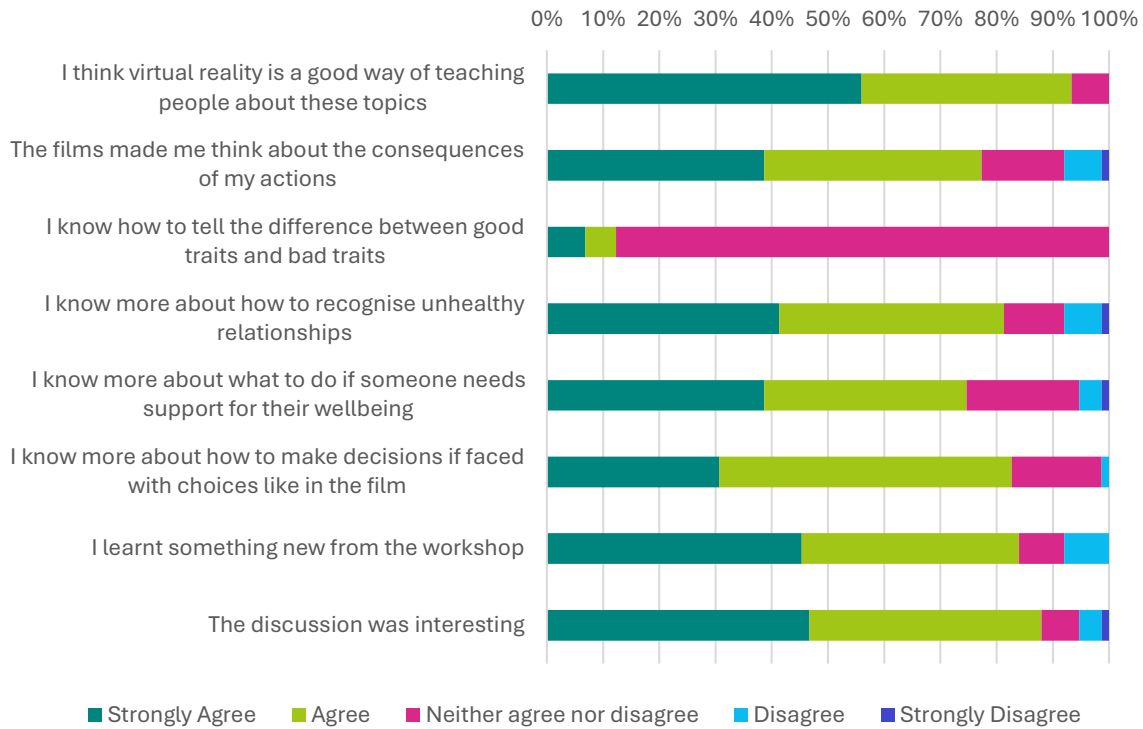


Figure 10 - Children's learning from the identity film

Children in Bradford had higher agreement on all statements compared to children in Calderdale. The most distinct difference was for the statement *'I learnt something new from the workshop'*, where 55.4% of children in Bradford strongly agreed compared to 15.8% of children in Calderdale.

Influence

The influence film was delivered in Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, and Leeds to 195 children⁶. After watching the influence film, **63.1%** said they knew a lot, **33.9%** said they knew a little, and **3.1%** said they knew nothing about influence. This is a 75% increase in knowledge compared to before watching the film.

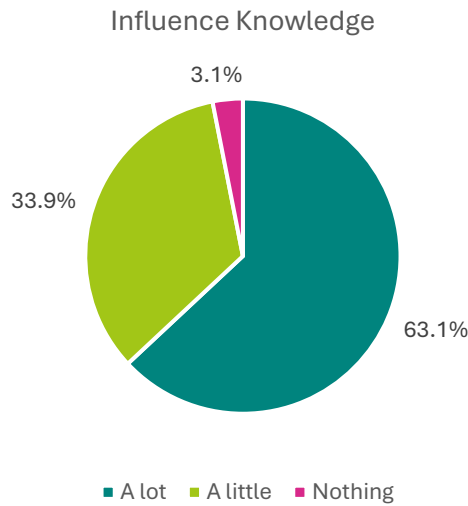


Figure 11 - Children's knowledge of influence after watching the film

Children’s self-reported knowledge after watching the influence films differed by district. Leeds had a significantly higher percentage of children who reported knowing a lot about influence. 72.8% of children in Leeds reported knowing a lot about influence, compared to only 40.9% of children in Calderdale.

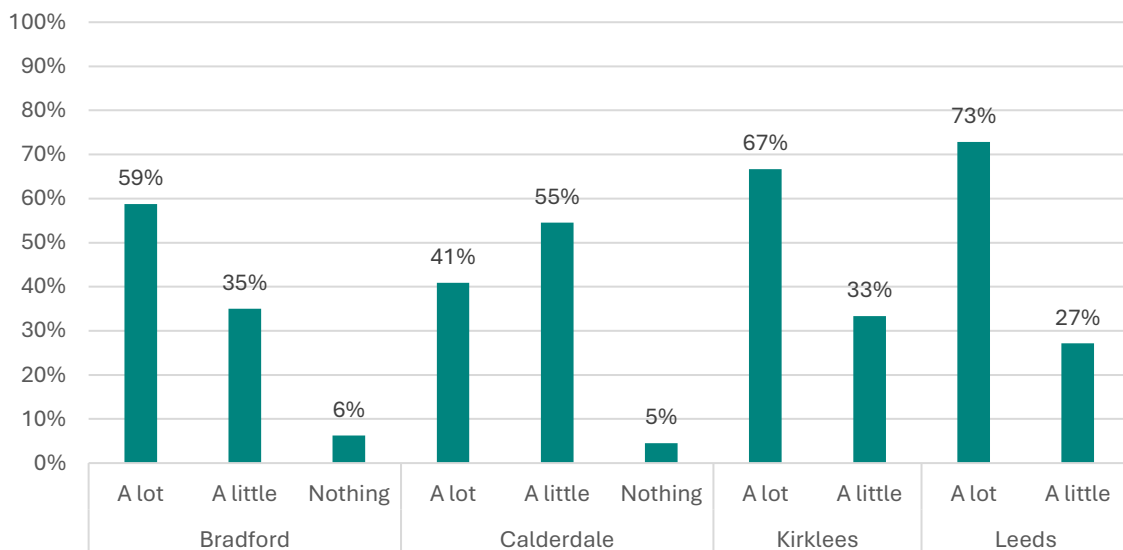


Figure 12 - Difference in influence knowledge by district

⁶ Number of children reached – 80 in Bradford, 22 in Calderdale, 12 in Kirklees, and 81 in Leeds

As shown in the chart below, children who watched the influence film most strongly agreed with *'I think virtual reality is a good way of teaching people about these topics'* (56.9%) and *'The discussion was interesting'* (52.8%). The statement with the highest level of uncertainty from children was *'I would confide in a trusted adult if I was concerned about something'* with 17.4% of children saying neither agree nor disagree.

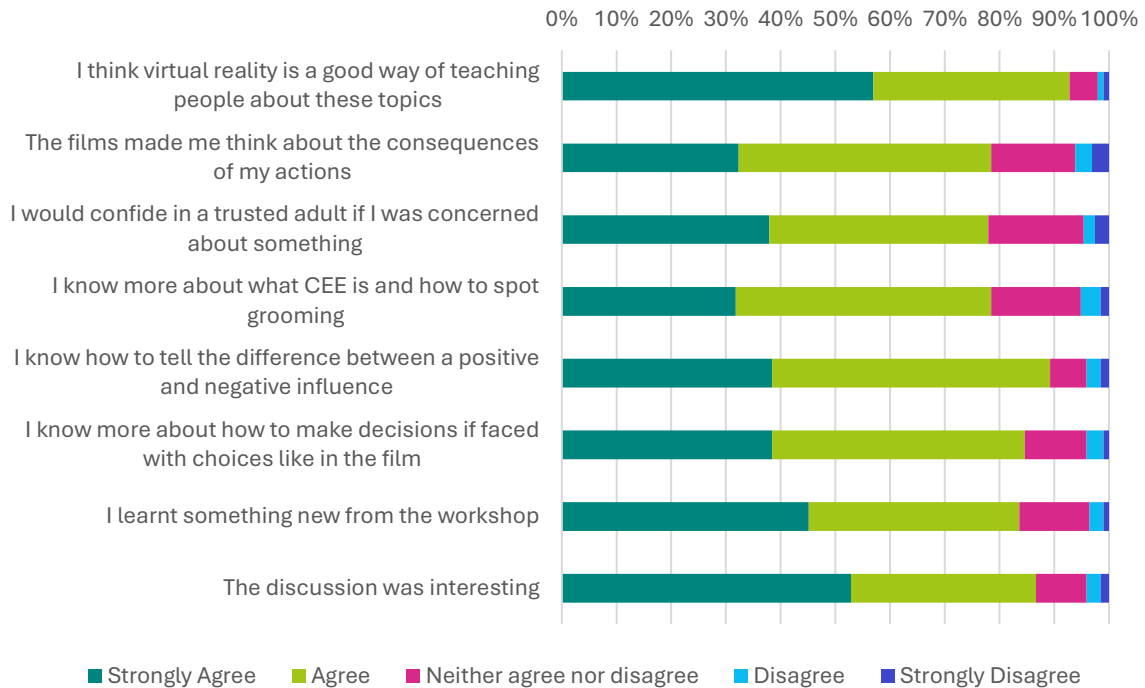


Figure 13 - Children's learning from the influence film

Children in Calderdale were least likely to agree that they would confide in a trusted adult if they were concerned about something, compared to children in Bradford, Leeds and Kirklees. Only 17% of children in Kirklees who watched the influence film strongly agreed that *'I know more about what child criminal exploitation is and how to spot the signs of grooming'* compared to 31.2% of children in Bradford, 36.4% of children in Calderdale and 33.3% of children in Leeds. These children may need to be provided with additional learning resources to support them to understand the issue of child criminal exploitation and how to identify it.

Anti-Social Behaviour

The anti-social behaviour film was delivered in Bradford, Kirklees and Leeds to 176 children⁷. After watching the anti-social behaviour film, **77.3%** said they knew a lot, **20.5%** said they knew a little, and **2.3%** said they knew nothing about anti-social behaviour. This is a 108% increase compared to knowledge before watching the film.

Anti-Social Behaviour Knowledge

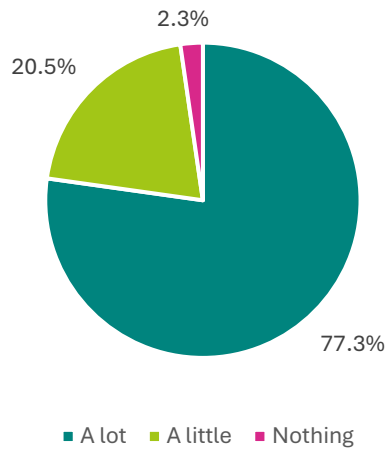


Figure 14 - Children's knowledge of anti-social behaviour after watching the film

Children’s self-reported knowledge after watching the anti-social behaviour films differed significantly by district. Both Kirklees and Leeds reported high levels of knowledge about anti-social behaviour (94.1% and 91.1% respectively knew a lot) compared to Bradford where 69.3% of children said they knew a lot.

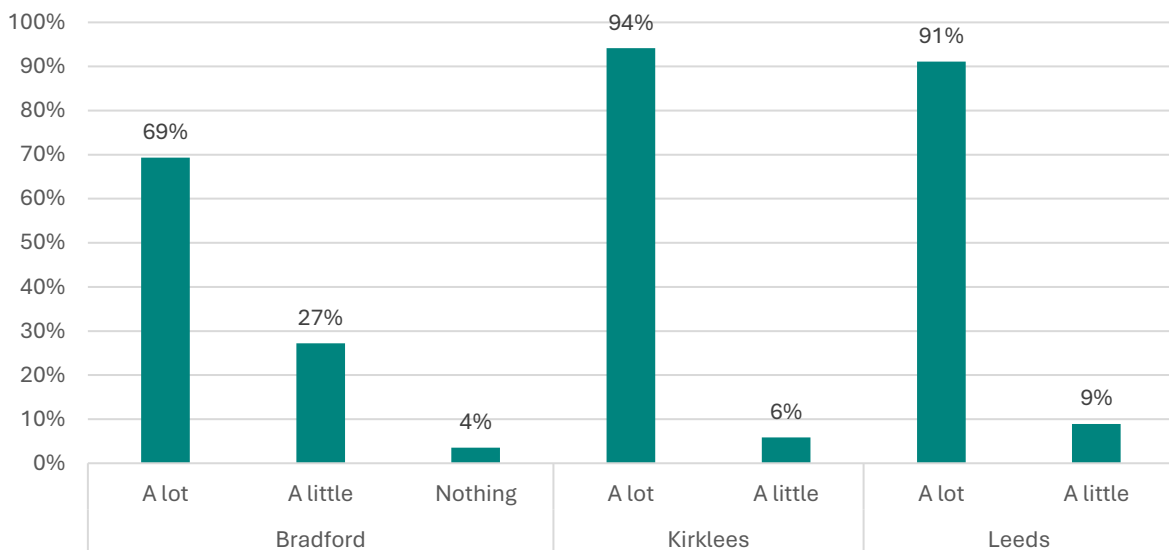


Figure 15 - Difference in anti-social behaviour knowledge by district

⁷ Number of children reached – 114 in Bradford, 17 in Kirklees, and 45 in Leeds

As shown in the chart below, children who watched the anti-social behaviour film most strongly agreed with *'I think virtual reality is a good way of teaching people about these topics'* (54%) and *'The discussion was interesting'* (46%). The statement with the highest level of uncertainty from children was *'I know more about how to make decisions if faced with choices like in the film'* with 13.1% of children saying neither agree nor disagree.

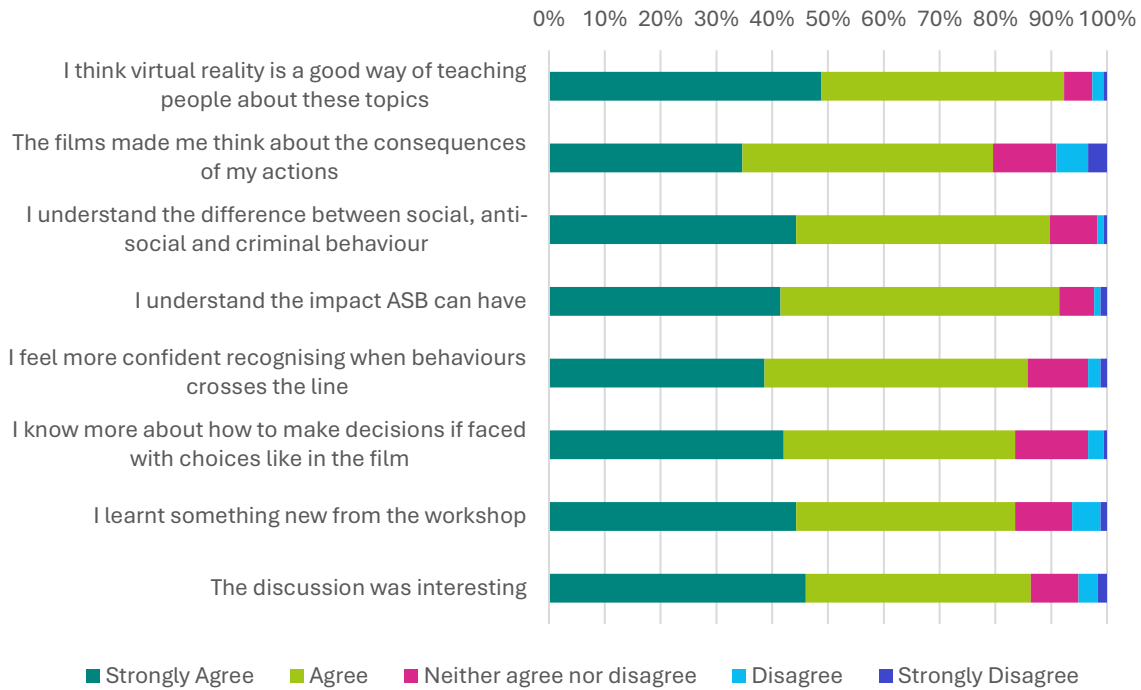


Figure 16 - Children's learning from the anti-social behaviour film

Agreement was generally higher for children in Leeds and Kirklees compared to children in Bradford. 70.6% of children in Kirklees and 57.8% of children in Leeds strongly agreed that they can *'understand the difference between social, anti-social, and criminal behaviour'* compared to 35.1% of children in Bradford. Children in Bradford may need further inputs to help differentiate between positive and negative behaviours.

What did you like about the film?

The children were asked to share what they liked about the films they had seen.

The strongest theme mentioned was *realism and authenticity*. Children mentioned the films ‘*feeling real*’ or ‘*being like real life*’ and related this to the use of real people as actors rather than animations. Children also felt the scenarios were realistic and made them feel as if they were there, making them engaging and impactful.

Children also enjoyed how interactive the session was through the headset and that they had the autonomy to make their own choices. Being able to make their own choices meant they could witness the consequences of their actions, thus feeling part of the story. Allowing children to make their own choices also allowed them to see different viewpoints through the different characters within the film.

“Choosing your own path”

Learning about the topics was positively received by the children taking part. Overwhelmingly, children enjoyed learning about the consequences of actions, and this was especially prevalent for the knife crime film. The films supported the children to learn the difference between right and wrong by witnessing how situations can escalate.

Virtual reality provided children with a new way of learning that they found ‘*interesting*’ and a ‘*good way to learn*’, with numerous children stating that they would like to do the workshops again.

What could be better?

Children were also asked to share what could be better about the films. The most frequent suggestion was making the films longer, adding more scenes, and critically showing what happens after the climax, for example in the knife crime film what happens after the police arrive. Some children wanted to see a fight whilst others referenced wanting to see the process of the criminal justice system. This is evidence for how much the children enjoyed the films and wanted the workshops to last longer.

Similar to this, children wanted more choices, options to choose from and endings available. They felt that the film could be improved by allowing children to replay and try different decisions and pathways, this would allow more interactivity.

Having the ability to move or physically interact more would improve the films. This likely speaks to the advanced technology most children will be familiar with using. In addition, better visual quality, including better graphics and improved resolution, would also improve the films.

Some children felt the films could be updated in terms of the slang and clothing to make them more relevant to the audience and time-period.

What is the most important thing you learnt today?

The children were asked what their key takeaway from the workshop was.

Most frequently, children mentioned learning not to carry a knife and the consequences of this including that carrying makes you more likely to be harmed, not protected. Children understood the age of criminal responsibility, that carrying a knife had serious legal consequences and that joint enterprise means you can be charged even if you did not use the knife.

“You can get arrested just for holding it”

Across all the topics, children mentioned learning about the consequences of actions and how widespread these can be. They understood that small decisions can escalate and change yours and other people’s lives.

“One mistake can change everything”

Influences and the impact of peer pressure was a key takeaway for children, especially in relation to gangs and knife crime. Children understood that peer pressure is common and subtle making it easy to be drawn in to, showing how important it is to say ‘no’.

“Be your own person”

Linked to this, children learnt how important it is to choose the right friends and social circle to avoid being drawn into anti-social behaviour and criminal activity.

“Be careful who you hang around with”

Children also reported learning about the importance of speaking up and seeking help from trusted adults. This relates to Project On Guard’s focus on dispelling the myths children held around snitching, which supported the children to understand when they should make disclosures.

“Snitching isn’t bad”

Summary

The findings from the evaluation of the Virtual Decisions programme delivered in 2025-26 highlights the impact the virtual reality workshops have on children and raises recommendations for future delivery. This year, the VRP piloted delivering the programme through a funded, dedicated delivery partner. The reach of the partner and the learnings acquired from having a dedicated resource indicates this approach is successful for delivering the programme and providing follow-on workshops and support for children in need.

Appendix A – Case Studies

Case Study 1 - Continued Engagement and Positive Redirection

Following initial engagement with the Virtual Decisions programme, one young person was identified as being at higher risk and in need of continued support beyond the workshop setting.

While the young person engaged positively during the VR session and initial discussions, follow-up conversations highlighted ongoing challenges in real-life situations, particularly around peer influence, provocation and decision-making.

As part of continued engagement, the young person was revisited and supported beyond the initial delivery. Through these ongoing conversations, they openly reflected on their behaviour and the potential consequences of their actions, recognising that they could have continued along a path leading to more serious outcomes.

Through the programme's referral pathways, the young person was supported to access a local youth provision, creating opportunities to engage in positive, structured activities outside of the workshop environment.

This progression proved significant. The young person shared that attending the provision had given them a new sense of direction, allowing them to:

- meet new people
- take part in sports and structured activities
- spend time in a more positive environment

They described the provision as something they enjoyed and looked forward to, highlighting the importance of having access to constructive outlets.

They also reflected that the support received through the programme helped them feel more grounded and better able to manage challenging situations, while recognising that further work and support would continue to be needed.

This case study demonstrates the importance of continued engagement beyond initial delivery and the value of connecting young people into positive pathways that support longer-term change. It highlights that while awareness is an important first step, it is sustained engagement, trusted relationships and access to positive opportunities that enable young people to shift direction and make safer life choices.

Case Study 2 - One-to-One Conversation - Emotional Regulation and Control

During delivery of a Virtual Decisions workshop, a young person approached the lead facilitator after the session and asked to speak privately. This request followed the group discussion and reflected a level of trust that had been built during delivery.

In the one-to-one conversation, the young person shared that he had previous involvement with the justice system and that further incidents could result in more serious consequences. He explained that he often reacts quickly when provoked and struggles to control his emotions in the moment, which has repeatedly led him into trouble.

The conversation focused on emotional regulation, provocation and control. Rather than centring on punishment, the facilitator explored how others can deliberately provoke reactions, effectively gaining control over someone's emotions, behaviour and outcomes. When asked how it felt knowing someone else could control his emotions, the young person paused and responded, "Not good."

The conversation introduced simple emotional self-defence strategies, including tactical breathing and pause techniques, to help him slow his response in high pressure moments. The emphasis was not on changing who he was, but on retaining control and protecting himself from further consequences. He engaged with these strategies and stated that he would try them when he felt provoked in future situations.

The facilitator then reframed the situation, asking whether those people were worth his time, or whether he could choose not to give them that power. The young person paused, smiled, and replied,

"Yeah... totally."

Staff later shared that it was significant for this young person to open up in such an honest and reflective way. Plans are in place to follow up in the next quarter, building on this initial conversation and continuing to support safer decision making.

This case study highlights the value of trusted one-to-one conversations alongside group delivery. It shows how reflective dialogue can help young people recognise their emotions, slow down impulsive reactions, and take control back over their choices. These moments can help reduce immediate risk and support safer decision making.

Case Study 3 - A Shift in Mindset

One young person entered the first session confident that he already knew it all. Early on he was disruptive, dismissing parts of the discussion and testing boundaries.

After experiencing the realism of the VR and taking part in reflective discussions using real examples, something clicked. He became quieter, more focused, and during his second session he approached the facilitator directly to ask whether he could join future workshops and access more learning programmes. He described the experience as "so real" and said it showed him "how easy it can be to get drawn in."

The balance of empathy and challenge during delivery helped him move from bravado to genuine reflection. Discussions are now underway with the centre manager to support his involvement in the Virtual Decisions Extended Learning Package, building on the insight and motivation he has already shown.

This shows how immersive VR learning, paired with skilled and sensitive facilitation, can turn initial resistance into real engagement and self-awareness.

Appendix B – Data Set

Sessions by District

Districts	Sessions
Bradford	67
Calderdale	11
Kirklees	6
Leeds	42
Total	126

Sessions by Month

Month	Sessions
June 2025	2
July 2025	8
August 2025	9
September 2025	12
October 2025	15
November 2025	19
December 2025	13
January 2026	14
February 2026	11
March 2026	23
Total	126

Sessions by District and Month

	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total
Bradford	2	4	9	5	11	5	2	14	8	7	67
Calderdale	0	2	0	7	2	0	0	0	0	0	11
Kirklees	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	6
Leeds	0	0	0	0	0	14	11	0	1	16	42
Total	2	8	9	12	15	19	13	14	11	23	126

Sessions by Film Type

Film	Sessions
Knives	63
Influence	24
Anti-social Behaviour	23
Identity	11
Gangs	5
Total	126

Age Breakdown

Age group	Number	%
0-11	104	9.1%
12-15	511	44.7%
16-18	527	46.1%
Total	1142	100%

Gender Breakdown

Gender	Number	%
Boys	736	64.4%
Girls	402	35.2%
Trans	1	0.1%
Non-binary	1	0.1%
Prefer not to say	2	0.2%
Total	1142	100%

Ethnicity Breakdown

Ethnicity	Number	%
White	478	41.9%
Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups	94	8.2%
Asian/Asian British	387	33.9%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	109	9.5%
Other Ethnic Group	64	5.6%
Prefer not to say	10	0.9%
Total	1142	100%

Numbers taking part per workshop breakdown⁸

Workshop	Young People Attending	Unique number of people	Young people 18 & under
Knives	624	624	614
Gangs	72	44	42
Influence	219	201	198
Identity	108	97	94
Anti-social behaviour	196	196	194
Total	1219	1162	1142

⁸ The difference in the total unique number of people and the total number of young people 18 and under is due to a small number of adults taking part in the sessions. These were individuals with SEND, peer ambassadors and staff members