**EUGangs – Walsall consultation 7th April**

Attendees

| Name | Position | Organisation |
|---|---|---|
| Yusuf Khan | Independent Social Worker | |
| Dean Marks | Youth Worker | Groundwork |
| Rachael Bird | Team manager | Walsall Youth Justice Service |
| Paul Dennis | Detached Youth Worker | IYPSS |
| Jane Preece | | Walsall Housing Group |
| Amanda Wood | Home Office Peer Reviewer | |
| Gavin Nixon | Security and Partnership Officer | West Midlands Police |
| Ian Thomas | Project Officer | Core Assets Fostering |
| Keith Blackburn | Security Officer | St George's School |
| Lance Blackwood | | Walsall Street Teams |
| Raj Khokhar | Curriculum Manager, Achieving Together | Walsall College |

**New skills and competences to address skills gaps and mismatch within the sectors working with Gang and Youth Crime across Europe (EUGANGS). (539766-LLP-1-2013-1-UK-LEONARDO-LMP/ Grant Agreement 2013 3382 /001-001).** This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication [communication] reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

## Issues

**Priority issues that professionals can do something about:**

| | Yusuf & Paul | Amanda & Jane | Lance & Gavin | Rachel & Dean |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Lack of alternative options - opportunties | Feelings of family from the gang – failure at school | Family | Peer pressure |
| 2 | Financial incentives - criminal activities – selling drugs - lucrative | Family – tradition – domestic violence | Unemployment | Failure at school |
| 3 | Failure at school | Housing – poor conditions | Failure at school | Children in the care system |
| 4 | Territory – tradition - peer pressure – friendship alliances | Unemployment – lack of opportunities | | No positive role model |
| 5 | Belonging – acceptance – respect – reputation – low self-esteem - vulnerability | Bullying | | Girls' involvement in gangs |
| 6 | Girls' involvement in gangs | Drug / alcohol abuse | | Selling drugs – lucrative |
| 7 | | Mental health – ADD - PTSO | | Domestic violence |
| 8 | | Wanting power status – peer pressure | | Money / lifestyle |
| 9 | | Children in care / leaving care – childhood trauma | | Offending in gangs, eg initiation, revenge, running |
| Girls involvement in gangs; absent fathers; exploitation; domestic violence; sense of security; common ideology; | | | | |

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**Wider structural problem, beyond local professionals' control:**

prison sentences, victim-care(?), prostitution, fines, selling drugs, difficult to leave gangs, low cultural backgrounds, appeal/glamorous, death or serious injury, sense of belonging, geographical, wall of silence, reputation, peer group pressure

## Issues and what professionals can do

| issue | What/do could professionals do? | Level of success | Why? |
|---|---|---|---|
| Failure at school | Incorporate different learning styles | Should try | People all learn differently |
| | Investment of time and resources | Mixed | Lack of trust/faith – not motivated – different learning styles |
| | Mentoring, support, role models, raising / creating aspirations | mixed | Lack of continuity<br>Not enough support / funding |
| | Education – business partnership | mixed | |
| | Breakfast clubs | | |
| | Personalised, innovative teaching | worked | |
| | Boundaries / expectations / perceptions | Should try | Still fighting traditional ideas of success |
| | Explore learning styles and tailor programme | Mixed | Holistic approach needed |
| | Young offenders can be made subject to court orders to enforce attendance at school | | LA won't always agree to requirements |

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| issue | What/do could professionals do? | Level of success | Why? |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Use of education welfare officers (EWO) + prosecution of parents when young people when young people attend | | |
| Lack of alternatives options / opportunities / unemployment | Dependent upon age; development of skills & interests; creation of opportunities for young people (Youth Rights) low unemployment | | Worked on some young people in Wales |
| | Support, encouragement, educate | | |
| Criminal activity | Help them see the reality: death, injury, prison | | |
| Family breakdown | Troubled families programme<br>Positive Parenting Program | mixed | Dependent on engagement |
| | Intervention / support | has worked | Advice + support given / AiD |
| | Family nurse partnership | mixed | Lambeth example – Ending Gang and Youth Violence Report |
| | Family intervention partnerships | mixed | |
| | Refuge houses | mixed | |
| | Partnership police | mixed | |
| | Family focussed therapies | mixed | |
| Peer pressure | Positive activities – eg residentials linked to education, training and employment (ETE) accreditation and possible careers | worked | Worked as short terms= as use of rewards / sanctions but perhaps not sustainable |

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| issue | What/do could professionals do? | Level of success | Why? |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Workshops delivered to explore identity and other issues | mixed | Success depends on content, relevance, young person's motivation |
| | Life story of ex-gang member as active learning | Should try | Explain first hand awareness of negative implications of the lifestyle |

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## Existing programmes for professionals working with young people involved with gangs

| Programme | Target group | What it does well | What it lacks |
|---|---|---|---|
| Crime diversion schemes | Prisoners, ex-offenders | Workshops on crime intervention, empowers young people to look at themselves & hear from someone who's been there | Funding / people |
| Community safety (working with gangs) city and guilds | Professionals + non-professionals who work with young teenagers | Focuses on social factors and interpersonal skills, media, culture and policy frameworks | Funding – course cost: £850 |
| IFCO / Power 4 Youth | Young people in care in conflict with the law (Russia) | Gathering young people from all over Russia to become a national voice for human rights for children/young people – meetings with policy makers – empowerment, engagement, participation | Funding – reliance on charity |
| Sandwell safeguarding training – gangs / SCJE (?) | Practitioners | Explains topic well – impact – understanding of issues | On-the-ground demonstration |
| Activate Against Hate / YOW | Young people / teenagers | Respect diversity | Publicity / backing |
| Cross borders (Tipton) | Two local gangs in Sandwell | Bringing together members of local gangs to widen world (?) and break down stereotypes, eg walk through Lozells area | Lacks national (backing) |
| Gang awareness | Parents | Simplified | Detail on how to manage the needs of young people |
| PVE | Professionals parents | | |

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## Programme content

| Element | What would you expect the element to contain? |
|---|---|
| Multi-agency working | Understanding of agencies involved, statutory responsibilities, Crime and Disorder Act, Children's Act |
| Safe-working and Safe-guarding | legislative framework, knowing area's safe working policy, do's and don't's, child protection procedures, child sexual exploitation (CSE), trafficking and missing children, lone working, policy, eg legislation to move children out of borough |
| Sociology of gang membership | John Pitts and other professors, Dave Brotherton, difference between gangs and groups and issues with such labels, case studies |
| Working with young offenders / vulnerable groups | Case studies, Best practice, what constitutes being vulnerable, preventing further criminal activities |
| Socio-psychological approaches | Cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT), mindfulness, cognitive bias, an individual approach, identifying what triggers can impact upon individuals |
| Reaching communities | Best practice, equality and diversity, profile of community, trends/similarities in areas where gang activity is prominent, police and crime commissioner (PCC) plan and victim support, helping young people to identify with their community and feeling a sense of pride |
| Policy in practice | Latest policy, understanding context re: gangs |
| Inter-personal communication skills | Working with partners (not necessarily gang members), professional skills in communication |
| Girls, gangs and exploitations | Latest trends and issues facing girls being groomed by gangs, myth busting |

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