

International expert in Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) visits Leicestershire schools



Graham Goulden from Cultivating Minds visited two local schools this month to support both staff and student mentors in their work to implement MVP. After delivering a masterclass to school staff from across the area, Graham and VRN team members visited Redmoor Academy in Hinckley, the first school to introduce MVP in our area. Graham delivered a session with student mentors who were later also interviewed by BBC Radio 5 Live about why they wanted to become mentors and what they hoped to achieve. Their comments were inspiring and included wanting to have the confidence to speak up and making their home town, Hinckley, safer.

Graham also visited Beaumont Leys school to meet their first group of mentors all of whom engaged brilliantly in a session about leadership, being a good friend and how they could support younger peers to feel safer at school.

A huge thank you to Graham for his on-going support and of course to the staff and students at all the schools involved.



[More info](#)

Youth Involvement Fund launched

Young people are at the heart of the VRN's work and this year we want to step-up youth involvement across the Network. To support this, we are looking for community-based organisations to partner with us to co-produce a sustainable Youth Involvement Framework with and for young people. We also have a series of involvement opportunities coming up including in relation to service design and campaigns and would like to ensure young people most affected by violence are given the opportunity to coproduce solutions.

Application deadline is
Friday 26th November at 5pm

[Apply here](#)

Award for Leicestershire Cares

Congratulations to one of our delivery partners, Leicestershire Cares, for winning 'Non-Profit of the Year' at the Leicester Live Business Awards. It's great to see the fantastic work they are doing being recognised! The VRN-funded Unlocking Potential project, which supports young people aged 16-25 who are in contact with the Criminal Justice System, is also up for a Children and Young People Now Award 2021! Winners will be announced later this month.



New Community Mentoring project established

The VRN is collaborating with Leicester City Council, the Police and Crime Commissioner and Charnwood Community Safety Partnership to fund a new joint community mentoring project to provide young people with increased support and opportunities to turn away from street-based violence.

Street-based mentors with strong links to the communities in which they work, will engage with individuals most at risk of involvement in violence, meeting them in a place where they feel safe and working with them regularly to offer support tailored to their individual needs. The mentors will work in partnership with other agencies to connect young people up to the other services that they need.

Local charity The Y, which has extensive experience of reaching and working with vulnerable young people, has been selected as the provider after a competitive process and will partner with community-based organisations to deliver this new service. The project has been co-designed with community partners and will run in areas with higher levels of serious violence including within Leicester and Charnwood.

[Read more](#)

Leicestershire Police launch new trial to target violent crime

Using local data and evidence from national research, Leicestershire Police are trialling an initiative which seeks to prevent serious violence through targeted, highly visible and pro-active patrols in areas where violence is most prevalent.

Commonly referred to as ‘hot-spot policing’, Home Office funded Operation Goshawk is led by Sergeant Mark Brennan and the Violence and Complex Crime Unit (VCCU). So far the operation has led to additional arrests, seizing of drugs and weapons and has received positive feedback from communities.

[Read more](#)

Community Leaders join the Violence Reduction Board



Cheryl (middle) and Tom (right) at a community event in Thringstone

We were delighted to welcome two Community Leaders onto the Violence Reduction Board in the Summer. Tom Walters and Cheryl Armatrading, both experienced Community Leaders, were part of the first Community Leadership Programme earlier this year. Tom and Cheryl, who were nominated to be Board members by the Leaders Network, will ensure the voice of communities is amplified at Board level and will support the development of community-based initiatives.

Tom, who runs the Charles Booth Centre in Thringstone, said “Bit by bit, working with the Community Leaders Group, partnerships like the VRN and collaborating across the city and county I hope to help build safer, more robust communities and see rates of violence fall.”

Cheryl, Managing Director of the Antoin Akpom Achievements Foundation added, “It was a great privilege to be able to have the opportunity to take part in the VRN Leadership Programme. This has given me the opportunity to engage with other community leaders and collectively be able to provide stronger bonds with the community. I feel proud to be a member of the VRN Board.”

New Violence Reduction Health Group established

A priority for the VRN team this year has been to support different sectors to strengthen their response to serious violence. With representation from Commissioners and Providers from across the local health system, the new Violence Reduction Health Group has been established to develop health-based prevention strategies.

Chris West, Deputy Director of Nursing, Quality and Performance and Violence Reduction Board member said: "Health are already an active member of the VRN including undertaking work to improve data sharing and embedding Violence Intervention Project (VIP) Workers in A&E. We now want to build on this to ensure that we routinely identify and pursue prevention opportunities in a range of settings".

Second cohort of leaders start the Community Leadership Programme



Earlier this month, a new group of community leaders commenced the second Community Leadership Programme. Designed and piloted last year by the VRN and Jones Consulting, the programme recognises the invaluable role communities play in preventing crime and violence and aims to provide participants with an opportunity to explore and develop their leadership style and skills. Following excellent feedback from the first programme, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner have commissioned this year's programme with Jones Consulting continuing to deliver the sessions and offer one-to-one coaching.

A warm welcome to our new Team member



David O'Hanlon Ribbins has joined the VRN team as Lead for Children and Families. As a former Headteacher with over 30 years experience in the education sector, David will be exploring and developing evidence-informed strategies for children, young people and families to prevent the onset of violence. This will include working with schools, early help partners and youth services as well as supporting Leicestershire Police in refreshing their education offer.

Webinar series announced

The VRN is collaborating with the University of Leicester's School of Criminology and Nottinghamshire VRU with the aim of generating and sharing learning across the East Midlands region in preparation for the forthcoming Serious Violence duty. This includes three monthly webinars running between November 2021 and January 2022. The first webinar "What is a Public Health approach to violence reduction" is on Wednesday 24 November.

[Book here](#)

VRN Website Refreshed

The work of the VRN partnership is going from strength to strength and we are keen to ensure that we are regularly sharing new developments as well as local and national learning. Take a look at our refreshed website including a new animation explaining our approach.

[See more](#)

