Final evaluation report
March 2013
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Executive summary

This report is an evaluation of the Healthy Relationships Training (HEART) pilot programme. HEART was designed to support vulnerable young people and improve their relationships with both peers and prospective partners. The primary focus was on reducing the risk of young women either committing or being subject to serious violence, particularly gang-related and sexual violence, with a view to reducing victimisation and crime levels.

The programme was co-ordinated by the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and implemented by the charity Foundation4Life (F4L) in the London Boroughs of Lewisham, Newham and Waltham Forest, with Croydon as a later addition. The model comprised several strands: group training (both universal and targeted), mentoring, a website and a helpline. Coreplan UK developed programme content and trained F4L facilitators and mentors to deliver it.

Catch22 and Analytica Consulting were commissioned to carry out the evaluation, beginning in November 2011 and following the life of the programme until December 2012. The evaluation focused on the targeted strands of the programme, the ‘distance travelled’ by those on the targeted training and mentoring strands, and the process and implementation of these strands.

The evaluation used an ‘outcomes star’ (see Appendix II), a purpose-designed self-assessment tool, to track individuals’ progress towards planned outcomes related to healthy relationships or ‘distance travelled’. Further relevant qualitative information was collected through interviews and focus groups with key stakeholders, including the young participants themselves.

Key outcomes

The evaluation was able to identify key areas in which there was evidence of positive distance travelled by young people on the targeted training and the mentoring strand. While there was no counterfactual with which to compare the progress of the participants, a broad mixture of qualitative and quantitative data allows us to establish the following:

Targeted training

- There was evidence of positive distance travelled in every area of the outcomes star. In several areas, there was evidence that boys made more progress than girls. This seems to have been due to a combination of boys starting at a lower level on the star, with more scope to improve, being more positive in self-assessing changes made, and possibly gaining more from specific outcome areas, such as committing crime.
- The qualitative evidence indicates behavioural and attitudinal changes in all areas, and in most there is evidence linking this to participation in the programme.
- At the end of HEART, participants had a better understanding of consent and coercion in sexual relationships, with the importance of age as a factor becoming more widely recognised.
- There was evidence of increased understanding of the gravity of the consequences of committing crime and the long-term impact a criminal record can have.
- After HEART, participants were more likely to think about the consequences of their actions and to take into account their impact on others. There is evidence that both syllabus content and the advice of facilitators had an impact in this area.
- There was evidence of participants being better able to deal with conflict and de-escalate heated situations after the programme. Participants indicated that facilitators had given
them techniques to deal with conflict and act in an assertive rather than aggressive manner.

- Participants highlighted being less likely to take out ‘bottled-up’ stress or anger on others or themselves at the end of the programme. The confidential space provided during sessions, and the relationships with facilitators, appear to have given participants the opportunity to resolve difficult emotional problems, facilitating behavioural change.
- There is evidence that the advice provided by facilitators supported participants to work towards healthier relationships with family members, peers and partners.
- Some participants indicated making changes to relationships with peers, and there was an emphasis on being friends with people you could trust and who would not get you into trouble.
- Follow-up interviews with a small sample of participants several months after their participation indicated that the sustainability of change was variable: some young people were still strongly influenced by the programme, while others showed fewer signs of ongoing effects.
- Due to a smaller sample of outcomes stars than originally anticipated, it is not possible to assess the extent to which the respondents are a representative or biased group of participants.

Mentoring

- There was evidence that mentees had received advice from mentors that helped improve their relationships with peers, family and partners.
- As with the targeted training, there was evidence indicating that relationships with peers were influenced, with mentees ending relationships with people they felt were a bad influence.
- Mentees were better able to describe their own positive qualities at the end of the programme, suggesting increased self-esteem.
- There was evidence that mentees were better able to deal with anger at the end of the programme, possibly due to the regular opportunity to talk about their feelings during the mentoring sessions.
- Most mentees interviewed found it difficult to deal with conflict at the beginning of the programme and had problems with lashing out at others. There was some evidence that mentors sharing their experiences and providing advice helped mentees to deal with conflict situations in a more assertive and non-violent way.
- Mentees were most likely to talk about behavioural change in relation to committing crime. Several mentees indicated that advice and shared experiences from their mentors helped them change their attitudes and behaviour in this area.
- The results from the mentoring were more mixed than those from the targeted training with limited evidence of behavioural change. In addition no quantitative analysis was possible on this strand of the programme.

Process and implementation

While primarily focused on the outcomes of HEART, the evaluation also identified factors related to process and implementation that stakeholders felt were crucial to realising programme benefits:

- **Shared experiences**: the backgrounds of the mentors and facilitators, and the fact that they were open to sharing and using their experiences to the benefit of the young people, were repeatedly emphasised as crucial by stakeholders.
- **External and therefore trustworthy**: those involved in training and mentoring highlighted that confidence in the confidentiality of the space was absolutely essential to its functioning.
The space to open up and show vulnerability: the space created in both the targeted training and the mentoring seemed to meet a need amongst young people to open up and express their feelings. This in itself helped them towards resolving problems rather than taking them out on others or themselves.

Young-person-led: both the mentoring and the targeted training were run in a flexible way that allowed the young people to deal with the issues affecting them. Both programme strands provided spaces for working through problems at home, at school and with peers or partners.

Consistency: the close bond between facilitators or mentors and the young people they worked with meant that the relationship was often regarded as a personal one. Any inconsistencies, such as facilitators or mentors being repeatedly late, not turning up, or being swapped, were taken personally and had a negative effect on the impact of the programme.

Creation of a support network (unique to the targeted training strand): an important feature linked primarily to the targeted training was the relationships created within the group. This seemed to create a support network, providing the possibility of sustainability outside the sessions and after the programme finished.

Conclusion

This evaluation indicates that the targeted strands of the programme, and in particular the targeted training, are an effective way to work towards attitudinal and behavioural change. Teachers, practitioners and young people all felt that the programme offered something unique and was unlike other schemes they had experienced in the past. However, HEART was a pilot programme, and generated knowledge that should be taken account of for future delivery. Some of the lessons to take forward are:

- The relative merits of centralised selection systems and localised referral systems for preventative programmes need to be carefully considered to ensure the programme reaches those for whom it was designed.
- Involving evaluators at programme-development stage helps to ensure important aspects of the programme are evaluable and the baseline is measured.
- In the recruitment of project workers and volunteers, a high value should be placed on relevant personal experiences, but the structure needed around those workers and volunteers, who will have their own support needs, also needs careful consideration.

Policy implications

- **Sex and relationships education (SRE):** this evaluation indicates that young people respond well to learning about sex in the broader context of understanding healthy relationships. There is clearly a need for education for young people which focuses on more than the biological aspects of relationships, a lesson which could be taken into account in the broader SRE curriculum. There are also benefits to SRE delivery by external staff with different skills who can engage with young people in a different way from teachers. In addition to SRE being integrated in the PSHE curriculum, there are clearly benefits to augmenting SRE delivery with sessions delivered by specialist organisations.

- **Working with boys:** there is increasing recognition of the need to support girls and young women associated with gangs who may be at risk of sexual exploitation. However, little preventative work is being carried out with boys on issues of sexual exploitation and coercion, or around challenging harmful gender norms and transforming masculinities. HEART is unusual in targeting boys in addition to girls, and this is essential to avoid seemingly making girls responsible for their own victimisation.
**Multi-agency working:** partnerships that bring together police, local authorities and the voluntary and community sector are a good way to provide targeted sex and relationship education. This evaluation suggests that the local expertise of F4L was essential to the effectiveness of the programme, and this should be considered in any future implementation. However, it is important to take into account that small local organisations may need resources and support to provide a consistent service.
1. Introduction

1.1 Programme context

Young people and sexual violence, coercion and exploitation

‘The central issue of concern is young people’s inability to identify sexual coercion, and even when they do they see such behaviour as normal and don’t challenge it. HEART needs to consider how to break down some of the myths around sexual exploitation, coercion, and violence amongst both young men and young women.’

Perpetuity, 2011

The HEART programme was developed in response to this key concern identified by the research organisation Perpetuity, in preparatory research to inform the programme interventions. HEART addressed several interconnected issues with the key thread of young people’s understanding of coercion and exploitation, and their ability to negotiate healthy relationships and make safe choices.

There is a growing evidence base which indicates that sexual violence, coercion and exploitation are key safeguarding issues affecting young people (see definitions in Appendix I). Adolescents are in fact more likely than adults to experience domestic violence; and violence in young people’s intimate relationships has been described as a ‘significant child welfare problem’ in a study by the NSPCC. In this three year study with 13 to 17-year-olds, Barter and colleagues found that 25 per cent of girls and 18 per cent of boys had experienced physical violence, 72 per cent of girls and 51 per cent of boys had experienced emotional violence and 31 per cent of girls and 16 per cent of boys had experienced sexual violence in relationships.

Sexual coercion by partners and peers has been found to be prevalent in adolescent relationships. This has been explained through the ongoing emotional development of
young people, as they become more aware of their own sexuality while lacking the emotional maturity to make safe choices.

The Barnardo’s *Puppet on a String* campaign in 2011 highlighted the extent of sexual exploitation based on information from its services, and forcefully argued for a co-ordinated policy response. Estimates of the prevalence of sexual exploitation of young people vary, partly because local authorities do not routinely collate this data separately. A recent study by the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) found 1,857 cases of sexual exploitation over several years, and the recent Office of the Children’s Commissioner (OCC) enquiry into sexual exploitation in groups and gangs found a higher prevalence, with 2,409 victims identified and 16,500 assessed as being at risk of sexual exploitation.

Particularly relevant to the HEART programme is the increasing evidence of ‘peer on peer’ sexual exploitation with young people being the perpetrators as well as the victims. Awareness of the issue was greatly increased by Barnardo’s 2011 report, while the work of Carlene Firmin and Race on the Agenda (ROTA) has further exposed the sexual exploitation and violence faced by women involved in gangs and serious youth violence.

The University of Bedfordshire is leading research into gangs and sexual exploitation commissioned by the OCC, exploring the prevalence of sexual exploitation in gang settings. It is examining whether there are certain features of sexual exploitation unique to this setting. The interim report published in 2012 identifies several disturbing characteristics which seem to be emerging:

- using sex as a means of initiating young people into a gang
- sexual activity in return for (perceived) status or protection
- young women ‘setting up’ people in other gangs
- establishing a relationship with, or feigning sexual interest in, a rival gang member as a means of entrapment
- sexual assault as a weapon in conflict.

Firmin’s research points to young women associated with gangs being at a heightened risk of sexual exploitation, although this has been contested by other researchers. She argues that young women associated with gangs are often isolated and without a network to rely on, and have also found a general lack of awareness amongst young women of services that could support them.

**Understanding of consent and coercion**

A key concern for HEART highlighted by the Perpetuity report is the lack of understanding of consent amongst young people and the view held by a substantial minority that in certain circumstances coercive sex is acceptable. For example, a poll by ICM Research indicated that 38 per cent of young men and 16 per cent of young women thought it was acceptable for a young boy to expect to have sex with a girl if she was very flirtatious with him. Barter and colleagues also found that there was a lack of understanding that pressure constituted sexual coercion and in certain circumstances this can lead to ‘blame the victim’ attitudes, where women are blamed for their own victimisation.

The literature on sexual violence and exploitation within street gangs in particular highlights worrying attitudes to consent. Women who are regarded as having engaged in casual sex are often seen as having forfeited their right to consent, and become increasingly vulnerable.
Reporting

Levels of reporting among teenagers of violence or coercion in intimate relationships are low. Barter and colleagues found that the majority of young people in their study had not reported violence in their relationship to an adult, and sexual violence had lower levels of reporting than any other type of violence. Gang-associated young people who experience sexual exploitation are some of the least likely to report for several reasons, highlighted in the University of Bedfordshire interim report:

- resignation to, or normalisation of, such experiences
- fear of retribution or retaliation
- low levels of reporting of sexual violence amongst young people in general
- a lack of confidence in the ability of police and other statutory services to offer adequate protection following a disclosure.

Barter and colleagues argue, along with others, that violence and coercion in teenage relationships has not been taken as seriously as violence in adult relationships. In addition, the Barnardo’s Puppet on a String campaign highlights the way in which safeguarding of young people has taken a back seat to issues around the safeguarding of babies, after high profile cases in the recent past.

Wider cultural attitudes

It is important to recognise that young people’s attitudes do not take place in a vacuum, and in a sense mirror the values projected from society as a whole. The Mayor of London’s strategy The Way Forward puts prevention at the heart of tackling violence against women for this reason:

‘Violence against women is rooted in pervasive attitudes, cultures and traditions that have been perpetuated over time in communities that have allowed abusers to act with impunity.’

Research points to the ‘sexualisation’ of popular culture as a key context to take into account when thinking about how young people navigate their sexual relationships. Imagery in the mainstream media along with the wide availability of pornography have been highlighted as having an impact on the way young people understand sex and relationships.

Who is at risk?

The research shows that there are factors which heighten the risk of sexual coercion, violence and sexual exploitation. Barter and colleagues found that those who had been exposed to family violence were more likely to experience all types of relationship violence, as were those with violent peers and older partners. There are also several factors which specifically increase the risk of sexual exploitation. Barnardo’s points to a disrupted family life and domestic violence, a history of physical or sexual abuse, disadvantage, poor mental health, problematic parenting, parental drug or alcohol misuse and parental mental health problems. Young people living in residential care and those who are associated with gangs (as above) have also been found to have heightened vulnerability.

Policy response

This is an area that encompasses several different policy domains. The Department for Education published a sexual exploitation action plan in 2009 which set out a national strategy with Local Safeguarding Children’s Boards as the strategic leads. However, key omissions to this plan were flagged up by Barnardo’s and ROTA through its Female Voice in Violence research. No minister had explicit responsibility for sexual exploitation and the
plan itself made little mention of issues related to peer on peer sexual exploitation or that associated with gangs. Similarly the Government’s *Call to End Violence Against Women and Girls* published in 2010 was primarily focused on domestic violence and sexual abuse, to the exclusion of child sexual exploitation or violence within young people’s relationships.  

However, high profile cases such as the recent child-grooming investigation in Rochdale, and the work of organisations in the field, have focused attention and since 2011 the Government has responded with several measures. The Children’s Minister was given responsibility for child sexual exploitation, and policy on child sexual exploitation and violence against women has been updated to reflect the changing context. In 2011 the Government re-launched the *Teenage Relationship Abuse* campaign which ran on TV, in cinemas and online. A consultation was also launched in 2011 on the Government’s definition of domestic violence and in particular if it should be extended to include 16 and 17-year-olds.  

There has also been a policy response to the research on sexual exploitation and violence within gangs. The Ending Gangs and Youth Violence Cross Government report in 2011 clearly referenced these issues and was followed by a Women, Girls and Gangs working group and funding for 14 young people’s advocates to improve services to support young people affected by sexual violence and exploitation, including by gangs. The OCC enquiry was launched in 2011 to throw light on the scale, scope, nature and extent of the sexual exploitation, victimisation and abuse by street gangs and loosely formed groups.

**Interventions**

The Government’s 2010 *Call to End Violence Against Women and Girls* sets out several different levels of intervention. The first is to prevent violence by challenging the attitudes and behaviours and intervening early, the second to provide adequate levels of support to victims, the third to work in partnership to obtain the best outcomes for victims and, lastly, to take action to reduce the risk to victims and bring perpetrators to justice. The HEART programme was primarily a preventative programme, working at level one but through the website and links to ChildLine aimed to provide support to victims at level two. By working with boys it also aimed to reduce the risk to potential victims, impacting at level four.  

The Perpetuity report highlights the importance of SRE in schools, arguing that SRE has tended to focus on the biological basics. A key finding from their research was the need for education which addressed the social and emotional side of relationships and supported young people to negotiate issues such as sexual consent.

There are an increasing number of programmes attempting to provide this form of education for young people, although at present the evidence base on their effectiveness is limited:

- **Safe Choices, nia**: this programme works with young women who have several risk factors in relation to gang culture. The programme offers group work programmes and intensive one-to-one support. A process evaluation of this project in 2011 concluded that the programme was well implemented and all involved had an overwhelmingly positive view of the project.  
  

- **EMPOWER, Safer London Foundation**: this is a support programme addressing young women’s experiences of sexual violence and exploitation, primarily through gang activity. One-to-one support is offered for those referred via statutory or third sector routes and group-based programmes are delivered in schools and Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) for young women and young men. Currently there are two main hubs in Hackney and
Croydon where practitioners are embedded within local authority co-located multi-agency teams.


- **SisterHood project, Catch22:** this is a new service working with young women aged 11 – 16 identified as being at risk from their involvement in/association with gangs and gang members to help them manage, avoid and break free from abusive relationships. The service comprises structured group work programmes, key-working, community mentoring, counselling, multi-agency support and referral and an out-of-area residential programme.

  http://www.catch-22.org.uk/

- **Challenging Violence, Changing Lives, WOMANKIND:** this is a teaching resource for key stages 3 and 4 that aims to raise awareness and transform attitudes to stop violence against women. The programme has been evaluated, finding that both young people and teachers felt that, as a result of participating in the programme, awareness of violence and gender inequality had been raised, attitudes and behaviours were starting to change, and alternatives were being explored.

  http://www.womankind.org.uk/what-we-do/our-impact/legacy/

- **Girls Only, Foundation4Life:** this is a therapeutic intervention and support service for vulnerable young women affected by sexual exploitation and serious violence. The service is delivered by a team of female ex-offenders and offers trauma screening and therapy services, a prescriptive 12 week group work programme, outreach mentoring and family support work.

  http://www.foundation4life.co.uk/services/risk.htm

### 1.2 The programme

This report is an evaluation of the HEART pilot programme. HEART was designed to support vulnerable young people and improve their relationships with both peers and prospective partners. The primary focus was on reducing the risk of young women either committing or being subject to serious violence, particularly gang-related and sexual violence, with a view to reducing victimisation and crime levels. The programme was co-ordinated by the MPS and implemented by the charity Foundation4Life (F4L). It was delivered in the London boroughs of Lewisham, Newham and Waltham Forest with Croydon a later addition for the targeted training in October 2012. Coreplan UK, a leadership consultancy, developed programme content and trained F4L facilitators and mentors to deliver it.

The model comprised several strands: group training (including universal and targeted training), mentoring, a website and a helpline. The targeted training and mentoring strands were aimed at particularly vulnerable young people, while the universal strand was delivered with school classes. The programme ran from June 2011 until December 2012 involving four cohorts totalling 710 young people on the group training and 220 young people being mentored.

The majority of funding for the HEART programme was provided by the Daphne III project. This was established in 2007 by the European Parliament and Council to contribute to the prevention of violence against women, children and young people as part of the General Programme *Fundamental Rights and Justice*. The matched funding for HEART was provided by the MPS, the councils involved and the Home Office.
The Daphne bid was made jointly by the UK and Lithuania, although the work took different forms in each country. The Lithuanian strand involved research on the cooperation of governmental and non-governmental organisations and the Lithuanian police in the areas of human trafficking, prostitution, domestic violence, violence against women, and vulnerable young people, as well as the HEART website.

Project development

Following a consultation exercise which took place at the Network Alliance Girls and Serious Violence conference in October 2009, a need was identified to promote healthy relationships between young people. HEART was devised as a preventative programme to tackle emerging attitudes and behaviour particularly focusing on those at risk.

To aid development of the programme, Perpetuity, a research organisation, was commissioned to undertake a systematic review of existing good practice on youth training, mentoring, telephone helplines and websites to build an evidence base to support the development of the different strands of HEART. The research involved a review of current literature, consultation with providers currently delivering support in this area, and focus groups with young people in each of the proposed delivery boroughs.

The report made extensive recommendations for the content and structure of the programme and is available on the HEART practitioner website. The cross-cutting themes identified by Perpetuity provide a context and reference point for the programme and its implementation:

- **Youth led:** Young people should have a leading role in the design and delivery of HEART.
- **Effective communication with young people:** this is central to the success of all three strands of HEART. Workers need to demonstrate understanding and have excellent communication skills including: a respectful manner, good listening skills, appropriate use of language (including body language) and be able to make topics relevant to young people.
- **Parents and carers should be engaged:** information should be provided to inform parents of the key messages, aims and objectives of the programme.
- **Young people should promote the HEART programme:** utilising young people’s social networks amongst friends, at school and online (Facebook).
- **Duplication should be avoided:** each delivery area should be explored to ensure there is no cross-over and duplication with existing initiatives.
- **HEART must be sustainable over the time an individual is engaged:** referral pathways much be clear in order to ensure that young people have long term and sustainable support.
- **The HEART directory must be regularly monitored and updated.**
- **Recruitment of reformed ex-gang members:** this should be considered as it will provide experiential understanding of the issues at the core of the programme and credibility in the eyes of young people.

These recommendations outline a youth-led programme with an emphasis on youth engagement and workers who can relate to the programme participants.

Theory of change

Figure 1 overleaf shows the theory of change that was developed to encompass the programme.

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1 ‘At risk’ is explained in the ‘Referral’ sub-section below.
Figure 1: HEART programme theory of change

**Programme structure**

The programme was co-ordinated by the MPS and was overseen by a programme board, which consisted of representatives from the three original boroughs, the MPS, F4L, with the evaluators invited to attend meetings.
F4L’s work is based on a belief that young people will engage if they believe a facilitator is qualified to talk about the subject matter in question and that advice is based on experience. F4L therefore recruited HEART facilitators with credibility, particularly young ex-offenders and ex-gang members, with experiences they could draw on in their work and who potentially could act as role models. Once facilitators and mentors were selected they received five days training from Coreplan UK, which focused primarily on developing communication skills in relation to dynamic delivery, building rapport, and disclosing personal narratives in a way that is both safe and effective in the context of youth-led group work. Facilitators and mentors also received accredited mentoring training as well as training in safeguarding/child protection, group-work facilitation. Male facilitators and mentors received one day training on working with vulnerable young women.

HEART involved three broad strands:

1. **Group training:** this involved 12 weeks of targeted training, delivered to single-sex groups of ten young people judged to be at greatest risk and a ‘universal’ training strand delivered to groups of 30 young people often in school classes over three sessions. The targeted training was delivered by two facilitators, one male and one female, followed a set syllabus with a flexible, youth-led approach, and was delivered in an informal and interactive manner. Peer groups were seen to be the ideal group as they increased the likelihood of young people sustaining their engagement in the programme and changing behaviour. Young people’s voluntary engagement with the programme was seen to be crucial to success and therefore an emphasis was placed in the training on the facilitators’ ability to engage.

Reflecting the guidance provided by Perpetuity, the training assisted young people to identify sexual coercion, exploitation and violence, understand what a healthy and unhealthy relationship looks like, and dispel myths around these issues, with some content decided by young people. The sessions were designed to provide an opportunity for young people to develop practical skills to deal with unhealthy relationships and, reflecting the Perpetuity guidance, to focus on drivers for young people’s involvement in gangs and myths around girls and gangs.

The majority of sessions took place in educational establishments, both mainstream schools and PRUs. Some sessions took place in Youth Offending Team (YOT) offices and youth centres. The targeted training was intended to be delivered to 360 young people and a further 360 were intended to go through the universal training.

2. **Mentoring:** the mentoring strand involved one to one sessions targeted at young people judged to be particularly at risk. Mentees were matched with a mentor and each mentoring relationship was intended to include 16 sessions, starting once a week and becoming less frequent, for a period of a year. The mentoring was intended to be provided for 180 young people across the boroughs.

Perpetuity recommended negotiating appropriate goals with the young people at the start of the mentoring relationships. Following Perpetuity’s recommendation, the planned content of sessions was similar to the content of the training, albeit with a less formal structure. The mentoring was also intended to be implemented alongside the other strands. At the design stage, attention was given to finding neutral public locations where meetings between mentor and mentee could take place, such as doctors’ surgeries, with public places like McDonald’s being seen to be too risky. The majority of mentoring sessions took place in schools.

The strand was designed to be delivered by young adults who had experience of the issues being faced and, wherever possible, matching the gender and cultural
background of the mentor to the mentee. Reformed, ex-gang members were suggested by Perpetuity as ideal for delivery. Consistency of mentors was seen to be essential, with mentors ideally not changing during a young person’s participation.

Figure 2 shows the periods over which the mentoring and different cohorts of targeted training where delivered. Although there was some overlap between delivery dates for cohorts two and three, they were classified according to start date.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2011</th>
<th></th>
<th>2012</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J</td>
<td>J</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>J</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Targeted training:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohort one</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cohort two</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cohort three</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cohort four</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2: Project timeline

3. **Communicating with young people through a helpline and website:** the programme also involved promotion of a confidential helpline, which was provided by the general ChildLine number, and a website that provided advice to young people about gangs, serious youth violence, and sex and relationships.

It was decided to use existing providers to deliver these services; this reflected advice from Perpetuity which noted that ChildLine has 85 per cent brand recognition within the general population. They also recommended use of new media technology (include smart phones/apps) to support the whole programme. The website design was youth led and designed to offer more content than just that required for HEART and Eclectic Productions were identified due to their experience in working this way.

**Referral**

The targeted strands of the programme included the mentoring and the targeted training. These strands were intended specifically for young people aged between 11 and 16 who were at risk of sexual exploitation or of sexually exploiting others, and those associating with street gangs or engaging in violent behaviour².

At the start of the programme the MPS co-ordinated a risk-focused prevention approach to selection, which utilised several proxies for vulnerability (eg being a regular missing person) to identify suitable young people. This system proved problematic due to the fact that young people were not being identified by those that knew them and therefore personal factors such as whether they wanted to participate were not taken into account.

The process was therefore changed to allow teachers and practitioners to refer young people. The referral criteria, set out above, and details of the HEART programme were disseminated to every state secondary school in each borough, YOTs, children’s services and the voluntary sector. This was supplemented by presentations to, for example, social workers, head teachers and Safer Schools officers.

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² See section 4.1 for extended referral criteria
Targeted training was available to those in selected schools, while the mentoring referral criteria were disseminated widely and referrals were taken from a range of sources. Referrals to the targeted training and mentoring were made by 22 schools, two PRUs and two YOTs.

Delivery areas

Of the London boroughs in which HEART was delivered, Lewisham and Newham are classified as inner London Boroughs, while Croydon and Waltham Forest are considered outer London Boroughs. They were selected due to their high levels of deprivation, as well as elevated levels of violent crime in comparison to other boroughs. They are densely populated, with relatively high levels of unemployment.

Newham has the highest percentage of households classified as overcrowded of all local authorities in England and Wales. All four boroughs have problems with gang crime and were each selected as four of the 29 areas peer reviewed as part of the Home Office Ending Gangs and Youth Violence programme.

1.3 Evaluation

Evaluation overview

Catch22 and Analytica Consulting were commissioned to carry out the evaluation, beginning in November 2011 and following the life of the programme. The evaluation focused particularly on ‘distance travelled’ by young people assessed as being at risk, who received more intensive support from HEART through mentoring and targeted training. A key tool used was the outcomes star; a purpose-designed self-assessment tool to track individuals’ progress towards planned outcomes related to healthy relationships (see Appendix I). Further relevant qualitative information was collected through interviews and focus groups with key stakeholders. These included young people, teachers, mentors and facilitators.

There are four components of the evaluation, addressed through a range of methodologies:

1. Distance travelled by young people on the targeted strands of HEART – the targeted training and mentoring strands. These were addressed through:
   - an outcomes star completed at the start and end of the targeted training strand
   - interviews and focus groups with young people
   - interviews with teachers
   - focus groups with mentors and facilitators
   - offending data analysis.

2. The process and implementation of the programme and the overall factors crucial to effectiveness of the programme:
   - interviews with teachers
   - interviews and focus groups with young people
   - focus groups with mentors and facilitators.

3. Assessing communications with young people:
   - data on use of the website
   - data on calls to the ChildLine helpline that were related to issues dealt with by HEART.

4. Considering the public funds savings made as a result of the programme:
• identify the savings associated with each of the four strands of the programme.

Quantitative data

The quantitative data used in the evaluation is derived from the outcomes stars which young people completed at the start of the targeted training and again at the end (see Appendix II). This allowed the distance travelled by each young person towards eight key outcomes to be monitored.

Development of the outcomes star

The outcomes star was based on the eight outcome areas of the programme and the theory of change. It was designed to be an easy-to-administer tool which would also be simple to understand and provide a visual guide for self-reflection. The star was developed in consultation with young people and practitioners within Catch22 and F4L.

The outcomes stars indicated where a young person felt she/he was in terms of their thoughts and behaviour with respect to eight outcome areas relating to healthy relationships. Each of these outcome areas was represented by a different point on the star. Each point of the star had five stages along it, each stage defined by a descriptive statement which could apply to the respondent. The outermost fifth stage on each point of the star represented the optimal outcome stage which the programme aimed to help young people reach.

Use of the outcomes star

The star was administered by the programme facilitators and mentors, who were trained in the use of the star.

Table 1 shows the number of young people who completed outcomes stars, broken down by borough.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Borough</th>
<th>No. of pre-training stars</th>
<th>No. of post-training stars</th>
<th>No. of pairs of stars</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lewisham</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newham</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waltham Forest</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croydon</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Number of outcomes stars completed by young people taking part in targeted group training, by borough.

Completed pre- and post-training outcomes stars were not received for all young people who took part in the programme therefore the numbers of stars received relating to the beginning and end of the programme may not necessarily represent the number of young people who actually started/finished the programme. In some cases, individual points on a star were not given a score by the young person. Where this is the case, that young person’s scores were not included in the analysis of scores for that outcome area.

The young people were asked to circle one number on the star point for each topic, each number representing a progression from the previous stage. Some participants felt that more
than one number applied to their situation and therefore circled two or more (not necessarily consecutive) numbers. This occurred in 61 out of the 1284 pairs of responses (4.8 per cent). In those instances in which HEART participants had used more than one score on the outcomes star, the median of those scores was taken as the score for that interval and entered into the analysis. However some of the richness of the responses is lost by using this method to provide quantitative analysis.

**Website and ChildLine data**

The young people’s website was developed and run by Eclectic Productions during the course of the programme. They collected visits over this period which we have presented later in this report as part of the evaluation of the wider programme.

The general ChildLine number was used to provide a helpline for those on the HEART programme. It was not possible for ChildLine to attribute any calls directly to HEART due to the high volume of calls ChildLine receives and the fact that young people did not mention the HEART programme. ChildLine was able to tag calls to analyse the traffic in calls over the past year to assess whether calls were concerned with the main themes of HEART and data is presented in Appendix IX.

**Offending data**

Records were provided by the MPS for a sample of young people from Newham and Waltham Forest. Five young people from Waltham Forest and seven from Newham were selected by F4L as likely to have criminal records. This dataset was inspected for levels of offending in the six months from the young person beginning HEART compared with the same six months of the previous year. See Appendix VIII for this data.

**Break-even analysis**

A basic break-even analysis was carried out, assessing how successful the programme would have to be in reducing offending to create value for money. This was carried out using the most recent Home Office data on costs of crime, along with the data provided on the costs of the programme. See Appendix VIII for this data.

**Qualitative data**

Qualitative data concerning HEART participants’ situations and experiences of the programme would be collected to get a clearer picture of the need for the intervention and what participants got out of it. This qualitative information was collected through individual interviews and focus groups with young people, as well as through interviews with a sample of teachers in the participating schools. The numbers of young people involved are shown in Table 2.
The HEART Programme
Final Evaluation Report  March 2013

Targeted training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Borough</th>
<th>Interviews with young people</th>
<th>Focus groups (number of young people involved)</th>
<th>Telephone interviews with teachers (cohort one, two and three)</th>
<th>Interviews with young people</th>
<th>Focus groups (number of young people involved)</th>
<th>Telephone interviews with teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Newham</td>
<td>9 (2)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4 (2)</td>
<td>3 (1)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 (3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waltham Forest</td>
<td>1 (1)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4 (2)</td>
<td>1 (1)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7 (2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lewisham</td>
<td>3 (2)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1 (2)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 (3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croydon</td>
<td>5 (1)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of people interviewed or in focus groups</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interviews with young people

Interviews were semi-structured and carried out on a one-to-one basis. Purposive sampling was used, and young people were chosen by F4L and schools to represent a range of different needs. Interviews were conducted with girls and boys roughly in proportion to their representation in the programme. Some of the young people interviewed regarding the mentoring strand had also previously taken part in the group training sessions. It should be noted that interviews are less likely to represent those that dropped out of the programme.

An interview guide was developed which focused on the programme’s outcome areas and encouraged the interviewee to talk about his/her experiences and behaviour in each area (see Appendix III). The interview also provided an opportunity to investigate in an open way how much HEART had influenced each young person.

For the targeted training strand of the programme, it was proposed that nine young people would be interviewed from each borough (27 young people in total) at the start and end of the programme. For the mentoring strand of the programme, it was proposed to interview six young people from each borough (18 young people in total) at the start and end of the
programme. In some cases there was difficulty organising interviews and it was not always possible to conduct second interviews. The number of interviews conducted can be seen in Table 2 above.

All interviews were transcribed verbatim to facilitate accurate analysis. Analysis was carried out using the qualitative analysis software, NVivo, based on the framework of the outcome areas, examining responses for emerging themes within these areas.

**Focus groups**

Focus groups were convened at the end of the programme with groups of two to ten young people. The young people in a group were usually all the members of one targeted training group or, in the case of the mentoring strand, were from the same school/PRU/YOT. Suitable groups were identified by F4L through purposive sampling and the focus group discussion sessions were arranged by F4L and the relevant schools/PRUs/YOTs.

A guide for facilitation of the focus groups was created and based on the outcome areas of the programme and the broader research objective of evaluating satisfaction and views of the programme (see Appendix IV). Each group was led by one or two researchers trained in focus group facilitation. As with the interviews, the focus group conversations were transcribed verbatim and analysed for emerging themes.

**Interviews with school staff**

Interviews with 14 teachers were carried out at the end of Cohorts one (four interviews), two (four interviews) and three (five interviews) of the targeted training cohort and at the end of the mentoring strand. These interviews were conducted by telephone to facilitate scheduling and to minimise the demands on teachers. None were carried out with teachers in Croydon as there was no delivery in this borough in Cohorts one to three.

Interviews were semi-structured, following a guide created specifically for the purpose (see Appendix V). The interviews explored general feedback on the programme and facilitators, as well as any perceived impact on the young participants, looking particularly at aspirations, behaviour and learning outcomes.

**Focus group with mentors and facilitators**

One focus group was carried out with a group of F4L staff, most of whom worked on both the mentoring and the targeted training strands. A specific focus group guide was developed which focused on their views and opinions of the programme and what was effective or ineffective in the implementation (see Appendix VI).

**Notes on the methodology**

The use of a mixture of qualitative and quantitative methodologies and information from a range of stakeholders ensures the evaluation can provide a comprehensive record of the programme in terms of outcomes as well as implementation.

There were certain limitations to the methodology and the breadth of information possible to attain which must be highlighted at this point. The first of these is to highlight that a comparison group was not possible given the resources and timing of this project, along with ethical questions over not extending the programme to those who may benefit from it. Caution is therefore needed in attributing the cause of the distance travelled to the interventions.

The second point to highlight is that due to staff turnover at F4L it became increasingly difficult for them to collect outcomes stars for the evaluation. Therefore, outcomes for the
universal programme were not possible to ascertain as outcomes stars were not collected by F4L. In addition, outcomes stars were not collected in sufficient numbers to be analysed for the mentoring strand, and there is a small sample for the targeted training which is subject to possible bias.

The third caveat is that a reliable assessment of the costs and benefits related to the criminal justice system was not possible because of the short periods involved and the lack of data about offending and costs. Therefore the economic analysis section along with the offending data has been provided for reference in Appendix VIII rather than as a part of the main report.

It was not possible to collect post intervention data from young people who did not complete the programme, so we cannot draw conclusions regarding reasons for non-completion. The last point to note is that the evaluation had to be completed by the end of the interventions due to funding requirements, so it is not possible to know whether the distance travelled will be sustained for all. However, there are some indications of sustainability through follow up interviews presented in section 2.10.
2. Outcomes star journeys

This chapter outlines the distance travelled in each area of the outcomes star, using data from the stars and the views of teachers, practitioners and young people. For each area different themes were identified through the qualitative data and the most dominant have been explored.

2.1 Outcomes stars

The scores from after the end of the training were compared to those from before the training to see whether the young people had made any progress over the 12 week period. As the outcomes stars used an ordinal rating scale,\(^3\) medians\(^4\) (rather than arithmetic means) were used to calculate the averages of both young people’s actual scores on the outcomes stars and the distances they travelled (the difference between scores at the start and end of the intervention). For the same reason non-parametric statistical tests were used to assess whether the pre-/post-training differences were statistically significant.

There were significant differences between pre-training and post-training outcomes stars in all outcome areas. In each topic, self-rated scores were generally higher at the end of the programme than at the beginning.

Participants were grouped into younger (11-13 years old at start) and older (14-18 years old at start) sets to examine whether progress over the course of the programme varied according to age. It was possible that boys and girls had made differential progress in different outcome areas over the course of the programme, so change values for boys and

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\(^3\) An ordinal scale is one where responses have a meaningful order and can be ranked, but it is not possible to quantify precisely how much difference there is between the categories.

\(^4\) The median is the ‘middle’ value between two points in a series of values arranged in rank order. It is often used as a measure of central tendency for ordinal data where the arithmetic is inappropriate.
girls were also compared for each outcome. In the following sections covering each outcome area, a table shows descriptive statistics, including the median pre- and post-training scores. The difference between pre- and post-training scores (change value) was calculated for each set in order to show distance travelled. A young person could move upwards from one to five or downwards from five to one, on the outcomes star, giving change values that range from plus four to minus four. This means that the maximum range of change values is eight.

2.2 Healthy relationships

One of the key objectives of the HEART programmes was to help young people understand what a healthy relationship is, how to maintain a healthy relationship, and know when they are in an unhealthy situation.

**Targeted training**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cohort</th>
<th>Number of young people completing stars</th>
<th>Pre-training median</th>
<th>Post-training median</th>
<th>Median change value</th>
<th>Number with positive change</th>
<th>Number with negative change</th>
<th>Number with no change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Number of outcomes stars completed before and after HEART for healthy relationships, pre- and post-training median scores and direction of change.

Table 3 shows that more young people showed positive change than stayed the same or showed negative change. It also worth noting this was despite the median score being fairly high at the start of the programme. There was a significant difference in pre- and post-training scores for the healthy relationships outcome area, meaning that such a difference was unlikely to have occurred by chance. Young people rated themselves higher in this area after the programme than they did before.

Comparison of the change in scores pre- and post-training between the younger and older participants revealed no significant difference in distance travelled between the groups.

Both genders had a pre-training median of 4 and a post-training median of 5. There was however a significant difference between the change values of boys and of girls, with boys showing a median change of +1 (range: 4) and girls showing a median change of 0 (range: 7). This suggests that although the median scores pre- and post-training were the same for boys and girls, there was more variability in girls’ change values. More girls than boys made a negative change over the duration of the programme. It is not known why this was the case, although it should be noted that there was a large imbalance in the number of boys and girls represented (18 and 62, respectively).

When relationships between each outcome area were explored, healthy relationships was significantly positively correlated with more of the other outcome areas (self-respect, 5 For notes on the statistical analyses, see Appendix VII.
wellbeing, thinking about people’s feelings and committing crime) than any other area. When progress was positive in healthy relationships, it was more likely to be positive in the four areas mentioned as well. This overlap suggests that impact in one area may affect another and vice-versa (see appendix VII).

The overall positive change indicated by the star data was reflected in the interviews in terms of attitudinal as well as behavioural change.

**Attitudes to relationships**

During the first interviews healthy relationships were frequently described in vague terms. A healthy relationship might be one where ‘you get on’, and an unhealthy one where you ‘fight’ or ‘argue’. Several participants described a healthy relationship in negative terms, focusing on the absence of conflict rather than the benefits of having supportive relationships. At the second interview stage, one of the main changes in the description of a healthy relationship was an increased emphasis on the need for communication and ‘talking about problems’. While at both stages participants talked about trust, respect and communication, there was a clear change of emphasis towards a more constructive attitude to resolving problems.

At the second interview stage several the participants highlighted specific attitude changes as a result of advice given during HEART and how their perspective on particular relationships was transformed. For some this was a transition to realising they had responsibility for a situation and that they needed to work towards creating a healthier relationship or valuing a family member more than they had been doing. As a 14-year-old girl who was having problems in her relationship with her father put it:

‘[HEART] was helpful because like, they showed you that it’s not just the other person being unhealthy, sometimes it could be you as well…’ (Girl, 14, interview)

For others this transformation was a realisation that a relationship they had was not healthy, and this was not only their responsibility. An 11-year-old boy who had experienced domestic violence explained what he had learnt from the programme:

‘I wish I could be in a healthy relationship, but like my brother will attack me so I used to get hurt. And like I didn’t really used to think about it – I didn’t used to really think about it. But now I understand about how people can get hurt in a relationship. I know I have to solve it by talking, tell someone, talking about it and stuff like that.’ (Boy, 11, interview)

**Relationships with peers**

One dominant theme was reconsidering friendships, and changing the criteria for significant relationships. Most of the participants consulted emphasised that peers whom they could ‘trust’ and who would not manipulate or ‘use’ them had become more important. One 14-year-old girl had ended her friendships with several people she felt to be a bad influence on her. She described what she had taken away from HEART:

‘Stay in healthy relationships, don’t make the wrong choices, because that will put you in jail or get killed, sometimes you shouldn’t be there for your friends if you know they’re not true friends, because you know they’re not going to be there for you’ (Girl, 14, interview)

This is an interesting finding because the Perpetuity report which informed the development of the programme emphasised that the objective of the programme should not be to break up groups or gangs. However, one possibly unintended effect of the programme has been to encourage young people to reconsider their peer group.
**Behavioural change in relationships**

Another leading theme from the second interviews was the use of guidance given by HEART facilitators to actively change a relationship. There were several different relationships referred to, including parents, boyfriends and friends. Much of the advice related to better communication, and particularly dealing with conflict by talking through problems. One 14-year-old girl talked about the advice she was given to help her relationship with her father:

‘[The facilitators said] tell him what’s going on, tell him how you feel or if you can’t, if you can’t tell him face to face, give him a letter and write how you feel about it... When I spoke about it, I started to cry, and then when they gave me advice, I done it, then he started to talk to me more’ (Girl, 14, interview)

The two following case studies both illustrate similar situations where positive changes have been effected by participants in response to talking about issues within the group:

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**Anna, 15 years**

Anna had a very difficult relationship with her father at the beginning of the programme. They had frequent arguments which were rarely resolved:

‘We’ve both got the same attitudes so it’s really hard to get along with him... neither of us know how to say sorry to people. So when we have an argument the house breaks down. It’s bad, I don’t like it. I don’t. I just don’t really get along with him so I don’t feel any emotions towards him.

*When I was younger I used to, like, throw tantrums. He used to get me on the floor and all I’d do was scratch and bite but now that I’ve grown up a bit all we do is shout. But that’s all we do... I spend most of my life in my room, but if I go downstairs for one night it always ends in an argument.’*

By the second interview stage she had made significant changes to her relationship with her father. It wasn’t perfect but the HEART programme had made a difference:

‘My dad, it used to be like shouting but now I can actually have a conversation with him; now if we have an argument, even though he still doesn’t know how to say sorry, I do. And now my mum is not always upset that me and my dad are arguing, the household is much happier, much better place than before, there’s peace.

I spoke not only in the sessions but afterwards sometimes, the facilitator kept me behind, because she would know, sometimes you can tell in your face when you need to talk about something, so she kept me behind sometimes and we spoke about that,

**Why did that help, talking about it?**

*Because it gets it out and you’re not holding everything in, and the people around you go to your school, so if they see you upset about something they do, they know why, and how to help you.***

The difference HEART seems to have made in this situation is in providing someone to talk to, and allowing Anna to think through and attempt to resolve stress and conflict rather than internalising it. Interestingly, Anna gave herself the same score of 4 on the healthy relationships scale pre- and post-training, while moving from 1 up to 5 on the self-respect scale, and from 2 up to 5 on the wellbeing scale.

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6 All names are changed
**Beenish, 14 years**

Beenish was in a relationship with an 18-year-old at the first interview stage. Her parents were not happy about the relationship and it caused tension with them as she had gone missing with him:

> 'My family doesn’t get along with him… once I did not go home at all, I stayed out all night… The day I came back, I had a lot of stress on my head, the teachers were on me, my parents phoned the police so they came (to school) and I had to come in here…'

The relationship with her parents was affected as she tried to keep in contact with him:

> 'I’m not allowed to have phones, to talk to him, and I’ve been getting phones behind my parents’ back, and now the trust’s been going… Sometimes he gives them to me and says be careful don’t let your parents know. Or I just buy them myself…'

By the end of the programme she was no longer in a relationship with him and described how HEART had been part of that decision-making process:

> 'We broke up, because it wasn’t really a good relationship, we didn’t really have times to meet, we had problems with my family and his… this HEART programme’s helped me to see what you can handle… it makes us think, you can look back like how we been, you always think he is a good choice, but when you look back on it, you think actually he is not a good choice and you’re ruining your life going there. So we made our mind to like break up.'

In this case the programme seems to have been instrumental in behavioural change by encouraging Beenish to consider her relationship and re-evaluate how it was affecting her life. This is reflected in her score on the outcomes star, which went from a pre-training score of 4, to a post-training score of 5.

The qualitative evidence indicates that some of the change recorded in the outcomes star data is likely to be linked to participation in HEART, but does not explain the significant difference between boys and girls for this outcome area.

**Mentoring**

Ideas of what constitutes a healthy relationship included getting on, caring and sharing, honesty, openness, knowing each other and respect. Healthy relationships were believed to be important in giving a person somebody to talk to and discuss problems with.

Links with family members were often cited as the healthiest relationships, although arguments with family members—even those described as being in the best relationship—were also mentioned.

Unhealthy relationships were characterised as those in which abuse, unhappiness, stealing, lying or hate were present. These thoughts around healthy and unhealthy relationships were broadly similar when mentees were interviewed at the beginning and at the end of the programme.

**Relationships advice**

In terms of their own relationships, several mentees felt that they were in a stronger position at the end of the programme due to the advice they received. Although mentees were not always able to describe what exactly had brought about such change, the programme, and specifically the mentors, were considered influential.

> 'The more that [my mentor] taught me the better I became.' (Boy, 12, interview)
The mentee quoted above had moved from 1 to 5 on the outcomes star for healthy relationships, so while it is not clear whether his behaviour had changed, he clearly felt he had a better understanding of relationships.

**Behavioural change**

Other mentees were clear that talking to their mentors and receiving helpful advice that could be translated into actions had been a benefit of HEART.

> ‘Because the – you know what type of healthy relationships – it helps you to do those things. To do it, how to have it. Even though you know like it gives you advice on how to do it.’ (Girl, 13, interview)

This mentee clearly differentiated between knowing what a healthy relationship is and how to go about ensuring that relationships are healthy, and felt that the mentoring she received had helped her with the latter. As in the case of the targeted training, some mentees responded to the programme with very specific changes in behaviour, by ending some relationships that they felt were unhealthy.

> ‘I’ve got rid of friends that I didn’t really need any more… Like people that were making my life more miserable or encouraging me to do things that I didn’t really want to do within myself. So I just, “Look I don’t want to do this anymore so you’ve got to go.” Got rid.’ (Girl, 15, focus group)

### 2.3 Having sex

HEART aimed to assist young people to identify what sexual coercion, exploitation and violence are, and provide guidance on how to prevent these situations from occurring, or find ways out. It was primarily a preventative programme working with young people at high risk of finding themselves in such situations, so the programme was targeted at changing attitudes and tackling risky behaviour.

**Targeted training**

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Table 4. Number of outcomes stars completed before and after HEART for having sex, pre- and post-training median scores and direction of change.

Table 4 again shows that participants had high median scores at the start of the programme, with the majority starting at the highest possible score. As such there was limited room for change, within the scale used. However one third still scored themselves higher at the end. There was a significant difference between pre- and post-training scores in having sex, with the median post-training score higher than the median pre-training score. There were no differences in change values according to age or gender.
The increase in outcomes star scores was accompanied by corresponding changes in the qualitative information collected. However, there was more evidence suggesting attitudinal change than behavioural change.

**Sex and emotional maturity**

At both stages of the interview process, the participants could think of a range of reasons why people their age decided to have sex. They often referred to social pressure and social standing initially, such as: building up a reputation, peer pressure and trying to keep a partner happy. Love and being in a relationship were rarely mentioned. There was an understanding at both interview stages that men and women sometimes had different motivations and pressures when deciding when to have sex, with several interviewees arguing that this was an ‘easier’ decision for boys.

Attitudinal change was indicated when asking about when it was ‘OK’ to have sex. In the first interview stage the dominant response to this question centred around ‘feeling ready’ or ‘comfortable’ but with little indication of what this entailed or how you would know if someone else was ‘ready’. Age was rarely mentioned without prompting. Some participants were unaware of the legal age of consent, or only mentioned that age could be a factor if sex could be classed as rape. Others thought that age was irrelevant when asked specifically if age mattered when thinking about having sex, for example:

‘Age is just a number; it matters if like if you love the person or something’ (Girl, 13, interview)

At the second interview stage, age was the most frequently cited consideration in deciding when it was ‘OK’ to have sex. Some had changed their view considerably. One 14-year-old girl initially only indicated that age was relevant if sex could be classed as rape. At the second interview she had a different perspective:

‘When you’re 21 or older. 18 is too young, 19, 20 is too young... they’re still kids in college or uni, and lots of mistakes happen.’ (Girl, 14, interview)

There were also some examples that the attitudinal change led participants to think about their own behaviour. One participant indicated that she was going to consider more deeply her decision to have sex:

‘I know how to say no. I was in a relationship when I started [the programme], I used to think about it all the time, I now just don’t want to do it, I’m not a woman, I’m not ready for it, I don’t see the point, it’s pathetic. If he asks me I’m like no!! Have fun another way.’ (Girl, 14, interview)

**Consent and coercion**

At the first interview stage there was a certain level of confusion about the concept of consent and a generally narrow understanding of coercion. Participants tended to see rape as the only situation where it was difficult to say no to having sex, and when asked what advice they would give to someone who felt under pressure, ‘run away’ and ‘call the police’ were frequent answers.

On occasions, this emphasis on the ability to choose turned into a ‘blame the victim’ mentality:

‘Honest opinion, to me, if someone’s had sex or done whatever, and they say it was an accident, I’m just, like, “It’s not an accident because you had a choice to walk away and say no. You chose to do it,” and then they go, “I didn’t wanna do it,” then I’m just, like, “But you done it anyway, so it was your choice, and you knew what to do if they had forced you, and you went in with it.” So I don’t feel sympathy for them.’ (Girl, 13, interview)
Older participants tended to understand the role of pressure in relationships slightly better. At both interview stages there was an understanding that if someone is pressured by their partner they should probably end the relationship.

At the second stage, several the participants said HEART had given them a better understanding of consent:

‘Before, I used to think, not that sex is sex, the boy/girl didn’t have to say it was not OK/they didn’t want to do it, if it happened it happened. Now I think you need both persons’ consent. Doesn’t matter if it’s the boy or girl, you both need to take the other person’s view, so you know if they don’t want to have sex.’ (Girl, 13, interview)

Many participants consulted also demonstrated a subtler understanding of pressure at the second interview stage. In response to questions about pressure, the role of fear and social pressure was a dominant theme and there was far more understanding of emotional as well as physical pressure. In response to a question about whether there might be a situation where someone felt they did not have a choice, a 14-year-old boy responded:

‘Yes, like if they think they’re in love with the person and they didn’t want to disappoint them or something, when they’re scared, when they don’t have the choice’. (Boy, 14, interview)

The qualitative evidence here reflects the change in outcomes star scores with responses in second stage interviews demonstrating a better understanding of coercion and consent.

**Mentoring**

Evidence of distance travelled for this outcome area was mixed with progression between the first and second interview stages being inconsistent.

**Attitudes to consent and coercion**

Many mentees consulted were aware of issues around pressure to have sex at the start of the programme, feeling that they were in control. As such they scored themselves as at 5 on the outcomes star at the beginning of the programme.

‘I think because some girls, if it’s with their partner and they say, ‘yeah, come on, let’s have sex’, even if she wouldn’t want it, but she would be scared he would leave her, so they would do that, but if it’s a really clever girl, and would know that it’s just not the right thing she wouldn’t, she would just say, ‘no, ‘cos I’m not a girl you can use.’ (Girl, 14, interview)

In this instance the mentee was clear about her own feelings about sex and felt confident of dealing with situations in which pressure might arise. However, while in this case the mentee recognised that pressure may not be directly from a potential sexual partner, others did speak about such instances and felt confident that they would be able make their own decisions.

Negative attitudes towards sex were sometimes conveyed, particularly by female mentees. ‘Getting a name’ as a result of having sexual experiences was seen as a reason to avoid sex.

‘Boys will go and have sex, they’ll f*** every moving thing ‘cos they like it, and they won’t get a name for themselves. Girls may want, girls may be in love with someone so bad, yeah? And wanna make love to them, but they won’t ‘cos of the, ‘cos they may get a name if it gets out.’ (Girl, 13, interview)
Another female mentee felt that girls have sex in order to feel loved and did not believe that this was a good reason to have sex. She struggled to think of more positive reasons, stating, ‘there’s never a good reason to have sex’.

*Changes to attitudes and behaviour*

There were some examples of learning around this outcome area as a result of the programme. One mentee felt she had learnt how to deal with pressure:

‘I’ve learnt that my mentors taught me how to say no when it came to things like that so I’ve placed myself on a 5... They gave their own experience about it and saying how bad it was for them. I kind of took it up.’ (Girl, 14, interview)

This mentee felt clearer regarding actions and consequences in dealing with pressure. In general, however, reasons given for exercising caution around sex did not change (for example from avoiding pregnancy to ensuring emotional maturity before having sex).

### 2.4 Wellbeing

Wellbeing has been defined as:

‘A positive state of mind and body, feeling safe and able to cope, with a sense of connection with people, communities and the wider environment’ (NCSS; 2011,)

The outcomes star was intended to measure the wellbeing of young people in the programme, particularly focusing on their resilience and ability to deal with difficult situations and emotions.

*Targeted training*

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Table 5. Number of outcomes stars completed before and after HEART for wellbeing, pre- and post-training median scores and direction of change.

Table 5 shows that although the median score for wellbeing did not differ from the beginning of the programme to the end, the majority of those participants that completed outcomes stars did show a positive change. Statistical analysis showed a significant difference between pre- and post-training scores, with post-training scores being higher.7

There was no significant difference in change values between younger and older participants, but there was a significant difference in change values according to gender, with boys showing greater change than girls. On average, boys started with lower median

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7 The test employed uses ranked, rather than raw data, so it is possible to observe a difference between the means of the ranks for two groups when there is no difference in the medians of the raw data.
scores than girls for this area (boys: 2, girls: 4), whereas after the programme the median for boys (5) was higher than that of girls (4). In other words, boys ‘travelled’ further and ended up rating themselves higher on wellbeing.

During interviews most of the participants talked about difficult emotions, such as anger and stress, with which they constantly struggled. Conflicts with teachers and within peer groups were common sources of stress, difficult home lives including conflict and domestic violence were also frequently mentioned:

‘I usually feel stressed if something happened at home and that kind of affects me a lot, cause if something’s going on at home and I’m not happy with it, it would affect everyone around me and they will realise that something is wrong’ (Girl, 15, interview)

Many participants consulted indicated that they were lacking in supportive relationships which allowed them to share and resolve their problems. Often problems were held in and taken out on peers, teachers, family or themselves, leading to violent conflict, self-harm, exclusion and staying out with friends:

‘Well now, before when I was angry I would either hit the person or I’ll punch the wall and make holes. I have loads of holes in my bedroom wall.’ (Girl, 14, interview)

‘Cos when I’m angry, I can’t take my anger out on my mum. But once, sometimes I just push her and slap her, like move out my way, and then like sometimes I just like hit my head and stuff like that’ (Boy, 11, interview)

‘Yeah, if I’m annoyed and then my mum annoys me even more then I go out ‘cos I want to have a good time and just take my mind off my mum and I end up coming home late and stuff like that’ (Girl, 14, interview)

‘If I’m angry in school I take it out on the teachers. And then they just get angry about it and then I get excluded.’ (Girl, 14, interview)

Opening up

There is evidence that the HEART group sessions gave participants a space to open up and talk about issues that were affecting them, problems that they had hitherto tended to internalise. Girls in particular emphasised this as an area where they needed help, and HEART had been particularly useful. One 14-year-old girl who had self-harmed described how HEART had helped her with this:

‘I can talk about things and not keep them inside. As a result of keeping things inside I just try things I didn’t want to do… self-harming, not eating, just anything to get away from not being happy.’

Why does it normally happen?

‘Because I get myself into a state and I don’t talk about things, I just get so wound up and it’s a vicious cycle… I’ve learnt different ways to calm myself down and because I have more healthy relationships I’m not angry or upset all the time, because I’ve got people to talk to now.’ (Girl, 14, interview)

HEART gave her a platform and safe space to talk about her problems and this meant she no longer had to keep them to herself.

For some of the participants, this opportunity to talk about their stress and anger made them consider the consequences of their actions more and think about different ways of dealing with them and resolving problems. A 14-year-old girl talked about frequently running away from home due to issues with her mother, and described how her perspective had changed after talking to a facilitator:
‘I’m starting to see that’s not the right way of dealing with things, always running away, ‘cos I was talking to [HEART facilitator] about it the other day, and she used to be a runaway when she was younger, as well, and she said it don’t get you nowhere…I figured that out for myself, since I’ve ran away three times…and that, so I’m going to have to find a different solution to my problems, ‘cos running away don’t really do nothing, it just puts you in even more trouble.’ (Girl, 14, interview)

The HEART facilitators also provided the participants with techniques for dealing with stress and anger in a way that was not destructive:

**Jackie, 15 years**

Jackie’s father had recently moved out and she had frequent conflicts with her mother, both physical and verbal. At home she cared for her two brothers:

‘Because my mum’s working all the time, so it’s like I’m kind of the mum because I’m the only girl and I’m in the middle, and my brother’s always doing his university stuff so I have to look after my little brother and cook for them too.’

The issues that she was dealing with at home led to self-harm as well as causing her to act out:

‘Sometimes when I get angry I just walk out, but sometimes when I get angry I really badly get angry. I start chucking things and if I can’t get to the person that I’m angry with, then I start chucking things or smashing things. And then I’ll just be angry for the whole day… Normally when if I’m sad I keep it in and then it builds and builds and builds and then I break down.’

She felt that HEART had helped because the facilitators had given her new ways of dealing with unresolved problems that were not destructive:

‘Well I don’t really like talking about my problems, so sometimes I keep it in, but now because I’ve been in the HEART programme they have told me ways to get it out but in a way by not expressing myself to other people. So they just said because I like be in my room a lot they just said be in your room, listen to music and just relax and just think of healthy stuff.’

These changes are reflected in her outcomes star score; Jackie scored herself at 3 for **wellbeing** pre-training, and 4 after participating in the programme.

The qualitative evidence for this outcome area mirrors the quantitative evidence indicating changes over the course of the programme. The interviews in this case provided strong indications that creating the space to ‘open up’ allowed participants to deal with difficult emotions in a healthier way. Again the interviews did not indicate why there was a difference between the scores of boys and girls.

**Mentoring**

As with the targeted training participants mentees were asked about what makes them feel down, stressed or angry. School, including issues with peers, teachers and exams, was by far the most frequently cited reason for feeling down or stressed. Several mentees found anger a frequent problem.

‘Small things’ll make me angry whereas before that didn’t happen… when I get angry, [I] like obviously end up getting into arguments with people and then, like, I’ll try to stay quiet and then stuff’ll drive me nuts and I’ll just air my opinion but in an
aggressive way. And then, sometimes that causes fights, or I just start dashing things about’. (Girl, 13, interview)

Dealing with anger

The examples of positive change in this outcome area were generally focused on dealing with anger. Several mentees talked about being calmer and better able to control their temper, resisting taking their anger out on others. In one case a change in response to feelings of anger was thought to have been influenced by the programme:

‘…’cos, the HEART programme, I used to have a real anger problem, and anything that anyone didn’t like about me, I would lash out, but since I’ve been doing the HEART programme, I’ve just left it. And I’ve said, if you didn’t like me, you should’ve just said, instead of waiting till everyone came around and just saying that.’ (Girl, 13, interview)

In this case, the mentee’s experience of the programme had clearly influenced her behaviour as well as how she thought about different situations. Responses hinting at a reduction in angry responses to difficult situations were fairly frequent.

‘And I won’t fight for – yeah – for dumb things, and I don’t really feel stressed out anymore, if only it’s like something major then obviously everyone’s human they’ll get stressed out over things.’ (Girl, 15, interview)

This mentee, who moved up from 4 to 5 on the outcomes star, showed a behavioural change, but also showed insight into the normality of feeling stressed from time to time.

Opening up

Some interviewees recognised that having someone to talk to was useful. At the end of the programme they talked about the value of the opportunity to open up to their mentor:

‘Because then if it’s all bottled up inside you then it’s worse, you need someone who’s been through it to tell you what you have to do.’ (Girl, 15, interview)

This interviewee clearly appreciated the support of her mentor, seeing both advice and a listening ear as helpful. However, while some of the mentees did feel that just having someone to talk to helped them deal with difficult emotions, others would have liked more practical help to address the situations that led to these emotions. In cases where specific advice had been received, this was often deemed very beneficial. One mentee, who found advice given by her mentor helped her following the death of her brother, stated:

‘We used to talk about my brother and that and then she said even if he’s gone like he’s looking down on you so make him proud even if he’s not there. And like go into your room where it’s quiet and like talk to him ‘I know he’s like not there but he’s always listening to you. So just yeah, make him proud and that. So that’s like calmed me down because I used to be really emotional about my brother and now I’m better now.’ (Girl, 12, focus group)

2.5 Self-respect

Some of the young people were invited to participate in the programme because they were perceived to lack self-esteem and self-confidence. Many of them had difficult family lives and HEART aimed to build self-respect and self-confidence in young people, which can create resilience and thereby reduce the risk of engagement in harmful and risky behaviours. The self-respect point on the outcomes star was designed to assess whether there was any change during the programme in their level of self-esteem.
Targeted training

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Table 6. Number of outcomes stars completed before and after HEART for self-respect, pre- and post- training median scores and direction of change.

As can be seen from Table 6, overall, the median score for self-respect was higher at the end of the programme than at the beginning, and analysis showed this to be a significant difference. The median score at the end of the programme was 5, the highest possible point on the star, with over half of participants showing positive change. The change values did not differ according to age or gender.

Understanding self-respect

During the first interviews confusion about the meaning of self-respect was prevalent and many interviewees had a fairly ‘one dimensional’ understanding of the concept:

‘When you have respect for yourself, say if you are going out, yeah, and when you are going out like clubbing and stuff, you see people wearing short skirts and exposing themselves but with me if I were to go out I’d wear a skirt, but not shirt, over my knees so I have respect of myself.’ (Girl, 12, interview)

Many of the participants consulted also found it difficult to talk in a positive way about themselves. When asked to describe themselves or their three best qualities, answers were rarely positive, and several participants found it difficult to describe their character. One 14-year-old girl had to be prompted several times before answering:

‘Bitchy. Um… dunno, when I’m not angry I think I’m a nice person, but then when I’m angry I can be quite horrible.’ (Girl, 14, interview)

Shifts in self-perception

By the second interview stage there was a shift in self-perception for some participants. At the first interview this 14-year-old girl answered in a negative way:

‘Do you like yourself?

No… just don’t like the way I am, or… I was about to say brought up, but it’s not ‘cos of the way I’m brought up, it’s the people I hang around with. I’ve got, like, a perfect life… I go to church every Sunday, I do all my mum’s – what my mum tells me to do. But if I go out, I’m like a rebel, because I feel like I’ve been let loose. But I don’t wanna be like that, I want to be like the same girl I am indoors, but I’m not...’

At the second interview she felt differently:

‘Do you like yourself?'
Yes, because I've learnt how to be happy and learnt how to like my smile more, I never used to like my smile.’ (Girl, 14, interview)

At this point, understanding of the concept of self-respect was by no means universally sophisticated and complex. However, there was a general understanding that the concept was about valuing oneself. Several participants felt that the programme had helped them value themselves more:

‘I’m starting to enjoy life; I started to be happy about myself I like who I was. Before I didn’t really like me but now after doing this course I’m really happy. I just feel good about myself because I used to come here and tell everyone I was fat and ugly but they’ve taught me that I’m perfect the way I was, I don’t need to change.’ (Girl, 14, interview)

New techniques

Another theme from the second stage interviews was the participants’ confidence and resilience in situations where they were bullied or insulted. A number of participants said that the programme had helped them not to take things to heart in the same way. One 13-year-old girl described how her friend who was also on the programme had been affected by it:

‘My friend she kept on saying, “Should I lose weight?”, but now she’s not like that, if people say bad things to her, she’s like, “I know I’m beautiful”, she’s got so much more confidence, she used to just cry.’ (Girl, 13, interview)

The changes in attitudes indicated by the interviews reflected the outcomes star changes for this outcome area and the qualitative evidence provides some links between changes in self-perception and HEART.

Mentoring

Mentees had varied opinions on what constituted self-respect, including not letting people put you down, ignoring any put-downs, caring about oneself, not following others and not letting others take advantage of you. In particular, references to sexual relationships were often made by girls.

‘Like if a boy came and said, ‘Give me head,’ and a girl gets on her knees and gives him head. That’s no self-respect.’ (Girl, 14, interview)

Making one’s own choices when it comes to sexual activity, rather than being led by others, was seen as a key component of self-respect by mentees interviewed. Sexual activity with more than one partner was also seen as lacking in self-respect, apparently irrespective of whether such behaviour was led by others or one’s own choice. Male mentees did not make any reference to sexual relationships when asked about self-respect.

Some mentees believed that whether or not one has self-respect was evidenced by one’s relationship with others.

‘What do you think it means for someone to have self-respect?

They take pride in what people think of them. They don’t want no-one to think bad of them.’ (Girl, 13, interview)

This seemed contrary to what some others believed.

‘Erm, if someone has self-respect they love themselves, take care of themselves, they don’t let no-one harm them, and if someone talks crap about them, they’ll just be like, OK, this is what you think, but this is what I think and this is me, and everything else.’ (Girl, 14, interview)
Qualities

Some of the mentees found it hard to give examples of their good qualities or talk about their personality, and this was often the mentees who did not rate themselves highly on Self-Respect. One mentee did seem more willing to ascribe good qualities to himself after the programme:

‘There are no good qualities….’ (1st interview)

‘I’m a good friend…. If you need help, I’ll help you.’ (2nd interview) (Boy, 12)

He also rated himself higher in self-respect after the mentoring.

Some mentees did not believe their level of self-respect changed. In some cases this was because they already believed themselves to have high self-respect (5 on the outcomes star) at the start of the programme. One mentee rated herself at the same point on the outcomes star at the beginning and at the end, although her opinion of her prior self-respect changed with hindsight:

‘Yeah, I would give myself like a 1 or a 2 at the beginning because I didn’t have a lot of self-respect. I didn’t learn how to do it but my mentor has helped me.’ (Girl, 14, interview)

The mentee had originally rated herself as 4, but seemed to have grown in self-awareness as well as self-respect by the end, citing the mentor’s highlighting of her good qualities as having improved her self-respect.

Other mentees also felt that they had improved in this area at the end of the programme, although few gave reasons or examples as to what brought about the changes. This may be because the mentoring sessions generally were not structured around set topics (those covered in the outcomes star), so self-respect may not have been explicitly discussed. Where self-respect was discussed, some mentees appeared to have found it helpful while others did not.

2.6 Thinking about people’s feelings

Encouraging young people to be empathetic and think about the feelings of others was an important part of HEART. The outcomes star assessed the progress of young people in their ability to empathise, from knowing when they have hurt someone’s feelings to understanding how to prevent this from happening.

Targeted training

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Table 7. Number of outcomes stars completed before and after HEART for thinking about people’s feelings, pre- and post- training median scores and direction of change.
The median score for thinking about people’s feelings post-training was higher than the corresponding figure pre-training, as shown in Table 7. The difference between pre- and post-training scores was found to be significant, with the median rising from 3 to 4. There was also no difference in change values between age groups or between male and female participants.

**Attitudes to empathy**

During the first interview stage a prominent theme was the participants describing differentiated spheres of concern; families and friends were considered and people who were not friends were outside this sphere of concern.

‘If it’s a school person that I beat up I will have no feeling. But when it comes to family people, I will know like, because I know my brother, when he gets upset, I know my mum and my dad.’ (Boy, 11, interview)

**Perspective changes**

At the second interview stage several participants highlighted a change in their perspective, some linking this directly to HEART. These changes included increased understanding of the consequences of their actions, and for some this was linked to their own wellbeing and having the space to think about others:

‘I don’t, I used to not care, someone would come up to me and really upset me, I’d be like I really don’t care, just go away from me. But that is when I didn’t have the energy to do anything, too busy thinking about myself, once I started to think about others then I’m alright. But it’s a skill like sometimes when I’m not in a mood if someone’s being depressed about me’ (Girl, 14, interview)

Jade, 13

Jade talked in the interview about bullying another pupil:

‘There’s this one girl that she’s not all there, she doesn’t have any friends and I used to hate her, always used to get into arguments cause I always used to spray her and that. I always used to give her 50p, and say “go to Sainsbury’s and get 50p spray”. And she would always come back but she never had the spray and was always arguing and I was like I told you to get the spray. I was like give to all the class “oh you need to have a bath” and that.’

In this case HEART helped her to see the consequences of her actions and thinking about the feelings of others:

‘There was a session when we was just talking about bullying. I didn’t know I was a bully. Now I’m just nicer to certain people, even if I don’t like them.’

This interviewee indicates that HEART has changed her self-perception, and this has had an effect on her behaviour. This is reflected in the scores she gave herself for thinking about people’s feelings. Pre-training Jade ranked herself at 2 and after the training she gave herself a 5.

**Impact of content**

In this outcome area there is evidence that the content of the sessions had a particular impact on participants. In one session the young people were given a ‘paradigm shift’ scenario, which encouraged empathy and thinking about the context of a person; this was mentioned repeatedly in focus groups and interviews. For some participants it led to them consciously changing their attitudes and behaviour, as a 12-year-old girl indicates:
‘I used to be really rude to my science teacher, and then basically the facilitator told me, she told us a story about some guy, he had two children running around on a train, and the woman told him to stop them, and he was like, yeah, but my wife just died.

So I was just getting rude to this science teacher, and I didn’t know what happened to him in his life, and he said to me, are you trying to act street? And I was like, “I’m not trying to act street, you’re trying to stereotype street people,” and he was like straight after, “I used to live on the streets, I left home at 16,” and now I’m nice to him.’ (Girl, 12, focus group)

This session was also mentioned by an all-male group who were referred through the YOT:

‘Paradigm shift, the mindset, the mind change… we were talking about how this man was on the train and his kids were running wild and this woman was like can you control your children and then he was like my wife just died, and her mindset changed, but it related to our lives, if we were going to do a robbery or something, think about the consequences of the robbery, that’s my mind changing, I was on it before, but it changed, and that’s what stuck to me.’ (Boy, 16, focus group)

New techniques

The programme provided new techniques and new ways of dealing with conflict for some participants which helped them to avoid hurting people inadvertently. For some participants the programme helped them to think more consciously about the consequences of their actions:

‘We were saying [in the programme] how you have to put yourself in other people’s shoes sometimes when you’re doing something and think about if you would like it if they done it to you. And then if you wouldn’t like it you shouldn’t do it to somebody else… Like sometimes I wanna say something but I’ll think wait a minute if they said that to me how would I react towards it and then I just don’t say anything.’ (Girl, 13, interview)

The qualitative data again shows changes similar to the outcomes star data, and provides some evidence that HEART may be linked to some of these changes. The interviews in particular provide evidence that the programme helped some young people to think about the consequences of their actions and change their behaviour on this basis.

Mentoring

While many of the mentees interviewed felt that they were generally considerate of other people’s feelings before the programme, some felt that they had improved on thinking about people’s feelings as the programme went on.

Advice

It was quite rare for mentees to have specific examples of how learning from the programme had influenced their thoughts or behaviours:

‘Yeah, because I don’t see the point in upsetting people that’s just like bullying them so… why are you being a bully?

Do you feel you were a bully?

Not a major bully like going around bullying people and teasing them – no, that’s just childish. I’d say like hurting people’s feelings and not caring about how they feel, just starting hurting them and just laughing at them because they’re sad…. I just learnt
don't do something to someone that you don't want done to yourself.’ (Girl, 15, interview)

For the mentee above, the advice cited seemed to have had an impact on their attitude. Others described how their behaviour in terms of thinking about people’s feelings was different following the programme.

‘Normally like [before the programme] if I’d have seen something happen I wouldn’t care, I would just carry on until, carry on insulting them until you know until I get sent out or until someone collects me out the lesson.’ (Girl, 14, focus group)

It therefore seems that learning during HEART enabled some mentees to make valuable changes to both attitude and behaviour, by considering others’ perspectives in a situation and adjusting behaviour accordingly.

Existing awareness

Several the mentees did not feel that they had changed in this area and did not feel the programme had been influential. Some stated that they did not talk very much about this topic in their sessions but did show awareness of other people’s feelings in their actions:

‘I only said I was one year older than I was. But still I didn’t want to lie….. it only seems like an age gap because I’m this age and he’s that age. But say if I was 20 and he was 23 or like that no-one would give a .... But it’s because it’s this age that people care…. I don’t think nothing of the age gap really. But I know that he probably will.’ (Girl, 14, interview)

This mentee had ended a relationship over concerns about her own and her partner’s feelings regarding an age gap between them, so was clearly able to see situations from different perspectives. Given that several the mentees interviewed showed a degree of sophistication in this topic area such as stating that it is not always possible to tell if someone is upset because some people might hide their feelings—it may be that it was not felt necessary to cover it in great detail in the sessions.

2.7 Dealing with others

Some young people participating in HEART had difficulty dealing with conflict, particularly with teachers and in school, and needed support in avoiding violence and aggression. Others were perceived to be vulnerable in other ways; some needed encouragement to act assertively, rather than support in controlling anger and aggression. One of the goals of HEART was to encourage such individuals to be assertive and develop their negotiation skills instead of resorting to aggression.
**Targeted training**

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<th>Cohort</th>
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Table 8. Number of outcomes stars completed before and after HEART for dealing with others, pre- and post- training median scores and direction of change.

As shown in Table 8, the median post-training score was higher than the median pre-training score, and the difference in scores before and after the programme was found to be significant. In this instance the pre-training median was lower than in most other areas giving more scope for progression up the star. Again, well over 50% of participants showed positive change. There was no difference in progress between younger and older participants. There was a significant difference in progress between boys and girls, with boys showing more progress than girls. Boys had a lower starting point (median: 2, range: 4) than girls (median: 3; range: 4), whereas both had a median and range of 4 following the programme, so there was more scope for boys to move up the scale.

Many of the young people referred to HEART were dealing with difficult situations at home and frequently carried unresolved issues with them. As described in the wellbeing section above, the lack of support and space to talk through problems often led to participants taking out their anger on teachers, peers and family. Several of the young people described reacting very quickly and physically lashing out to deal with anger:

‘**So how do you normally react when you have an argument with someone?**

*Um, I get angry…Then I go for them.*’ (Boy, 11, interview)

**Thinking about consequences**

As noted in the section on thinking about people’s feelings, a noticeable theme from the second set of interviews was interviewees thinking more about the consequences of their actions. The content of the sessions also had an impact in this section and participants talked about the personal testimonies of the facilitators really having an impact on them, for example:

‘**Because like I chucked a chair at my teacher, and [my facilitator] told me a story that he chucked a chair as well and he hit him on the temple and that guy was knocked out so he wasn't breathing or anything and he got scared because he didn't know what to do now. So then he called the nurse and the nurse pushed hard and fast on the guy’s chest and then he woke up so he was like 10 minutes dead on the floor but then the teacher saved him. So it taught him a lesson why he shouldn't chuck chairs and like why he shouldn't fight. So then I thought about that because I chucked it before but I didn't know like that was going to happen, things like that.**’ (Boy, 11, interview)
The reality of the facilitator’s experience allows this interviewee to vividly imagine and understand the possible consequences of throwing a chair in a classroom. The consequences came to life for this participant, rather than remaining just a theoretical possibility.

**Behavioural change**

Participants talked about the sessions providing them with techniques to use in conflict situations. Several participants felt that they had new tools to help prevent situations from escalating. One 13-year-old girl talked about what she had learnt from the programme and how she had used the learning:

‘[I learnt] how to tone it down and that. And if you’re in a situation what you can do instead of fighting and if you’re having an argument, what you can do instead of shouting and that, you can just like walk away and leave the other person.

There was this one girl who was trying to start arguing with me and I was just like thank you, have a nice day today, you look nice, I like your hair like. She was just like wow, ’cause I wasn’t arguing back with her.’ (Girl, 13, interview)

There was some evidence of learning and behaviour change within peer groups. In a Year 7 girls’ focus group several participants argued that HEART had made a significant difference within their friendship group:

‘Before we used to have arguments every single day, one day these two and the other day more. There would always be problems, but now we know that we’re not perfect…Even now if we have an argument it’s always dealt with a few days later, now it’s always dealt with, there ain’t no fights anymore.’ (Girls focus group, 11-12)

Teachers confirmed these accounts, stating that the attitudes of the young people to teachers and their ability to deal with conflict have been radically altered:

‘The girls have gone from being of the highest concern to the school in their year groups to hardly any problem at all now. If there’s a problem in class, or they don’t agree with something or have a problem with the teacher, they will now take a different approach. Before they would walk out of class or be rude to the teacher, disrupting the class. Now they will either talk to the teacher after the lesson, or their head of year. They talk about issues and sort them out properly. It’s their reaction to things, their attitude, which is much more positive. They are able to take a step back and deal with things more maturely. They still get upset with things in class, and frustrated, but they just deal with them a lot better.’ (Teacher)

However attitudes and behaviour did not change towards teachers in all cases, with a number of the young people expressing similar attitudes towards conflict with teachers at the second stage. One 14-year-old girl, asked at the second interview stage how she thought she could get better at dealing with conflict, answered:

‘I don’t know. If the teachers stop annoying me’. (Girl, 14, interview)

Younger participants tended to highlight behavioural change in dealing with conflict more than older participants. The evidence indicates that this may be an area which has more relevance to those in Years 7 and 8. It seems likely that this is a result of the comparative lack of maturity for 11 to 13-year-olds in comparison to 14 to 15-year-olds.

In *dealing with others*, there were several examples given of HEART supporting behavioural change. This is evidence that some of the changes seen in this outcome area are likely to be linked to the programme.
**Mentoring**

As with the targeted training, many of the mentees self-reported having long-standing difficulties in dealing with others and controlling anger. There was plenty of evidence of self-awareness and reflection on the part of the mentees even before the mentoring had commenced. However, awareness of problems of this nature was not always accompanied by an understanding of the appropriate actions to take.

**Lashing out**

Mentees often mentioned physical conflict when talking about dealing with others. Fighting was sometimes the first response to arguments or perceived disrespect, seen as part of the natural progression of an argument that has not been quickly resolved:

‘It depends on how deep the argument is, obviously if it’s a proper heated argument then obviously, like, one person or the other tends to get violent, but usually when there’s a casual argument, it dies down basically, it doesn’t really become anything.’ (Boy, 15, interview)

In some cases, particular advice received from mentors was identified as a key factor in precipitating behavioural change and supporting the mentees to control their anger:

‘Cos [my mentor] told me she had anger problems as well and she told me to do some stuff that she done as well and it really helped for example when someone come up to me to physically have a fight with me, just let – if they’re going to have a fight with me, then you can’t punch them back or slap them back, you have to walk away. Or if you’re going to have an argument with someone, let them talk and just stand there, even if you’re angry inside just let – just be humble and don’t say anything, just stand there and listen to it and walk away.’ (Girl, 13, interview)

In this instance, the mentee believed that she had made some improvements in her dealings with other people and difficult situations following the mentoring she received:

‘I don’t lash out as much, as before. My anger is quite improved but I still need more changes and stuff but I think it’s improved.’

**Mixed success**

Many of the mentees consulted appeared to be in the same place after the programme with regards dealing with others as they were before the programme. In some cases this was apparent through their reported behaviour, as they seemed to encounter similar problems or deal with disagreements in similar ways after the programme as they did before.

‘If I’m angry, and you get me angry, you know, like, I might still act the same, that I’m actually like. But if you really get me on the proper level, am, like, top, top, top anger... you don’t want to know the rest.’ (1st interview)

‘But that’s the thing. I’ve got a major anger issue. If you touch me or my family or cuss my mum or dad or any of my family your face will be on the ground straightaway.’ (2nd interview) (Boy, 12)

In some cases, mentees stated explicitly that they did not feel that they had changed in this outcome area following the programme. This may be because mentees did not have any particular difficulties in this area or because the sessions did not make a difference where the mentee did have difficulties with this topic.

**Contradictions in self-assessment and reported behaviour**

In some instances, the comments of mentees suggested an apparent contradiction between their self-assessments, including their appraisal of the programme, and recent behaviour
they described in relation to this outcome area. For example, one mentee felt that he had moved up the outcomes star for dealing with others at second interview, but described a recent incident in which he had been involved in a fight resulting from a disagreement. But there may well have been changes in the frequency or severity of such occurrences in dealing with disagreements and conflict. The mentee quoted above who felt that her anger had improved following the programme was also able to describe a recent fight at second interview, but she felt that such incidences were less common than before. That some mentees still had difficulties in dealing with disagreements should therefore not necessarily be seen as a failure of the programme, particularly in cases such as this where the mentee showed awareness of the limitations of her progress, as improvements are likely to be happen gradually.

2.8 Committing crime

This outcome topic was designed to have an effect on attitudes to crime and discourage people from offending. As HEART worked mainly as a preventative programme, many of the young people referred on to it were perceived to be ‘at risk’ of becoming involved in crime, rather than known to be currently involved.

Targeted training

Table 9. Number of outcomes stars completed before and after HEART for committing crime, pre- and post-training median scores and direction of change.

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Table 9 shows that the median post-training score was the same as the median pre-training score, but statistical analysis of all of the pre- and post-training scores showed that there was a significant difference in this outcome area, with an improvement occurring over the course of the programme. There was no difference in progress according to age group, but there was a significant difference according to gender, with boys showing more progress than girls. This may be due to a lower average starting point for the boys, as their median score pre-training was 3 (range: 4) compared to the girls’ median pre-training score of 4 (range: 3). Post-training both genders had scores with a median of 4 and a range of 3. The number showing no change was slightly higher in this section than showing positive change.

The preventative nature of the programme led to the interviews focusing primarily on attitudes rather than behaviour. There were a small number of interviewees who had been arrested, and a few who had been convicted. The predominant crimes involved were assault, robbery and criminal damage.
Consequences

At the first interview stage a dominant theme was the underestimation of the consequences of crime. This seemed to change by the second interview stage, by which time there was increased understanding of the gravity of the consequences of involvement in the criminal justice system and the impact on future opportunities:

‘Now I know that if you rob and you get caught you’ll pay money, go in jail a couple of years and like – people go to jail, yeah, just for stealing like a £10 thing. What’s the point of stealing a £10 thing if you’re going to do maybe 5 years in jail? Just stealing this little thing. So now like I understand don’t rob things like that. [The HEART facilitator] went to jail for a couple of years for robbery as well. Like he told me that like it’s not good in jail because he’s been through it.’ (Boy, 11, interview)

‘Not everyone’s lucky enough to actually get a job or whatever, or do something productive with their life when they come out of prison or whatever…and…I want a job, [The facilitator] was telling us how he got in a lot of trouble when he was younger, like with the police and that…but he’s lucky because he’s doing something productive with his life and he don’t want people to be in the same situation as him, ‘cos as far as he’s concerned he was lucky that he got a job.’ (Girl, 14, interview)

This was an area in which the experiences of the facilitator had a real impact. Their first-hand experiences gave their advice legitimacy and encouraged the young people to engage and evaluate their choices:

‘The group made me change because the way [my facilitator] used to talk about like life in jail and other life like crime. The crime he went through, I was going to go through that stage and I was going to go through the same path, and then I just took a step back and done a U-turn and go on another path, innit.’ (Boy, 13, focus group)

Reconsidering friendships

The above quote highlights the dominant behavioural change evidenced at the second interview stage in this outcome area. Participants talked about reconsidering peer groups and ending friendship with those they felt might be a bad influence. One 14-year-old girl described why she had moved up on the committing crime scale for 4 to 5:

‘I used to hang around with a lot of older boys, ‘cos of my brother, and like I was just staying with them, and they were always making trouble. Once there was an accident where we went somewhere and my friends were joking about and by accident he smashed the window. Someone found out about it, and they knew I was with the group, and the police round the school were talking to me… I don’t hang around with the wrong people anymore, I try staying out of trouble, breaking the law whatever, just stay with the good people that ain’t bad…’ (Girl, 14, interview)

For several participants part of this realisation was due to a better understanding of joint enterprise, and the realisation that even just being present at the crime scene could lead to criminal justice consequences:

‘Like if your friend’s doing something bad and you know it’s wrong and you tell them to stop, and they won’t stop if you’re there and they’re doing it obviously you’re gonna get in trouble as well. So you can just walk away from them and leave them to do it on their own. I’m not saying it’s being a bad friend and that but you don’t wanna get yourself in trouble and you have to think about yourself as well, and not just them.’ (Girl, 14, interview)

The qualitative evidence here reflects the outcomes star scores, demonstrating changed attitudes to committing crime during the programme. Although the facilitators had clearly
made an impact when talking about their experiences in this outcome area, the evidence linking behavioural attitudinal changes to HEART is not as clear for committing crime.

The qualitative evidence does not easily explain the difference between boys and girls indicated by the outcomes stars in this area. One possible explanation is that boys were more likely to have histories of offending than girls, and therefore this area may have been more of a focus during the programme.

**Mentoring**

Offending was a current issue for some of the mentees consulted, but not all of them. Many seemed to have some understanding of the consequences of breaking the law, and how these vary according to the offence.

**Staying out of trouble**

When asked how easy they found it to stay out of trouble, most responded that it was not easy at all. In some cases there was a sense of helplessness that unless you stayed indoors, you would inevitably end-up receiving attention from the police whether or not any crime had been committed.

‘If you look intimidating, and look, like, loud and stuff, then you’re not staying out of trouble. It’s simple, you’re not staying out of trouble unless you stay in your house and you don’t go out.’ (Girl, 13, interview)

There was also an understanding that staying out of trouble may depend on personality and ability to resist pressure from friends. Some people were seen as more easily influenced than others, which was linked to finding it difficult to say no ‘in a nice way’.

Mentees often talked about staying indoors, and away from certain people as the best way to stay out of trouble. One mentee recalled how she had previously offered advice to a friend, such as to stop drinking and smoking and to focus on school. Detailed advice such as this was rare, with mentees apparently struggling to think of many small, practical steps that could help one to stay out of trouble, which may stem from the feelings of helplessness described earlier.

**Attitudinal and behavioural change**

The evidence of change in this outcome area was mixed; there were a few examples of positive change linked directly to the programme:

‘He just told me what are the consequences when you do these things. So now I don’t do them.’ (Boy, 13, interview)

The programme seems to have had some effect on both learning and behaviour here. Although the mentee did show some awareness of the consequences of crime when he was interviewed at the beginning of the programme, his mentoring sessions appeared to have added to that understanding. Another clearly felt that qualities specific to his mentor were at play in his response in this outcome area:

‘I got caught up in dumbness and then… he just tells you… the way he explains it is so good…yes.

So it makes you want to do what he suggests?

Not what he… I can’t explain…basically he gets you back on the right path. If you’re stumbling, he’ll get you back on the right path. He won’t talk to you like you’re a child, he’ll talk to you like you’re an adult. He wouldn’t think, because you’re a 13 or 14-year-old kid… he will talk to you as an adult. That’s the thing I like.’ (Boy, 14, focus group)
The relationship between the mentee and the mentor also appears to have been influential for one 14-year-old girl who hinted at having been involved in crime in the past:

‘So yeah, like I used to do a lot of s*** but since I started talking to [my mentor] like it’s calmed down….

**And what do you think it is that has really helped you to calm down?**

‘I think it’s mostly to have, it’s just the fact that you’ve having someone to say like, ‘I know you can do it’ and actually saying that they believe in you. That’s like, it’s just something that you know, I don’t know how to say it…It’s like a motivation to like do it saying it like that.’ (Girl, 14, focus group)

In several cases, when asked which area of the programme they found the most useful mentees indicated *committing crime*. This was particularly the case for some of the most vulnerable interviewees.

There were cases in which the mentees may have been involved in crime but did not make any related behavioural changes within the time period of the programme.

‘Sort of like what I was doing was committing a crime against the law but luckily I didn’t get caught for it. So yeah, I kept myself on a four.’ (Girl, 14, interview)

For some, the programme seemed to have little influence on their attitude to crime, as with some of the other outcome areas, several mentees said that they did not really talk about *committing crime* in their sessions.

### 2.9 Lifestyle choices

The *lifestyle choices* outcome area aimed to help young people feel more in control of their lives, and be more aware of the choices open to them. The outcomes star aimed to assess whether the young people had a higher aspirations at the end of the programme.

#### Targeted training

<table>
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Table 10. Number of outcomes stars completed before and after HEART for *lifestyle choices*, pre- and post- training median scores and direction of change.

There was a significant difference between pre-and post-training scores in *lifestyle choices*, and as can be seen in Table 10 the median post-training score was higher than the median pre-training score. This is another area in which the post training median score was 5, the highest possible value on the outcomes star. There were no significant differences in change values according to age or gender.
The outcome area on lifestyle choices relates to every single outcome area where they were linked to decision making. For example, dealing with conflict in a different way, decisions around committing crime, or thinking about sexual consent in a more knowledgeable and mature way indicate that a young person is thinking about the consequences of their actions and how these decisions could affect their future. There is clear evidence highlighted above in each of the outcome areas indicating increased maturity in decision making.

At the first interview stage every single participant had aspirations for their future, from working in health and beauty, to being a doctor or a racing car driver. Many of these goals were aspirational rather than thought-out and realistic. However, many of the participants were only in the first or second year of secondary school.

A strong theme at the first interview stage was acknowledgment from participants that, although they had goals, there were issues affecting the likelihood of reaching them. For example, participants mentioned the effect anger had on them and, even if they had high aspirations, they knew they needed to overcome this barrier to reach their goals.

Focusing in school

At the second interview stage several of the interviewees emphasised the importance of school and the need to focus in order to get where they wanted to be. The majority of the boys in one Year 8 male focus group said that HEART had helped them behave better in school, which meant not talking as much in lessons and respecting teachers more, and resulted in being sent out less often and getting higher marks. One participant had put himself up to be a student leader, which was highlighted by another in the group:

‘He went up for something called student leader, which basically makes you like an ambassador of the school... I don't think he would've went for it if it wasn't for his positive behaviour. He saw a change in his attitude and saw what he could be, what he can be. Potential. So he like pushed himself to that extra mile and now he is a student leader. That's why he has a red tag.’

When asked why he had decided to apply for the position he answered:

‘Just a personal challenge. To like set more goals for myself’ (Boys' focus group, 12-13)

This boy’s actions indicate that there were some individuals who consciously made better choices and set themselves goals. Other participants felt the programme had encouraged them to think more about their choices for the future:

‘Well the HEART helped me think about what I actually want to do, because...I'm coming like, near to the end of school, like year 10, GCSEs, and then year 11... I don't have that much time...well you don't have to know exactly what you want to do, but you should have a rough idea of what you want to do.’ (Girl, 14, interview)

Teachers confirmed these behavioural changes anecdotally, frequently mentioning reductions in internal and external exclusions, changes in attitudes towards teachers and better behaviour in school generally:

‘At our school, we have teacher referrals – to head of year, headmaster – for bad behaviour. Since the programme, the number of these referrals has halved. It’s huge. They have all changed. They were all in danger of being permanently excluded and were a continuous problem in lessons. Now, in terms of permanent exclusion, every one of them is completely off that possibility. Nowhere near that happening.’ (Teacher)

Teachers gave several examples of students who had really taken something from the programme and changed their attitude in school. One teacher gave the example of a student
who had drawn very negative attention through her conduct around school, her tone of voice and attitude to students and staff, and the fact that she wouldn’t take responsibility for her actions. He stated that there had been a ‘180 degree change in her’. The school had recently hosted the ‘success for life’ mentoring programme that selects specific, committed young people to mentor on specific subjects right through to university. They interviewed students and chose this girl as someone to be mentored. He said that this was something that would have never happened before, and described it as ‘a massive turnaround’.

Gender was a factor in this area as boys tended to focus far more on changes to their performance in school. A dominant theme from boys in interviews and focus groups was that they were prioritising school, and behaving better in their lessons. Linked to this was a general tendency among boys to be more positive in self-assessing the changes that they had made, whereas girls were often more circumspect. A typical male response in a focus group was:

‘I’ve made a couple of changes since I’ve joined this group. I’ve been focusing on my education, trying to get A’s. I’ve been more respectful, been doing more homework, been thinking about my life more lately, been making a lot of changes at home Like going to sleep early for school, doing my homework quick, watching less TV, I have changed stuff like that.’ (Boy, 13, focus group)

The main change indicated by the qualitative evidence was therefore within attitudes and behaviour to school and it suggests that some of the change seen in the outcomes star is linked to participation in the programme.

**Mentoring**

For mentees, there was not strong evidence of the programme’s influence on lifestyle choices. The aspirations discussed by mentees included general lifestyle choices and specific jobs. It was common for mentees to see themselves with a stable job and a family at age 25. In terms of careers, many mentees consulted had an idea of what they wanted to do at the beginning of the programme, although not all had given it much thought.

Some of the careers that mentees had in mind included working in the social/healthcare sector as social workers or counsellors or pursuing a sporting talent. In some cases, mentees had several possible career paths in mind, as was the case for one 14-year-old girl who was interested in both a career in the music industry and in becoming a counsellor for teenagers.

For the most part, career aspirations—where there were any—were down-to-earth, and included plans to attend college in order to gain qualifications appropriate either to their career of choice or to a back-up option. Many mentees consulted would turn to family members for advice on a particular career choice or see a family member as inspiration, although other adults were inspirational in some cases. Sources of inspiration in terms of lifestyle choices did not appear to alter markedly when mentees were interviewed at the end of the programme. Family was a greater influence on aspirations and guidance than mentors.

**Attitudinal and behavioural change**

There was some evidence of mentees having a clearer idea following the programme of what they would like to do in the future.

‘And what do you plan to do once you finish your GCSEs?

Go to America… I would like to work with computers… Video games.’ (Boy, 13, interview)
At first interview, this mentee had said that he had no idea what he wanted to do in the future, but at second interview appeared to have a lifestyle in mind, if not yet the specifics regarding the next steps in getting there. Other mentees appeared to change in aspirations or clarification of earlier ideas over the course of the programme. However when asked about what might have led to these changes none suggested that the programme had been influential. Given the ages of the mentees it would be expected that many would change their minds with regards future careers over the time period covered by the programme.

*What do you see yourself doing when you are 25?*

*Probably doing the job that my mentors did.* (Girl, 14, interview)

This mentee provided the only hint that the mentoring sessions had been influential in the area of *lifestyle choices*, although even in this case she had previously expressed an interest in a similar career. Many of the mentees consulted did not feel that they had changed in this topic area.

*I’ve always known what I wanted to do and how I wanted to do things but I’ve never had that push to do it, like it’s always been in the back of my mind that I might do that tomorrow, I want to do this but I would never go for it, but now I’m still trying to… yeah.* (Girl, 15, interview)

As can be seen from the quote above, mentees’ lack of progress in the *lifestyle choices* outcome area was not necessarily due to their feeling in control of their futures to begin with; there was often simply no great change from the beginning of the programme to the end. However, in a more general sense some mentees showed progress in this outcome area through changes in their current behaviour. The advice one 12-year-old girl received from her mentor linked consequences of her current behaviour to future options in life, and this clearly had an impact, with the mentee reporting a greatly improved attitude towards school work. For another mentee a prior awareness of this relationship between current behaviour and future actions and paths in life was seen as a good reason to listen to her mentor.

*‘And how did she help?’*

*Well she told me how to deal with the situation as in let’s say, if someone called you a name and you’re just there trying to sort it out by arguing it wouldn’t solve anything; she would tell you just to walk away. Or if you don’t want to talk about it, sort it out in private, only with the person, not in front of everyone where it can only get worse. Just walk away.*

*And why was it that you took her advice do you think?*

*It was because at the time I really felt like I had to do something. By arguing or fighting I wasn’t going to get anywhere; I was on the boundary of getting excluded as well…. So I knew I had to do something if I wanted to have a better life in the future.* (Girl, 12, focus group)
2.10 Sustainability: targeted training

*Eight-month follow-up*

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Table 11. Change values post-training and at eight-month follow-up, by outcome area.

Third interviews were carried out and outcomes stars filled out by six young people eight months after they had participated in the targeted training to get a sense of whether any sustained change could be created by the programme. The data, as set out in Table 11, provides a mixed picture, although with such a small group it is difficult to assess this.

The outcomes star data shows that in most areas scores had not fallen back to the pre-training level. Where there was negative change, it was fairly minimal, except for the lifestyle choices area where the follow-up average was actually lower than the pre-training average. It is difficult to ascribe reliability to such a small number of scores, but it does indicate a certain level of sustainability.

The interviews provided a mixed picture with sustainability varying dramatically between individuals. Some demonstrated no sustained change at all, and others were adamant that their life had been significantly influenced for the better by HEART.

*Sustained change*

*Dealing with others* was an outcomes area where several interviewees talked about HEART changing the way they behave. Interviewees talked about being calmer and better able to deal with conflict situations and using specific techniques they had learnt from the programme to prevent conflicts escalating within their peer group:

‘Yesterday there was an incident with my friend and everyone was really angry and everyone was shouting at each other, they wouldn’t let each other speak, so what I done is I gave everyone like something to hold, so if you don’t have my phone, if you don’t have my phone you’re not allowed to speak. So everyone was speaking, so once I’d done that, everyone was speaking again and we could all discuss about the problem and now today, everyone is talking to each other and everything is okay.’ (Girl, 12, interview)
One young person in particular described several changes to her life which resulted from the programme:

Nicole, 12

Nicole was one participant who felt strongly that HEART had really had an impact on her. She focused particularly on her relationships with her family and how they had changed. This also comes through the outcomes star scores for healthy relationships, where she ranked herself at 2 initially, moving up to 5 both at the end of the programme and at the eight-month follow-up:

‘Because before some things I’d keep from my sister, I’d keep it in but it would start to hurt me, so from the HEART Programme I’ve learnt that I can express myself. I never used to like my sister, she never used to let me. She never really lived round here either, we didn’t talk much.’

Nicole described the way HEART had helped her sort things out with her sister:

‘Because when I was doing some of the things that my sister would say I do, they would tell me reasons why she might be doing that. Tell me what I could have done wrong, what she could have done wrong. So it wasn’t always like blaming one of us, it wasn’t just one of us it was like both of us.

It’s just to be able to sit down with your family and tell them how you feel about school and get everything out of your system, stop keeping it in because where you keep it in, it starts to hurt and you’re really scared to let it all out.’

Being able to express herself had knock-on effects for other aspects of Nicole’s life. It helped her to avoid internalising her feelings and she talked about not getting so stressed or angry:

‘Because before I used to be like moody every day after school because like some of the teachers would get on my nerves and I used to just walk out the classroom and that. But now since the HEART Programme I found that I don’t need to get stressed over certain things and don’t need to walk out the classroom as much… Before the HEART Programme I used to lose my temper like really easy over silly stuff, but now I’ve learnt that I don't have to get angry easy, I just have to talk it out.’

These changes are visible in her outcomes star scores. Pre-training she scored herself at 3 for dealing with others and wellbeing. After the programme she had moved to 5 in both, and at the eight-month follow-up was at 5 for wellbeing, and 4 for dealing with others.

Mixed success

One less positive change observed at the follow-up interview was a bitter and long-running argument between two girls who had been in a group together. One of these girls in particular indicated little change in the outcome areas that had been most challenging for her.
Neesha, 13

Neesha had difficulties within *dealing with others* before HEART and scored herself a 3 for this area. However, this did not change during the course of the programme or in the first and second follow-up assessments where she ranked herself at 2 and 1.5 respectively. During the first interview when asked to describe her best quality she said:

‘My best is that people can’t annoy me ‘cos they know I’ll beat them up. I’ve got anger problems’

By the follow-up the situation had not changed dramatically. When asked about getting into fights she said:

‘Actually it does solve the problem…Because they are obviously not going to look at you, or do something to you again after you beat them up. Unless they beat you up it depends.’

She was also in conflict with another girl who had also been in the group, someone she had been good friends with at the time:

‘How come you are not friends anymore?’
‘Because she is a head chick.’

*She’s a head chick what does that mean?*
‘Someone that gives head.’

*Okay, so what makes that so difficult at the moment?*

‘Because she is a sket, and I just don’t like her, and I bate her out yesterday so we are just not friends I don’t like her. Everyone speaks about her around BBM no one likes her. It’s because she puts on a front, she blames it on her mum she says “I’m a sket because my mum is a sket” so I don’t like her…

*I hate [her] so much, on Facebook I’ll just be rude about her, I don’t do indirect statuses if I have to be rude about her I’ll say her name in it or tag her in it. I don’t like her.’

This girl was exhibiting one of the types of behaviour HEART was aimed to prevent, bullying another girl on the basis of assumed sexual behaviour and attitudes. It is difficult to know why the programme did not work for her, possibly she would have benefitted from a longer running and more intensive one to one programme.

For some young people the process was different to Neesha’s. One girl felt real changes had been generated by the programme but this had not been sustained over the follow-up period:

‘When I started the HEART programme I didn’t want to live with my dad, but then the things we were doing in the HEART programme, I talked to my mum about them, and me and her kind of got our relationship got a bit better. And then I don’t know what happened. So now I’m with my dad.’ (Girl, 13, interview)

Although she feels that HEART helped her to change her relationship with her mother initially, this was not a long term change and her relationship broke down over the follow up period.
2.11 Training and mentoring outcomes star journeys: summary

This section gives an overall assessment of progress across all outcome areas and explores the links between them.

**Targeted training**

The evidence indicates the targeted training strand had an impact on participants both in terms of their attitudes and behaviour. It indicates young people were able to deal more easily with conflict situations, and to deal with difficult emotions in a more constructive way. There is also evidence that young people had healthier relationships after the programme and had increased their self-esteem and confidence. In these areas distance travelled in the outcomes star was backed up by qualitative data indicating that the HEART programme was behind some of these changes.

There is also evidence that young people had a better understanding of consent and coercion in sexual relationships and had changed their attitudes to committing crime. However, there was less evidence in these areas than in those mentioned above which connected these changes to the programme.

**Mentoring**

The mentoring strand had mixed outcomes and without quantitative data it is difficult to make any generalisations about progress. The areas where change seemed to be clearest were again in young people's ability to deal with conflict, and their ability to deal with difficult emotions like anger in a more constructive way. Mentees indicated that the programme had made a difference to them in terms of providing techniques to defuse situations as well as encouraging them to think more about the consequences of their actions.

There were also indications that mentees had changed their attitudes towards offending and felt they were less likely to offend after the programme. This was particularly expressed by some of the most vulnerable mentees.
3. Process and implementation

The next two sections explore the implementation of the programme through the views and opinions of stakeholders, including teachers, young people and F4L staff. The strands explored are the targeted strands of the programme including the targeted training and mentoring strands.

3.1 Targeted training

The selection process

Young people aged between 11 and 16 years were invited to participate in the programme for a variety of reasons. In the disseminated referral information the following are outlined as primary criteria:39

- girls at risk of sexual exploitation by gangs, peers or older men
- young men at risk of sexually exploiting young women
- young people associating with street gangs
- young people engaging in, or being subject to, violent behaviour
- girls showing early and over-sexualised behaviour.

There are also secondary criteria outlined:

- young people with behavioural and attitudinal problems
- young people showing a lack of self-esteem
- young people engaging in violent and destructive relationships.
As detailed in the programme outline (section 1.2), at the start of the programme the MPS co-ordinated a risk-focused prevention approach to selection, utilising several proxies for vulnerability to identify suitable young people. This system was problematic due to the fact that young people were not being identified by those that knew them and personal factors such as whether they wanted to participate were not taken into account.

The difficulties with the centralised system described above were recognised and from January 2012 all young people were referred through teachers or practitioners that knew them. All the teachers who were interviewed had managed the referral process in their school, and decided who would benefit most from the programme. Teachers cited several different reasons for referral including:

- gang affiliation
- difficult family life
- victim of bullying
- offending history
- regular missing person
- sexually active
- frequent internal and external exclusions
- difficult relationships with teachers.

Schools with a dedicated pastoral member of staff managing the process, and deciding who would be asked to participate in the programme, tended to be more engaged and enthusiastic. Often these were schools where a variety of different factors were taken into consideration for referral. Some schools—and they tended to be those without a dedicated non-teaching staff member managing the process—focused more on internal and external exclusions and attitude to teachers.

Within schools, the young people who had participated in the programme tended to feel they had been asked to participate due to their behaviour in school. When asked why they were selected, they often answered that it was because they were ‘naughty’ or had a ‘reputation’ in school:

‘It’s our records we’ve got. We’ve got a reputation in this school; we’re known by all the teachers in a bad way, then they thought maybe this guy could relate to us and could help us in a way like he did.’ (Boy, 14, focus group)

The majority of young people were not given much information in advance about the programme, typically they described turning up to the group session and having it explained to them by the facilitators. However, the participants generally described being happy to come back after one session.

**Facilitators**

The facilitators were seen by young people, school staff and practitioners as one of the key strengths of HEART. Their ability to engage with the young people in a way that was not possible for teachers or other practitioners involved in their lives was flagged as crucial to effectiveness. Facilitators were selected by F4L—who provided training in mentoring, facilitation, safeguarding and working with vulnerable young women—and then trained by the organisation Coreplan UK who focused particularly on engagement with young people.

**Common experiences**

The key element emphasised by teachers, practitioners and young people was that the participants could identify with the facilitators and share common experiences. The facilitators were particularly open in sessions, sharing personal experiences and giving testimonies about their past and lessons they had learnt through experience:
‘I liked [my facilitator] because she understands us, say what’s the point of having a teacher that hasn’t gone through things, some teachers, haven’t gone through what you’ve been through, and [she] understands stuff’ (Girl, 12, focus group)

‘And how did you know they had past experience?’

R1: Cos he showed us a list of his breaches as well.

R2: He just showed us he used to do the stuff that we do, he breached, he knew the consequences, he was telling us about repercussions.

R1: He didn’t really like to share about it, but he did anyway, showed that he was there at one point, you can’t put yourself above.’

(Boys’ focus group, 15-16 years, YOT)

Facilitators saw this as central to their delivery and what made them different to other organisations:

‘The USP [unique selling point] between what Foundation4Life do and everybody else is doing from the directors right the way down, we’ve all had life, real life experiences that we can actually say “We’ve done this and through what we’ve done we’ve turned our lives around”… [there’s] not a particular section in life that an individual can bring be it young or old that we haven’t got somebody in this organisation that will be able to identify with it and hopefully changing it round.’

(Facilitator, F4L)

Participants often felt that this life experience and the willingness to share it meant they wouldn’t be judged by the facilitator, and they could trust them to understand. In one Year 9 all male focus group they felt this was a key factor:

R1: ‘Even if you done something bad and that [my facilitator] will understand.

R2: ‘I don’t mind saying stuff in front of [my facilitator]. He would understand.’

(Boys’ focus group, Year 9)

The facilitators’ experiences also meant they were in a position to give detailed and practical advice. The participants frequently stated that they liked receiving advice from the facilitators because they would not just tell them what to do, but explain the consequences of their actions:

‘Obviously, when we had a situation we could tell them, innit. And then they tell us, yeah, from judging like the worst of their life experiences, yeah, like what for us to do and what actions we could take and what actions we shouldn’t take.’ (Boy, 12, focus group)

Teachers confirmed that the experiences of the facilitators allowed them to play a role that they could not, and this gave real added value to the programme:

‘I think the facilitators are people who have been able to say to these girls how it would be if you carry on and they have been able I think what the girls found really valuable is viewing the facilitators’ own personal experiences, how they change things around and what you need to do to work things out really.’ (Teacher)

Personal connection

Frequently young people described the relationship as a powerful personal connection, and felt that facilitators were also personally invested. Facilitators were often described in family terms, fluctuating between a parent and an older sibling:

‘Basically, [the facilitator] is like a second mum to me, I can trust her. And she could understand me. She was like my sister… my best friend… she was like my mum. I
don't know… she was like some best friend mum thing. It was weird. I mean person. She was like my role model' (Girl, 12, focus group)

Here this participant describes the facilitator in terms of a role model; this was prevalent, with facilitators being described as 'smart and intelligent' and 'he like knows everything'. Teachers commented that the relationship was built up very quickly, and after a few sessions, participants were often happy to use their own time during breaks or after school to participate. At one school, exams were planned which clashed with a HEART session, and the participants were so eager to take part in the programme they offered to use their lunchtime for it.

One facilitator described what they could offer as 'relatability':

'I think the 'relatability' that we can offer the young people… just to be able to relate to every aspect and get on the level with the young people. But also be able to, on the same time, relate to the clients and you know the headmistress within the school and the senior YOS [Youth Offending Service] workers and you know. ‘Relatability’, that’s what I think it is time and time again. “I see you coming and I thought, you know, you look like my kind of person.” That’s happened time and time again to people that I’ve worked with.’ (Facilitator, F4L)

This ‘relatability’ allowed the participants to feel a personal connection and a two-way relationship. The participants felt that facilitators were unlike other figures in their lives because they ‘really cared’ and weren’t just there because it was their job:

R1: ‘Basically [the facilitator] didn’t just teach us, we taught her about us as well, because she even told us, before she’s even changed because of us.

R3: She feels like she was meant to be with us… And most of them said if it wasn’t for the HEART programme they would be in jail or dead.’ (Girls’ focus group, Year 7)

R1: ‘The teacher feel like he was… I don’t know.

R2: Because he wasn’t just there because he was getting paid.

R1: They were proper engaging with us.’ (Boys’ focus group, 15-16 years, YOT)

The participants invested in the relationship with their facilitators so much that any organisational changes were taken personally, as a reflection on their relationship and how much their facilitator cared for them. If a facilitator came late, they felt they were 'let down', if they had to leave to run another group, they felt they had been ‘ditched’ and took this personally:

R1: '[One facilitator] always used to come late and [the other] was always on time

R2: [The other’s] never ever let us down; he’s never ever been late; he’s always on time helping us, everything' (Boys focus group, Year 9)

One all-female group started with a male facilitator who was moved around to work with groups in other schools, they took this particularly personally:

R1: ‘He did come for, like I think, the first three weeks, two weeks, then he would miss one and then he’d come and then after that we didn’t see him. And until we actually did something about it I don’t think he would have been here.'
R2: One was a call out and then he just stopped coming and then it kind of felt, like bad, ‘cause it makes you think, like, he couldn’t be bothered to come.

R4: And then he, like, expects us to sit and, like, tell him stuff about us, that are, like, in this group and you don’t wanna tell someone that you never see, ‘cause it’s like walking up to someone you’ve met once and telling them your life story. It’s, like, it’s not something you wanna do.’ (Girls focus group, Year 9)

The personal investment of the participants in a facilitator seems to mean that they are not interchangeable. Even with careful management of these changes, it is clear that the programme revolves around a specific bond, and to be effective it is crucial that facilitators are consistent. It is not known how often issues such as these arose for training groups.

Session content

On this basic level it is clear that for the participants the key element of the programme was the relationship with their facilitators. Testimonials were frequently mentioned as a ‘favourite’ part of the programme; what made it engaging and relevant were the experiences shared by the facilitators:

‘Mine was when they open up to us. Because every teacher here makes their lives sound perfect, and they have told us that they used to have problems but they found a way to change it around so they can help us.’ (Girl, 12, focus group)

Drama and role play were also mentioned by participants as an enjoyable part of the programme. Another tool used by the facilitators was scenarios or narratives which used a story to illustrate a certain point. In the outcomes section, the ‘paradigm shift’ story is highlighted as effective in encouraging young people to think about situations from someone else’s perspective. One boy described the programme in a subtle way:

“We just thought like, we miss two lessons and it’s a bit of fun… we played some games, but what we didn’t realise when we played them games, yeah, was that it was actually, it had a method, like it actually had a meaning behind it but we didn’t actually realise at the time. So one of the games was about focus, one of them was about like temptations and how temptations affect life, so all the games were relating to the… basically the programme and what they came here to do. But it was in a more fun way, the way… kinaesthetic way… like more active so more young people get engaged, and then as the weeks went on we started to play less games and we started to get deeper because like we felt like a family, and we felt like we know each other now, so let’s get to explore and go deeper’ (Boy, 12, focus group)

As this programme participant eloquently described, the mixture of different techniques, using stories, role play and testimonials, kept the young people engaged and active during sessions.

Young person led

The programme was also described as a good way to deal with day-to-day issues going on in the young people’s lives. Rather than having rigid session guides and topics, participants talked about sessions which were led by them, creating a space to deal with the conflicts and stresses affecting them. This was described in contrast to teachers:

‘Sometimes teachers are stressed out, they’ve got like 30 people in the class, they don’t have time for you, especially when it’s in the middle of the day and they’ve had so much children before… But you are with the HEART programme for two hours, and you are with them to talk, so like they’ve got much more time for you as an
individual and there is not many people in the class, so they've got much more time for you, so that's why I think it was good.' (Boy, 12, focus group)

Teachers also confirmed that the flexibility of the programme was important:

‘They had the experience and flexibility to change the programme, it was really student led, they had the flexibility to meet the needs of teachers and the boys’ (Teacher)

**Bonding and opening up**

All groups consulted found HEART an emotional experience at some point. Many of the participants talked about opening up during sessions and allowing themselves to cry in front of the group. The vulnerability exposed in crying in front of facilitators and other school pupils indicates that participants both felt comfortable and had a high level of trust within the group:

‘I cried two times. Because we had to really open up. I got really upset ‘cos [participant], your mum… ‘cos of what happened, and [participant], because of her Dad and her Grandmother. And [participant] when her Grandma died… she just really needed her mum. And that was really upsetting for me. At first I didn’t know this about them, and it’s sad to learn about that stuff happening to your friends.’ (Girl, 12, focus group)

‘How people see him, he’s like… obviously people aren’t ever going to expect him to show emotions that some other people show, you see him as a person that will punch first and ask questions later, innit, but after like, in one of the sessions, yeah, he showed his emotions, like letting it go’ (Boy, 12, focus group)

**The group**

The programme provided a space to allow the young people to get to know each other in a non-judgemental environment, thereby creating a support group of peers, and many of the participants talked about the trust that was created within the group. The confidentiality of the space was frequently mentioned and seen to be an essential and hugely beneficial element when taking part in the programme. In order to create this space, rules of conduct were created:

‘It’s two people who we open up to them and they open up to us, they have rules, like no shut ups, and we think it’s important to have rules.’ (Girl, 12, focus group)

‘There is a good method that always happens at the beginning, just stating the rules and boundaries and getting the individuals to say what they feel and what they would expect to happen in this session… that’s a good icebreaker because then they know they’re setting their own boundaries.’ (Project worker, F4L)

The trust created within the group was a crucial element for participants; as they shared their experiences over the 12 weeks of the programme and learnt that they could trust each other, they created long lasting relationships:

‘Basically all the girls are the bestest friends I’ve got, I can’t really trust anyone else, now I know that they can keep secrets, and now I know they can keep stuff and not go snitching about things’ (Girl, 12, focus group)

‘You could get young people who have never met each other for instance and then by the end of the 12 weeks they’ve got a beautiful bond. You know, you can get situations where you get enemies in the group you know, like, they’re from different parts in the same area for instance and you’ve gotta sort of deal with that situation. And then, again, they could be enemies in the beginning and during the group session, you know, it’s collective and everyone’s the same here, no one’s any
different. Then, hopefully, they can come to some, you know, equilibrium’ (Project worker, F4L)

In several cases disclosures of information leading to safeguarding concerns had come out of the sessions and been followed up. In the schools where disclosures had been made, the teachers tended to be positive about the programme and happy with the safeguarding processes put in place. However, in several schools, often those where no disclosures had come out of the session, teachers wanted more information and felt the facilitators could have been more open. Those schools with a dedicated pastoral member of staff who was managing the programme within their school tended to feel they had got more out of the programme. This was particularly true of those schools that were concerned about ‘supporting the facilitators’ and had put processes in place to do this.

For some participants the group allowed them to feel less alone, and helped them realise there were other people struggling with similar stresses:

‘It’s like the HEART Programme yeah, outside of the HEART Programme you might be the only one, let’s say, committing crimes or something. You might not want to tell no one, innit, like had to do with it or something like that yeah? When you’re in here you’re like all the same, innit? All of you have the same issues; you all have the same problems.’ (Boy, 13, focus group)

There is evidence that after a time, the group became an additional support system for the participants. The sessions were a chance to get to know, and realise that it was possible to trust a group of peers in school. Teachers, practitioners and young people alike noted that outside of sessions they had a supportive network of peers:

‘It gets it out and you’re not holding everything in, and the people around you go to your school, so if they see you upset about something they do, they either know why or how to help you so, like my friend sitting next to me, she saw me upset one day and came and helped me because she know why I was crying about or what I was upset about.’ (Girl, 15, focus group)

‘They said it has been quite emotional at the time, they supported each other, they have learnt about each other’s difficulties, they didn’t realise what was going on in each other’s lives, they empathised with each other and they have been able to thrash issues through, they have got, to do with home or with each other in those groups.’ (Teacher)

This indicates that the support provided by the HEART programme could be sustained by the peer networks created in the process, at least within the period covered by the sessions. This provides evidence that the programme had an impact outside of the sessions and if this supporting behaviour continued after the period covered by the sessions, it would be a valuable legacy of HEART. However, without long term follow-up it is difficult to establish this.

Group composition

There were a small number of situations were a participant breached the confidentiality of the group. Teachers and participants both emphasised that issues were resolved quickly with the removal of the participant:

‘She did two incidents and the lady that held the group she didn't like the second one. When the first one happened we gave her a second chance but she blew the second chance so she was out of the group. Since she’s been out, the group has been able to share more and trust each other more as well.’ (Girl, 14, interview)

Feedback indicates that the composition of the group has an effect on the ability to bond. In one case where confidentiality was breached, the participant was part of a rival friendship
group to the rest of the participants. Rather than breaking down boundaries, this seemed to create conflict within the group, and possibly outside of the group sessions. Teachers emphasised that friendship groups had to be managed, and splitting them apart could be problematic.

**Length and exit**

All participants interviewed recommended the programme to others and the overwhelming response was that they would take part in it again if it was offered to them. When asked about any changes they would make to the programme, participants tended to merely state they would like it to last longer and be more frequent:

‘I think it’d be better off if there was more time...Because we can’t really trust people that easily. Not been...had more time to think well I know to trust them I would have spoken out more.’ (Boy, 13, interview)

Teachers also expressed the desire for the programme to last longer, or be a regular programme running constantly in the school:

‘Ideally I think the sessions going on for longer, or the programme repeating itself as opposed to being a one off would be very effective, but I think things like that, when they are ongoing, they are on cloud nine, really flying, and sometimes when things like that come to an end they do dip, when the regular contact time has gone. Yeah, they haven’t changed dramatically, but there are positives.’ (Teacher)

As the teacher above indicates, at the end of the programme participants generally felt sad that the programme had ended. In one case the participants wrote a letter to the school asking for it to be run again. Other schools wanted the facilitators to come back after six weeks for a standalone session to reinforce things and say goodbye.

### 3.2 Mentoring

**Selection process**

As with the group programme, the selection process changed over time, starting with a central process of identification and changing to allow teachers and practitioners to manage the process and decide to whom the programme should be offered. Again, similarly to the group programme, the teachers that engaged the most in the selection process seemed to see more benefits from the programme. They were in a position to understand not only the risk factors affecting a young person, but more subtle factors like whether they would be willing to engage, and whether they would be happier in a group or a one-to-one setting. As one teacher described:

‘It was important who you chose for the mentoring and the group programme, certain girls work better in groups and hate one to one sessions, while others are private and don’t like to talk in front of a group, there were certain girls who couldn’t be put in a group programme because they might ruin the group.’ (Teacher)

In most cases mentees were instructed to go to a certain room where they found out about the mentoring from their mentor. In some cases they were told beforehand by the school, but this seemed to be less usual. The descriptions of getting to know their mentors indicate that in some cases the young people engaged very quickly even if they had been unsure to begin with. As the students from a PRU indicated:

*R1: ‘I was like at first yeah, I didn’t know whether to do it or not but when I met [my mentor] I said yeah.*
R2: They were all sitting there like, remember at first we didn’t want to go. All the girls were like, “No, we’re not going” and then they were forcing us, pushing us in the corridor: “Go!... So you just have to go” and so we went. And I’m glad that we went’

(Girls, 14, focus group)

**Mentors**

Mentors were selected by F4L and then trained by the organisation Coreplan UK who focused particularly on engagement with young people. Teachers and participants indicated that engagement with the mentors depended on the first few sessions. Where they bonded well, the young people felt deeply attached to their mentor, and felt a personal connection to them. For mentees who did not bond so well, it often seemed to be the first few sessions that hadn’t quite worked and left the young people feeling there was nothing in it for them.

**Space to open up**

A dominant theme in the description of mentors was that they were calm, they did not shout, they just listened. Mentees felt that a key benefit was the opportunity mentors provided for them to just talk about how they felt, often in comparison to teachers:

‘But these you can actually see that they really want to help you. Like teachers would be more intimidating about it, like they would try and make it come out of you whereas these just let you talk. And talk and talk.’ (Girl, 15, focus group)

The mentee quoted above indicates that they needed time and support that teachers could not provide. The mentors provided them with space to express themselves. Not all mentees, however, were convinced of the benefits of talking about their problems:

‘I like, have a key-worker, but I don’t really go to her. I’ll tell her things when I meet up with her, but I don’t go to her, I just, keep quiet. And I might, if I’m having a conversation with one of my friends or something, and I tell them I’m angry, they don’t understand, and I end up telling them, it doesn’t help the situation, I’m just airing my opinion.’ (Girl, 13, interview)

It is clear that what works for one may not work for all, but many mentees consulted saw their sessions as a valuable opportunity to unburden themselves of worries.

In certain schools mentees did not engage as well as others. Often these were schools where referral had been managed centrally and the mentees weren’t interested in the programme and as in the case of the young person quoted below, they did not understand why they had been referred:

‘I didn’t want to do it. It was a waste of time. Every time I come it was just about [the mentor], she would talk about her dad. I don’t care about your dad, I don’t care about your son. I don’t know why I came. I don’t know why I got chosen for this.’ (Girl, 14, focus group)

As mentioned above, it seemed that the first few sessions were crucial and some teachers felt that certain mentees might have engaged better if the mentoring was a follow up to the group work:

‘The group work process engaged the girls emotionally, they were engaged to tackle difficult issues, at first with the mentoring, they hadn’t formed a relationship so they felt there was nothing in it for them. However, once the girls had engaged they would do it after school.’ (Teacher)

In the school above, the mentees had been centrally selected and had not participated in the group programme beforehand. However, there were schools where several young people finished the group programme and moved on to mentoring or vice versa.
**Shared experiences**

Similarly to the group programme, teachers and mentees stated that the shared experiences of the mentors and the emphasis mentors placed on opening up and using their lives to provide examples were extremely powerful. Several mentees felt that their common experiences made them feel less alone with any issues they were dealing with:

‘[My mentor] told me like when she was 21 because this same thing happened to me as well, her boyfriend beat her up or something and then she left home so it’s like same as my family problems and she said just be like be relaxed about it, yeah, because she’s been through the same as me so it’s kind of like I’m not the only one and I feel more comfortable about it.’ (Girl, 12, focus group)

Others indicated that hearing about the experiences of mentors helped them to understand the consequences of their actions in a way they had not before:

‘Like at school, sometimes if I didn’t really bother, I wouldn’t come into school and she said that when she was younger she thought like that and like she realised that she wishes she’d tried harder because things would have been different for her right now if she’d went into school more because her grades would be like better and stuff and I don’t know, I guess her education would have been different. So you see someone like they’ve been there and they didn’t go to school, because when you’re doing it you don’t think it’s going to affect your grades and stuff and in the end it does.’ (Girl, 16, focus group)

Several mentees also highlighted the age of their mentors as a benefit. Stating that they engaged better because the mentors had recently been through what they were going through.

**Trustworthy and non-judgemental**

Again, similarly to the group programme, a dominant theme from mentees was that they could trust their mentor. Many of the mentees felt they could ‘say anything’ to their mentor and they would not be judged. This therefore meant that they were happy talking about things they would not talk about outside of the session, or to anyone else. Confidentiality was very important to the mentees, and the belief that the sessions really were confidential took time to build up:

‘Obviously at first you like miss out bits of the stories when you tell them, like you don’t say everything. You’ll go like say some things that you’ll miss out but as you get to trust them you’ll go back to that story and say, “Oh well, this happened as well.” So that over time they gain your trust; that’s why they do it, that it lasts quite some time because if you just have it for like once or twice, like a little while, then you don’t trust the person enough to tell them everything.’ (Girl, 15, focus group)

The mentees that engaged well tended to feel they had a personal relationship with their mentor. Similarly to the group programme, they talked about their mentors being ‘not just there for the money’. For those that had the mobile numbers of their mentor, they felt this was a testament to their relationship. Several mentees also highlighted that mentors remembered what they had said each session and felt this showed a depth of relationship, and that their mentor was ‘genuine’.

**Boundaries**

The relationship between mentee and mentor could be a powerful one, and it was therefore essential that it was managed well. Mentors felt the strength of the programme lay in the fact that they were encouraged to share their lives and be present in the relationship as an individual rather than just listening in the way a counsellor might. The emphasis on shared
experience meant the line between a personal and a professional relationship had to be carefully maintained, as one mentor put it:

‘There’s a boundary there as well to put in place. Because you don’t want to reveal too much to someone… using your experience to enhance whatever they need for their help. That’s understanding, as opposed to be enhancing my ego or anyone’s ego.’ (Project worker, F4L)

For mentees who were passionately attached to their mentor, the difficulty came at the end of the process when the mentoring ended. One group of mentees in particular was upset and angry that they would no longer see their mentor:

‘You get used to it because you just get used to having that person to talk to like and you know getting advice and you get used to that help and that. And then all of a sudden we find out it’s our last week.

I feel pissed off to be honest.’

(Girls, 14, focus group)

In this case, the mentees had been unaware when the mentoring was ending and felt that it was not fair. It is clearly crucial to make sure that mentees are prepared from the first sessions as to how long the mentoring will last, so they are ready for the relationship to end.

In some cases mentees felt a lack of boundaries and found this uncomfortable:

‘I don’t want it to be like strict or anything… She would give me good advice at times like ‘just go in the lesson, do your class then it’s finished’ but it was more like she would tell more about like her life and when she used to do stuff and like it wasn’t like professional. Do you get what I mean like she sometimes she would even swear.’

(Girl, 13, interview)

This mentee found some of the openness and informality difficult and slightly disconcerting. This also emphasises the importance of the match between mentee and mentor, as in this case there was possibly a disconnect.

Engagement with mentors

Rather than focusing on particular HEART outcome areas, the mentors provided guidance on everyday problems, and helped mentees to problem-solve when they encountered issues or stresses in their lives:

‘No we just…she kind of just asked us like “How’s the week been?” and if there was one issue we’d talk about it and sort it out and then if it, if the issue had already been solved or like you’d got into trouble she would tell you like…well not tell you, she would discuss with you how you could have worked it out or how it could have happened. So, for the next time that it happens to you it will be different.’ (Girl, 15, focus group)

A dominant theme from mentees when talking about why their sessions were useful was that mentors did not tell them what to do, but guided them through the options and possible consequences of their actions:

‘She didn’t like tell you what to do; she gave you advice, but she was like, she would always say, “Obviously I’m not going to tell you what to do because it’s your choice, it’s your life,” and you’d have to make your own decision. But she’d like tell you what she thinks, she’d give you options of what you can do but not just one thing what she thinks is best… So she wasn’t trying to control you, she was just helping you.’ (Girl, 16, focus group)
This was frequently emphasised by mentees, who contrasted their mentors with their teachers and others in their lives. The mentor seemed to play a unique role in the lives of many of the mentees. Mentees described the sessions as a dialogue in which they could decide what they did and did not want to touch on. The sessions were seen to provide help with ‘anything’ whatever the young person wanted advice on. Several mentees also highlighted the fact that their mentor did not talk down to them:

‘He won’t talk to you like you’re a child, he’ll talk to you like you’re an adult. He wouldn’t think, because you’re a 13 or 14-year-old kid…he will talk to you as an adult. That’s the thing I like.’ (Boy, 13, focus group)

**Session organisation**

The mentoring took place in school and mostly during school hours. The mentees generally had no problem with missing lessons, but teachers preferred the sessions to take place out of school hours. Some school staff were under pressure to prevent the mentees missing school and found juggling the needs of the school and those of HEART difficult to manage, described as a ‘logistical nightmare’ in one case. Where schools were able to organise mentoring during lunch time or out of school, the staff were generally more positive about the programme.

In some cases the mentors shared mobile numbers with the mentees or used the mobile phone applications *What’s App*, or *Blackberry Messenger* (BBM) to keep in contact out of hours. Those that could not contact their mentor outside of sessions were generally very positive about the possibility of doing this:

‘If you could meet up with them outside school, would you do it? Probably, probably yeah. Probably like if I, ‘cause I was talking to her about things that are happening at home. So, if anything happened, like at home, I would just ask if I could just, like spend the time just talking about it.’ (Girl, 14, focus group)

Some mentors also felt strongly that their availability out of school hours was essential:

‘I give out a card with my details; I don’t force them. I don’t force them to come to the sessions; I don’t force them to give me their pin for BB. I am aware that young people have BB; a lot of them don’t have credit and mainly their contact is through BB. So this is the way I can support my young people. They can do voice notes through BB. If it’s an emergency then they can tell me can you please call me back… I will do it through like a text or BB and just say “How are you, how’s things?” Or they’ll message “I’m a bit stressed, this that, this that”. And then, you know through that, you know, one message it can make a difference. And this is what the young people need. They’re sick and tired of working with professionals that they don’t even have any contact after 5.’ (Project worker, F4L)

One concern expressed by several school staff was about the organisation of mentoring sessions. They felt there was a lack of information and regular contact. For some schools, although they could see the benefits of the programme, lack of organisation, late and missed sessions, frustrated them. It is clear that in a school environment where the day works to timetable, timing and reliability are absolutely crucial.

**Suggestions**

The majority of young people would recommend the programme to others, often to their siblings, and to those who had anger problems and needed support. Similar to the group programme, many of the suggestions for improvement of the programme from the mentees were that it should run for a longer period of time and with longer sessions. They
emphasised that it took time to trust someone and therefore the programme needed to be longer.

Teachers tended to focus on the organisation of the mentoring, and a dominant theme was that, for the programme to work well in schools, it needed to be completely reliable and predictable.

3.3 Overall effective factors

The HEART programme was a pilot, and therefore it is crucial to capture the learning to support the development of work in this area. From the data that has been gathered it is possible to provide an overview of the elements which came across as essential to the effectiveness of the targeted strands of the programme. The elements below bring together the mentoring and training strands, with some additional factors relating to the targeted training at the end.

**Shared experiences**

The backgrounds of the mentors and facilitators, and the fact that they were open to sharing and using their experience to the benefit of the young people, was emphasised as crucial time and time again by those involved in the programme. This allowed the young people to feel they were understood, they were not judged and eventually to create a strong personal connection. The techniques used are powerful and can create strong relationships between mentors and mentees, however this has to be carefully managed.

**External and therefore trustworthy**

Those involved in training and mentoring highlighted that confidence in the confidentiality of the space was absolutely essential to its functioning. Young people often expressed the view that because facilitators were not internal to the school it was easier to trust them.

**The space to open up and show vulnerability**

The space created in both the training and the mentoring seemed to fulfil young people’s need to open up and express their feelings. As identified in the outcomes chapter, many of the young people involved in the programme internalised anger and stress, often feeling they had to keep problems to themselves. The programme provided a much needed forum where they could share, and this in itself helped them towards resolving problems rather than taking them out on others or themselves.

**Young person led**

Both the mentoring and the group programme were run in a flexible way which allowed the young people to deal with the issues affecting them. They both provided spaces for working through problems at home, at school and with peers or partners.

**Consistency**

The close bond between facilitators or mentors and the young people they worked with meant that the relationship was often regarded as a personal one. Any inconsistencies such as facilitators or mentors being repeatedly late, not turning up, or being swapped between different programmes, were taken personally and had a negative impact on the impact of the programme.

**Unique to the group programme: the creation of a support network**

A clear development visible from the training was a network of support created through the relationships within the group. When the group composition was managed well, the group
allowed young people to realise what they had in common, and establish that they could trust each other. This is interesting because it may be one of the outcomes that is sustainable after the formal programme has finished.
4. Communicating with young people via the website

The website created for HEART recorded a total of 6434 visits over the main 16-month period in which training and mentoring were delivered. The number of visits and unique visits to the HEART website for each month of this period is shown in Table 12.

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<td>984</td>
<td>2.36</td>
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Table 12. Breakdown of visits to the HEART website over the period July 2011 to October 2012. 'Unique visits' represents the number of visits associated with an IP address for which a visit had not previously been recorded in that month.

There was considerable variation in the number of visits per month, including the number of unique visits per month. August 2012 recorded the lowest number of visits per month and February 2012 recorded the highest.

The website saw an increase in the number of visitors between January and May 2012. The biggest monthly increase in visits was from January to February, with February recording the highest overall number of visits in the period for which data is available. The number of pages visited on the site was however lower in February than in the previous month, with the average duration on the site also being lower. It is not possible to determine what factors influenced these (and other changes reported below) or whether they were random, not least because the website was widely promoted and presumably used by individuals not connected with HEART.
Although the purpose of these visits cannot be ascertained from the data, it is possible to give some indication of the routes by which users found the website. Traffic sources were categorised as Search (website reached via search engine result), Referral (website reached via a link from another website) or Direct (website URL typed into the browser). The number and proportion of website visits attributable to each of these traffic sources is shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Percentage of visits to HEART website attributable to different traffic sources by month, July 2011 to October 2012

The average duration of visits for each month was relatively short at less than five minutes. Data on the duration of each visit was not received, so the variability of visit duration is not known. Over the January to May period mentioned, the traffic source which provided the greatest increase in visits was Search traffic, which also accounted for the highest percentage of visits out of Search, Direct and Referral. All sources of traffic saw increases from January to February.

There are several factors that may have been related to this increase in visitors. A large number of young people participated in HEART training or mentoring between January and May 2012, when they would have been informed of the website, and this may account for a large proportion of the visitors. Coverage of the HEART programme on television and newspapers in February and March may also have been influential.

Content updates on the HEART website around this period may also have triggered an increase in repeat visits, although unique visits made up a higher percentage of overall visits in February than in January. Social media websites such as Facebook and Twitter have been linked to an increase in the number of visits through Referrals.

The number of visits dipped in the summer months, which may be related to young people being on summer holiday and not involved with the programme at that time, assuming that several the visits to the website were made by those receiving training or mentoring. It is also possible that concerns relating to core HEART topics, which may have prompted web
searches leading to the website, were less frequent over this period, when young people were away from their usual term-time social environment.
5. Conclusion

This evaluation indicates that the targeted strands of the programme, and in particular the targeted training, are an effective way to work towards attitudinal and behavioural change. Teachers, practitioners and young people all felt that the programme offered something unique and was unlike other schemes they had experienced in the past. However, HEART was a pilot programme, and generated knowledge which should be taken account of for future delivery. We have therefore taken this opportunity to present some of the lessons to be taken into account for future delivery, and some policy implications of the learning.

5.1 Lessons learnt

Programme development

One aspect of the programme to be particularly commended is that the detailed design was shaped after a review of relevant research by the research organisation, Perpetuity. It was not pre-determined and was therefore able to draw on the learning of other relevant initiatives. This led to a programme that was well-conceived and evidence-based, with the basis for development of a clear theory of change.

The commissioning of the evaluation at the outset of the programme was also of huge benefit, as this leads to much better research than bringing in the evaluators in the final three to six months. However, there were limitations to what the evaluation could achieve. This was partly because of programme design, partly the impossibility of having a comparison group, a limited data supply and a timetable that meant the evaluation had to end at the same time as the programme. The way to minimise the risk of such issues limiting the value of evaluative research is through programme developers liaising with evaluators prior to bidding so that the design and resourcing needs are taken into account. Ideally those commissioned to undertake the evaluation should be involved in the programme design.
process well before implementation. This can help ensure that the programme is evaluable, that a baseline is measured and that learning from the design process is captured.

**Working with experience**

The emphasis on shared experiences and personal testimonials allowed a close, personal bond to be developed between project workers and programme participants which encouraged a high level of engagement. This was identified as a distinctive and effective factor running through the programme and is therefore crucial to consider for any future implementation. It seems likely that similar results would only be achieved from this programme through the use of project workers who are from the local area with a wealth of shared experience they can bring into the sessions.

One of the reasons project workers were able to engage with the participants was because they did not have a long history of professional experience, their experience was of a personal nature. However, a lesson to be learnt from the HEART experience is that project workers who are young and often from difficult backgrounds themselves have their own needs and vulnerabilities. Therefore a higher level of support and nurture is required to ensure that project workers can consistently carry out their work to the best of their ability.

Providing a high level of support to staff has implications in terms of resources and organisational capacity, particularly where staff members are working alone and unsupervised. This must be recognised at the programme design stage with processes put in place to ensure that consistency and reliability are maintained.

**Selection and referral**

There were a range of ways in which young people were invited to participate in the programme. The referral process was disseminated to partners, and in most cases young people were referred on to the programme by teachers and practitioners who worked with them. At the start of the programme the MPS co-ordinated a centralised risk-focused prevention approach, which utilised a number of proxies for vulnerability (eg being a regular missing person) to identify suitable young people. This system proved problematic due to the fact that young people were not being identified by those that knew them and therefore personal factors such as whether they wanted to participate were not taken into account.

The difficulties with the centralised system described above were recognised and from January 2012 all young people were referred through teachers or practitioners that knew them. The only difficulty with this process was that, due to the wide ranging issues dealt with by the programme, from violent crime to parental relationships to sexual exploitation and coercion, it is likely that groups and mentees were referred for a wide variety of reasons. There is evidence that some teachers referred young people purely on the basis of how disruptive they were in lessons, indicating that some of the target group would have been omitted.

Given that this programme was preventative and aimed to deal with several interconnected issues, there was clearly no perfect referral system. However, it is crucial to find a balance between factual information and personal assessments. Any future implementation of the programme would have to consider carefully how referral criteria are communicated and how to work in partnership with schools and other partner agencies to ensure they understand these criteria.
5.2 Policy implications

Multi-agency working

Multi-agency partnerships which bring together police, local authorities and the voluntary and community sector are a good way to provide targeted sex and relationship education to this particular cohort. As indicated above, this evaluation suggests that the local expertise of Foundation4Life (F4L) facilitators and mentors coupled with the Coreplan UK training was essential to the effectiveness of the programme and this would have to be considered in any future implementation of the programme. However, it is important to take into account that small, local organisations may need resources and support in order to provide a consistent service in this context.

Sex and Relationships Education

This evaluation indicates that young people respond well to learning about sex in the broader context of understanding healthy relationships. Indeed, rather than a narrow focus on the issues in question, the programme was successfully able to address broader issues relating to the lives of the participants, and therefore attempt to have an impact on the causes of some of issues affecting participants. There is clearly a need for education for young people which focuses on more than the biological aspects of relationships, a lesson which should be taken into account in the broader SRE curriculum.

The programme also indicates that there are benefits to SRE from the involvement of external staff with different skills who can engage with young people in a different way to teachers. There was evidence that because project workers were external, young people felt more comfortable sharing confidential information. Clearly in addition to SRE being integrated in the PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) curriculum there are benefits to augmenting SRE delivery with sessions delivered by specialist organisations.

Working with boys

The HEART Programme has contributed to an increasing recognition of the need to support girls and young women associated with gangs who may be at risk of sexual exploitation. The Ending Gang and Youth Violence: One Year On report specifically flags up a stream of work around this issue. However, there is little preventative work being carried out with boys on issues of sexual exploitation and coercion, or around challenging harmful gender norms and transforming masculinities. The Teenage Relationship campaign tackled some of these issues at a national level, but at a local level provision is targeted largely at girls and young women. HEART is unusual in targeting boys in addition to girls, and this is essential to avoid seemingly making girls responsible for their own victimisation.
Appendix I

Definitions

Sexual exploitation was defined by the National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People as:

‘Sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive ‘something’ (eg food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities. Child sexual exploitation can occur through the use of technology without the child’s immediate recognition; for example being persuaded to post sexual images on the Internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain. In all cases, those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child or young person’s limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability.’

Sexual coercion is defined as:

‘A process where a person is forced to engage in a physically intimate act against his or her will’
Appendix II
Appendix III

Interview guide

Welcome
Introduction of interviewer

Why are we here?
Catch22 is a national young people’s charity working throughout England and Wales. We have been commissioned to evaluate the HEART programme you have been involved with. The evaluation will look at how well the HEART programme works in helping young people. We are here to get your views and opinions about the programme. We will be asking about how much you enjoyed it, what you think could be improved and the difference the programme has made to you.

What will we do with the data?
We will write a final report on the HEART programme at the end of the year which will include the views and opinions of many of the young people who have been involved. This report may include the views and opinions you express today:

 The interview or focus group will be voice recorded. The recording will be listened to by only those researchers working on the project and will be destroyed once we have published the report.
 It will be anonymous. We will remove all names and other identifying features so those reading the report will not be able to tell it is you.
 If you say anything which indicates you, or anyone else's safety is at risk, we will pass the information on.

The outcomes star
Have a copy of the outcomes star guide in front of you and the interviewee. For each topic remind them of the corresponding page in the outcomes star guide. When you ask them where they place themselves on the star, go through each statement with them.

First-stage HEART interview guide

 Feedback on HEART – What do they think of it? What do they think of the facilitators? Do they know anyone in their group? Why do they want to do it?

Healthy relationships
 Best relationship: What is the best relationship they have at the moment? Who is it with? Why is it the best? What is good about it?
 Most difficult relationship: What is the most difficult relationship they have at the moment? Who is it with? Why is it difficult? What’s difficult about it? Has it always been like that?
 What makes a relationship healthy: What do they think a healthy relationship is? What makes it healthy? Do they think this describes any of their relationships? How do they think people benefit from being in relationships?
 What makes a relationship unhealthy: What do they think an unhealthy relationship is? What do they think is the difference between a healthy relationship and an unhealthy one? Do they think this describes any of their relationships? What advice would they give to a friend who was hurt by someone they are close to?
 Outcomes star: Where do they see themselves on the outcomes star? Why?

Wellbeing
- **Stress**: Ask about the last time they felt stressed. How/why did they get stressed? How did they react to the feeling? How did they deal with it? How often do they get stressed? What things normally make them stressed? How do they normally deal with it?
- **Feeling down**: Ask about the last time they felt really down. Why did they feel like that? How did they react to the feeling? How did they deal with it? How often do they feel down? What things normally make them feel down? How do they normally deal with it?
- **Anger**: Ask about the last time they felt really angry. Why did they get angry? How did they react to the feeling? How did they deal with the situation afterwards? Who or what makes them feel angry? How do they normally react when they get angry? How do they normally deal with the situation?
- Who or what helps them most when they feel down, stressed or angry?
- **Outcomes star**: Where do they see themselves on the outcomes star? Why?

**Self-respect**
- **Qualities**: How would they describe their character to someone who didn’t know them? What are their three best qualities? Is there anything they would change about themselves? Ask ‘do you like yourself, why?’
- **Understanding self-respect**: What do they think it means if someone has ‘self-respect’? Why is self-respect important? What do they think it means to have no self-respect?
- **Outcomes star**: Where do they see themselves on the outcomes star? Why?

**Dealing with others**
- **Disagreement**: Ask about a time recently when they disagreed with somebody. How did they deal with it? How do they normally deal with it when someone ‘disrespects’ them?
- **Last argument**: Ask about an argument they had recently. How did they react? How did they deal with it afterwards?
- **Arguments in general**: How do they normally react when they have an argument with someone? How does this change with different people (eg family, friends, girlfriend/boyfriend)? How often do they have arguments? What advice would they give to someone who loses their temper all the time?
- **Outcomes star**: Where do they see themselves on the outcomes star? Why?

**Thinking about people’s feelings**
- **Upsetting people**: Ask about the last time they upset someone. How did they know they had hurt their feelings? How did they deal with it?
- **Upsetting people in general**: How often do they upset people? What do they normally do if they think they have upset someone? How does this change with different people (eg family, friends, girlfriend/boyfriend)?
- **Empathy**: How can they tell when they have hurt someone’s feelings? Can they always tell?
- **Outcomes star**: Where do they see themselves on the outcomes star?

**Committing crime**
- **Crime**: Have they ever been in trouble with the police? Ask: ‘Can you tell me about it?’ What were the consequences? How did their family/friends react?
- **Consequences**: What do they think are the consequences of breaking the law? How do they think ‘getting in trouble with the police’ would affect their family/friends?
- **Staying out of trouble**: What advice would they give to a friend who wanted to stay out of trouble with the police? Do they think it’s easy to stay out of trouble?
- **Outcomes star**: Where do they see themselves on the outcomes star? Why?

**Having sex**
- **Reasons for having sex**: What are the different reasons people choose to have sex? Is this different for boys and girls? What is the difference?
When is it OK: When do they think it is OK to have sex? Do they think age matters?

Saying no: Is ever a situation when someone can’t say no to sex? Why would that be? What advice would they give to someone who was pressured into having sex?

Outcomes star: Where do they see themselves on the outcomes star? Why?

Lifestyle choices

Short term: What are their plans after they finish their GCSEs? What would they like to do? What do they realistically think they will be doing?

Long term: What do they want to do in the future? Why? What do they want to be doing when they are 25? How do they think you will get there? How could other people help them to get there?

Outcomes star: Where do they see themselves on the outcomes star? Why?

Is there anything else they want to add?

Second-stage HEART interview guide

HEART feedback: What did they think of the programme? What did they think of the facilitators? What was their favourite session?

Healthy relationships

What makes a relationship healthy: What do they think a healthy relationship is? What makes it healthy? Do they think this describes any of your relationships? How do they think people benefit from being in relationships?

What makes a relationship unhealthy: What do they think an unhealthy relationship is? What do they think is the difference between a healthy relationship and an unhealthy one? Do they think this describes any of your relationships? What advice would they give to a friend who was hurt by someone they are close to?

Best relationship: What is the best relationship they have at the moment? Who is it with? Why is it the best? What is good about it?

Most difficult relationship: What is the most difficult relationship they have at the moment? Who is it with? Why is it difficult? What’s difficult about it? Has it always been like that?

Outcomes star: Why did they place themselves at that point on the star? Why is it the same/different to before the programme? Did they talk about this in the sessions? What did they learn?

Wellbeing

Stress: Ask about the last time they felt stressed. How/why did they get stressed? How did they react to the feeling? How did they deal with it?

Feeling down: Ask about the last time they felt really down. Why did they feel like that? How did they react to the feeling? How did they deal with it?

Anger: Ask about the last time they felt really angry. Why did they get angry? How did they react to the feeling? How did they deal with the situation afterwards?

Who or what helps them most when they feel down, stressed or angry?

Outcomes star: Why did they place themselves at that point on the star? Why is it the same/different to before the programme? Did they talk about this in the sessions? What did they learn?

Self-respect

Understanding self-respect: What do they think it means if someone has ‘self-respect’? Why is self-respect important? What do they think it means to have no self-respect?
Qualities: How would they describe their character to someone who didn’t know them? What are their three best qualities? Is there anything they would change about themselves? Ask ‘do you like yourself, why?’

Outcomes star: Why did they place themselves at that point on the star? Why is it the same/different to before the programme? Did they talk about this in the sessions? What did they learn?

Dealing with others
- Disagreement: Ask about a time recently when they disagreed with somebody. How did they deal with it? How do they normally deal with it when someone ‘disrespects’ them?
- Last argument: Ask about an argument they had recently. How did they react? How did they deal with it afterwards?
- Arguments in general: What advice would they give to someone who loses their temper all the time?
- Outcomes star: Why did they place themselves at that point on the star? Why is it the same/different to before the programme? Did they talk about this in the sessions? What did they learn?

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- Upsetting people: Ask about the last time they upset someone. How did they know they had hurt their feelings? How did they deal with it?
- Empathy: How can they tell when they have hurt someone’s feelings? Can they always tell?
- Outcomes star: Why did they place themselves at that point on the star? Why is it the same/different to before the programme? Did they talk about this in the sessions? What did they learn?

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- Consequences: What do they think are the consequences of breaking the law? How do they think ‘getting in trouble with the police’ would affect their family/friends?
- Staying out of trouble: What advice would they give to a friend who wanted to stay out of trouble with the police? Do they think it’s easy to stay out of trouble?
- Outcomes star: Why did they place themselves at that point on the star? Why is it the same/different to before the programme? Did they talk about this in the sessions? What did they learn?

Having sex
- Reasons for having sex: What are the different reasons people choose to have sex? Is this different for boys and girls? What is the difference?
- When is it OK: When do they think it is OK to have sex? Do they think age matters?
- Saying no: Is ever a situation when someone can’t say no to sex? Why would that be? What advice would they give to someone who was pressured into having sex?
- Outcomes star: Why did they place themselves at that point on the star? Why is it the same/different to before the programme? Did they talk about this in the sessions? What did they learn?

Lifestyle choices
- Outcomes star: Why did they place themselves at that point on the star? Why is it the same/different to before the programme?
- Have you made any changes to your life since the last interview?
- Did they talk about this in the sessions? What did they learn?
- Short term: What are their plans after they finish their GCSEs? What would they like to do? What do they realistically think they will be doing?
- **Long term:** What do they want to do in the future? Why? What do they want to be doing when they are 25? How do they think you will get there? How could other people help them to get there?

- **Is there anything else they want to add?**
Appendix IV

Focus group guides

Welcome
Introduction of facilitator and assistant

Why are we here?
Catch22 is a national young people’s charity working throughout England and Wales. We have been commissioned to evaluate the HEART programme you have been involved with. The evaluation will look at how well the HEART programme works in helping young people. We are here to get your views and opinions about the programme. We will be asking about how much you enjoyed it, what you think could be improved and the difference the programme has made to you.

What will we do with the data?
We will write a final report on the HEART programme at the end of the year which will include the views and opinions of many of the young people who have been involved. This report may include the views and opinions you express today:

- The interview or focus group will be voice recorded. The recording will be listened to by only those researchers working on the project and will be destroyed once we have published the report.
- It will be anonymous. We will remove all names and other identifying features so those reading the report will not be able to tell it is you.
- If you say anything which indicates you, or anyone else’s safety is at risk, we will pass the information on.

Focus group guidelines
Let’s decide on a code of conduct while we’re here for how we talk to each other. (Write down a list)
Could include:

- There are no right or wrong answers.
- Everyone listens to each other.
- Respect everyone’s answers and feelings.
- Everyone has a valid contribution.
- We all have different points of view, we would like to hear everyone’s so try not to talk over each other.
- Talk to each other.
- You can go at any point.

Targeted training

Topic One: feelings and thoughts about the HEART programme
Using a flipchart, write down all the first words that come into people’s minds when they think about the HEART programme in general, then their HEART sessions, then the facilitators.

- What do you think the HEART programme is about?

Topic two: expectations and selection

- Selection Process: How were they selected? How did they find out they were going to be on it? Who told them? Did they feel like they had a choice?
- Worries, thoughts about the programme: What did they think the programme was going to be about? What did they think when told they were going to be part of the programme?
What they wanted from it: Why did they agree to do it? What did they think they would get out of it?

Topic three: feedback on the course
Ask everyone to draw a picture of what HEART means to them. Whatever comes to mind first, it could be about what a session feels like, or what their facilitators mean to them.

- Session examples: best session, worst session, most fun, emotional session, sad session, session that made you angry,
- Best and worst things about the course
- Facilitators: what were they like, how do they compare to teachers, what was good, bad about the way they ran the sessions
- Content: what did they talk about in sessions, how did they feel about talking about things which were sensitive
- Recommend it: Would they do it again? Would they tell friends to do it?
- Suggestions: What would they change about it? How would they improve it? Facilitators, content, length of course, sessions etc

Topic four: outcomes
- Key learning: What have they learnt, what did it make them think about, what do they remember/ take away with them?
- Changes: Will they/have they made any changes to your life as a result of the programme?

Give out copies of the outcomes star out – put one in the middle of the table and go through the different outcomes reminding people of what each outcome means.

- Changes: Which outcomes changed when they filled in the star at the end? What kind of difference was this: attitudes, learning, behaviour etc /How did this come about, what part did the HEART programme play in that?
- Areas that didn’t change: Which outcomes didn’t change at all when they filled in the star in at the end? Why?
- Probe on any unmentioned areas
- Outcomes star: Is there anything that isn’t in the star that should be?

Mentoring

Feelings and thoughts
Using a flipchart, write down all the first words that come into people’s minds when they think about the mentoring strand and their mentors.

Expectations and selection

- Selection Process: How were they selected? How did they find out they were going to be on it? Who told them? Did they feel like they had a choice?
- Worries, thoughts about the programme: What did they think the mentoring was going to be like? Was there anything they were worried about?
- What they wanted from it: Why did they agree to do it? What did they think they would get out of it?

Mentoring
Ask everyone to draw a picture of what HEART means to them. Whatever comes to mind first, it could be about what a session feels like, or what their mentor means to them.

- Mentors: What were they like? Did they get on? Did their mentor share their experiences? Did they ever change mentor? Why? What was this like?
- **Sessions:** How long did they see your mentor for? Did they look forward to their sessions? Did they ever miss any? Why? Where did they see their mentor? Did they ever see them outside of school? Did it fit in with their school timetable? Could they contact their mentor outside of sessions? Did they do the group programme? How did it compare? What did they think of it being one-to-one?

- **Content:** Did they talk about specific topics in each session? How much could they decide what they were going to talk about in a session? What areas of life did they focus on? Where there things they would have liked to talk about that they didn’t?

- **Recommend it:** Would they continue if they could? Would they tell friends to do it?

- **Suggestions:** What would they change about it? How would they improve it? mentors, content, length of time, etc.

**Topic four: outcomes**

- **Key guidance:** Did their mentor give them any guidance? If so what? Have they used any suggestions that their mentor gave them?

- **Changes:** Will they/have they made any changes to your life as a result of the mentoring? Have they ever done anything like this before? How does it compare?

Give out copies of the outcomes star out – put one in the middle of the table and go through the different outcomes reminding people of what each outcome means.

- **Changes:** Which outcomes changed when they filled in the star at the end? What kind of difference was this: attitudes, learning, behaviour etc. /How did this come about, what part did the HEART programme play in that?

- **Areas that didn’t change:** Which outcomes didn’t change at all when they filled in the star in at the end? Why?

- **Probe on any unmentioned areas**

- **Outcomes star:** Is there anything that isn’t in the star that should be?
Appendix V

Interview guide for teachers

1. How are you involved with the HEART programme?
   a. How long have you been involved?
   b. Why did you become involved?
   c. Have you been involved with anything of this sort before?

2. Do you think there was a need for the programme? If yes, why?
   a. What were the referral criteria? Give details

3. What is your opinion of the programme?
   a. What do you think of the way it is run?
   b. What do you think of the staff running it?
   c. How has it fit in with the rest of the school day/curriculum as a whole?

4. What kind of changes have you seen in the young people involved in the targeted training?
   a. Have you observed changed behaviour?
      i. Have you seen people interacting in a different way?
         1. With peers?
         2. With partners?
      ii. What about other behaviours?
   b. What about changed attitudes?
      i. Towards school
      ii. Towards the opposite sex
   c. Why do you think this has occurred?
   d. Was it only during the programme or sustained after it had ended?
   e. Were the effects different for boys or girls?
   f. Are there any specific students that you have seen a change in?

5. What kind of impact have you seen on learning outcomes of those involved?
   a. If yes how do you think this has come about?
   b. Was this only during the course of the programme or sustained after it had ended?

6. Have you seen any changes in the goals or aspirations of young people involved in the training?

7. What kind of difference has the programme made to the school environment overall?
   a. Have you observed differences in behaviour in the classroom?
   b. Have you observed differences in behaviour in the playground?
   c. Have any other teachers observed differences they have shared with you?

8. What kind of feedback have you had from students about the programme?

9. What kind of feedback have you had from parents of young people involved in the programme?

10. Are there any other changes you have seen as a result of the programme?

11. What changes you would make to the programme?
    a. How do you think have a stronger impact on learning outcomes?
    b. How do you think it could have a stronger impact on behaviour?
    c. Is there anything else you think it should cover?

12. Is there anything else you’d like to say?
Appendix VI

Mentors and facilitators focus group

Background
- **Involvement**: Why did you get involved? How did you get involved? What were you told about the programme beforehand?
- **Background**: Did you ever use any programmes like this in the past?
- **Training/ support**: What was the training like? How were you supported through the year? Is there anything else that would have been useful in terms of support?

The programme

Group
- **Topics**: How much would you stick to the session guide? How often would you deal with spontaneous issues brought up by the young people? How did young people react to talking about sex and relationships? What did you think of the material you had to cover? How would you change it?
- **Boys and Girls**: How was the material adapted for boys groups as opposed to girls groups? Do you think girls and boys reacted differently to some of the topics? Do you think it worked having mixed gender facilitators?
- What were the main barriers to delivering sessions?

Mentoring
- **Assignment**: How were you assigned your mentees?
- **Topics**: Did you have specific information to cover in the sessions? How often were you led by things the young person wanted to talk about?
- **Location**: Where did you meet your mentees? What did you think of the venue/environment you had to do sessions in? How would you change it?

Both
- **Length**: What did you think of the length of the programme?
- **Schools**: What was it like working within schools? How did you feel about sharing confidential information with teachers? Where there certain schools where the programme worked particularly well? What was it like when teachers/school staff sat in on the sessions?

Relationships

Group
- **Engaging**: How did you get the young people to engage with the programme initially?
- **Trust**: How did you create trust within the group? How did you get the young people to open up?
- **Groups**: How did you manage the group dynamics of the young people? Which groups worked together the best? Why? What do you think was the ideal number to have in a group? Did the mix of ages make a difference to the dynamics? Did it make a difference if those in the group were already friends?

Mentoring
- **Engaging**: How did you get the young people to engage with the programme initially?
- **Trust**: How did you create trust between yourself and your mentee? How did you get the young people to open up? How long did this take?

Both
- Is there anything that would have made it easier to create relationships with the young people?
Impact

Group

- **Topics:** Which topics did the young people respond to the most?
- **Changes:** What are some of the key changes you saw in young people attending the programme? Are there any individual cases which were particularly striking? Do you think there are certain young people who take more from the programme/less?

Mentoring

- **Changes:** Were there any key sessions where you felt you had a breakthrough? What were some of the key changes you saw in the mentees?
- Do you think there are certain young people who take more from the sessions/less?

Both

- **One on one vs. group:** Do you think the mentoring and the group programme were equally effective? Do you think certain people got more from a group or one to one setting? Why?
- **Changes:** Overall are there any changes you would make to the programme?
Appendix VII
Statistical tests

Due to the use of ordinal scales to measure progress in the different outcome areas of the outcomes star, non-parametric statistical tests were used to investigate whether or not statistically significant changes in self-rated status took place over the course of the programme. The overall difference between outcome area scores pre- and post-training was assessed primarily using the Wilcoxon signed-rank test. Investigation of the different participant characteristics of age group and gender was undertaken primarily with Mann-Witney U tests. However, in some cases the data did not meet the criteria for these tests due to having differently-shaped sample distributions. In these cases the tests were replaced by other tests with less stringent assumptions, the Sign test and the Median test, respectively. It is worth noting that as the Median test, in particular, has rather low power. This represents a very conservative treatment of the data to avoid incorrectly rejecting the null hypothesis that the sample data (from two different age groups or two genders) are drawn from equivalent populations.

For the purposes of evaluation all test results were compared against the .05 alpha level.

Healthy relationships
Pre-training scores were compared with post-training scores, n = 80: Wilcoxon Z = -4.229, p < .001. Pre-training the median score was 4 with a range of 4, post-training the median score was 5 and the range 4.
Change values of young women (n = 62) were compared against those of young men (n = 18): U = 371, Z = -2.234, p = .025.
Change values of younger participants (n = 41) were compared against those of older participants (n = 39): U = 762, Z = -0.374, p = .708 (ns).

Self-respect
Pre-training scores were compared with post-training scores, n = 81: Wilcoxon Z = -4.825, p < .001. Pre-training the median score was 4 with a range of 4, post-training the median score was 5 and the range 4.
Change values of young women (n = 63) were compared against those of young men (n = 18): Median test $\chi^2$ (1) = 6.819, p = .009.
Change values of younger participants (n = 42) were compared against those of older participants (n = 39): Median test $\chi^2$ (1) = 0.019, p = .89 (ns).

Wellbeing
Pre-training scores were compared with post-training scores, n = 80: Wilcoxon Z = -5.012, p < .001. Pre-training the median score was 4 with a range of 4, post-training the median score was 4 and the range 4.
Change values of young women (n = 63) were compared against those of young men (n = 17): Median test $\chi^2$ (1) = 6.819, p = .009.
Change values of younger participants (n = 42) were compared against those of older participants (n = 38): U = 791, Z = -0.069, p = .945 (ns).
Dealing with others
Pre-training scores were compared with post-training scores, n = 82: Sign test $Z = -4.333$, p < .001. Pre-training the median score was 3 with a range of 4, post-training the median score was 4 and the range 4.

Change values of young women (n = 64) were compared against those of young men (n = 18): Median test $\chi^2(1) = 9.208$, p = .002.

Change values of younger participants (n = 43) were compared against those of older participants (n = 39): Median test $\chi^2(1) = 2.558$, p = .11 (ns).

Thinking about people’s feelings
Pre-training scores were compared with post-training scores, n = 80: Sign test $Z = -3.974$, p < .001. Pre-training the median score was 3 with a range of 4, post-training the median score was 4 and the range 4.

Change values of young women (n = 62) were compared against those of young men (n = 18): $U = 795$, $Z = -0.757$, p = .449 (ns).

Change values of younger participants (n = 41) were compared against those of older participants (n = 39): Median test $\chi^2(1) = 0.35$, p = .554 (ns).

Committed crime
Pre-training scores were compared with post-training scores, n = 80: Sign test $Z = -3.28$, p = .001. Pre-training the median score was 4 with a range of 4, post-training the median score was 4 and the range 4.

Change values of young women (n = 63) were compared against those of young men (n = 17): Median test $\chi^2(1) = 4.356$, p = .037.

Change values of younger participants (n = 42) were compared against those of older participants (n = 38): Median test $\chi^2(1) = 0.271$, p = .602 (ns).

Having sex
Pre-training scores were compared with post-training scores, n = 80: Wilcoxon Z = -2.883, p = .004. Pre-training the median score was 4.25 with a range of 4, post-training the median score was 5 and the range 3.

Change values of young women (n = 63) were compared against those of young men (n = 17): Median test $\chi^2(1) = 3.556$, p = .059 (ns).

Change values of younger participants (n = 42) were compared against those of older participants (n = 38): $U = 645$, $Z = -1.587$, p = .112 (ns).

Lifestyle choices
Pre-training scores were compared with post-training scores, n = 78: Wilcoxon Z = -4.251, p < .001. Pre-training the median score was 4 with a range of 4, post-training the median score was 5 and the range 4.
Change values of young women (n = 61) were compared against those of young men (n = 17): Median test $\chi^2(1) = 1.71$, $p = .191$ (ns).

Change values of younger participants (n = 39) were compared against those of older participants (n = 39): Median test $\chi^2(1) = 2.54$, $p = .111$ (ns).

**Relationships between outcome areas**

Table 13 shows the correlation coefficients (Spearman’s $\rho$) for the relationships between the change values for different outcome areas, followed by the associated significance levels.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Healthy relationships</th>
<th>Self-respect</th>
<th>Wellbeing</th>
<th>Dealing With others</th>
<th>Thinking about people’s feelings</th>
<th>Committing crime</th>
<th>Having sex</th>
<th>Lifestyle choices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Healthy relationships</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>.312, $p = .005^{**}$</td>
<td>.223, $p = .050^{*}$</td>
<td>.007, $p = .948$</td>
<td>.255, $p = .048^{*}$</td>
<td>.247, $p = .029^{*}$</td>
<td>.070, $p = .540$</td>
<td>.211, $p = .066$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dealing with others</td>
<td>.007, $p = .948$</td>
<td>.038, $p = .739$</td>
<td>.394, $p &lt; .001^{**}$</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>.203, $p = .071$</td>
<td>.240, $p = .032^{*}$</td>
<td>.350, $p = .001^{**}$</td>
<td>.209, $p = .067$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13. Correlations between different outcome areas. * = significant at the .05 alpha level ** = significant at the .01 alpha level.
Appendix VIII

Offending behaviour and economic analysis

Offending behaviour outcomes

In order to investigate the potential impact of the programme on violent offending behaviour, records were provided by the police for offences committed by some HEART mentoring participants, from two of the boroughs involved. Young people who received mentoring were included in the records if they were known to have a criminal record at the time of referral to the programme.

From the records obtained, a period of six months from the date the young person started the programme and the equivalent six month period of the year before (to avoid the potential confound of seasonal variation in offending) were examined to see if there was any change in the number of violent offences committed following engagement with the programme. Due to the timetable for finishing the evaluation, it was not possible to track offending profiles for the six months following completion of HEART. Offences falling within these periods and the disposals given are shown in Table 14.

It should be noted that other categories of offence (non-violent) were recorded by the police, as well as offences outside the time periods specified. Of the offences meeting the criteria for inclusion, it can be seen that robbery was the most frequent. There is insufficient data to assess whether statistically significant change actually occurred but if there were a reduction in robbery, then that would have significant economic/financial benefits.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual</th>
<th>6 months before HEART</th>
<th>6 months after HEART</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Offence</td>
<td>Disposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Robbery</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Robbery</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Assault</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>ABH</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Robbery</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 14. Disposals for violent offences committed over two equivalent periods before and after engagement with HEART by young people receiving mentoring.

Disposals: 1: Referral order < 12 months; 2: Referral order >= 12 months.
Economic analysis

In order to get some idea of the potential savings to the public purse made as a result of the intervention, we focused on the outcome of reducing violent offending behaviour amongst the young people taking part in the programme who had already had contact with the criminal justice system according to the records provided by the MPS.

As can be seen from section 3.1, a small subset of young people in the programme already had offending profiles. We therefore investigated possible savings of marginal programme costs that could be achieved if offending behaviour was reduced as a result of the programme by comparing programme costs to the unit costs of certain types of violent offence.

Unit costs for specific types of crime were taken from Home Office research. Some of the costs associated with response to crime were examined, specifically, costs to the Criminal Justice System for categories of violent personal (as opposed to commercial) crime, including personal robbery. According to the research:

‘The most costly crimes are those with a large estimated emotional and physical impact; homicide, wounding, robbery and sexual offences are estimated to be the most costly crimes.’

Table 15 shows the unit costs for the relevant categories of offence. In the case of the category of Violence against the Person used by the Home Office—which includes Homicide and Wounding, which is further divided into Serious Wounding and Other Wounding—this has been broken down into the separate offence types. Homicide has been omitted from this analysis on the basis of the offending profiles of programme participants supplied by the MPS. Although the offence of Violent Disorder was present in the offending data, a unit cost per crime could not be obtained for this offence category. In some cases the Home Office crime categories differ than those used by the police.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Offence</th>
<th>Total cost per crime (£)</th>
<th>Criminal justice system cost per crime (£)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Serious wounding</td>
<td>21,422</td>
<td>14,345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other wounding</td>
<td>8,056</td>
<td>978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual offences</td>
<td>31,438</td>
<td>3,298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common assault</td>
<td>1,440</td>
<td>255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal robbery</td>
<td>7,282</td>
<td>2,601</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 15. Overall unit costs and costs to the criminal justice system for different types of violent offence against the person.
The overall costs for the different strands of the programme, as provided by the MPS, are shown in Table 16.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme strand</th>
<th>Total cost (£)</th>
<th>Number of young people</th>
<th>Cost per young person (£)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Training (targeted and universal)</td>
<td>165,313</td>
<td>710</td>
<td>234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring</td>
<td>89,000</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>405</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 16. Costs of different programme strands.

These are marginal programme costs associated directly with the delivery of these strands of the programme and do not include other aspects (such as the initial research) or the fixed costs of, for example, police personnel who were involved in programme delivery. The numbers of young people in each strand of the programme represent maximum figures, not taking account of occasional absences from group sessions. It can be seen from Table 16 that although the cost of the training was higher than that of the mentoring, the cost per young person was lower.

Table 17 shows for different crime types how many offences would need to be prevented for the savings in criminal justice costs to equate the marginal programme costs of HEART. It was not possible to produce break-even points according to the proportions of offences known to have been committed by HEART participants due to offending data being available for only two out of the four boroughs involved in the mentoring strand.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Offence</th>
<th>Number of crimes equal to training costs</th>
<th>Number of crimes equal to mentoring costs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Serious wounding</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other wounding</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual offences</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common assault</td>
<td>648</td>
<td>349</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal robbery</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 17. Number of offences of different types that would need to be prevented to reach break-even point for the training strand and the mentoring strand of the HEART programme. Figures are rounded to the nearest whole number.

These break-even figures assume that all programme costs are spent on preventing one category of crime. As the criminal justice system’s costs per crime are average figures it is not possible to say what saving would be made by preventing one crime from a category, as the costs incurred vary on a case-by-case basis.

The figures show that in one of the most serious categories of violent personal offence, Serious Wounding, if the mentoring strand could lead to the reduction of a relatively modest number of offences (6) it would reach its break-even point. To take the most frequently recorded crime in our offending data analysis as an example, a reduction of 34 personal robberies would meet the break-even point for the mentoring costs. Savings to the criminal
justice system will, of course, only constitute part of the financial savings that both the public and private sectors would experience as a result of crime reductions, while that social benefits would also be substantial.

The mentoring and training aspects of HEART were delivered to a total of 930 young people. We cannot say whether the programme has led to any reduction in offending or whether any up-scaling of the programme would do so, but we do know from the outcomes data we have collected and reported in Chapter 2 that there have been reductions in some risk factors associated with offending and vulnerability to certain types of offence. If this reduction in risk factors seen in the sample of young participants consulted is representative of all of the young people involved in HEART and is sustained, it is possible that several crimes could have been prevented as a result of the programme.
Appendix IX

ChildLine data

The counselling provided to young people by ChildLine through a telephone and web-chat service was advertised through HEART. Counselling sessions with ChildLine were logged and analysed according to the main concerns of the interaction in order to examine patterns of concerns regarding core HEART areas. The topics most closely related to HEART areas were: bullying/cyber-bullying, gang-related issues, contact behaviour/abuse/offence, teenage intimate partner abuse and sexual abuse. It was not possible to tag calls to ChildLine according to whether or not the caller mentioned HEART, so no calls can be directly attributed to HEART’s promotion of the ChildLine service. The percentage of overall interactions with each of these areas as a concern between April and September 2012 is shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Percentages of ChildLine counselling sessions regarding concerns related to HEART outcomes, April to September 2012
Table 18. Number of ChildLine counselling sessions by month, April 2012 to September 2012.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Number of sessions of all concerns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>26,470</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>26,008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>24,852</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>25,209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>22,801</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>22,325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>147,665</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bullying and cyber-bullying

As can be seen from the data presented above, the HEART-related topic that was the most frequently occurring concern in ChildLine interactions was that of bullying/cyber-bullying. There was a drop in the percentage of interactions that involved these issues coinciding with the main school holidays period in summer. In this the data follows a similar pattern to that of visits to the HEART website.

Gang-related issues

Gang-related issues were infrequent concerns, but they followed a different pattern to that of bullying/cyber-bullying in that the percentage of interactions relating to gangs issues peaked in the summer months.

Contact behaviour/abuse/offence

Contact behaviour/abuse/offence refers to sessions where the young person expressed concern about their own behaviour, which could be for many reasons, such as conduct disorder or risk of offending. This concern accounted for a relatively low percentage of ChildLine interactions, but the pattern varied over the months examined, with the number of interactions rising between May and June, whereas counselling sessions overall decreased over this period.

Teenage intimate partner abuse

Teenage intimate partner abuse was a main concern of the HEART programme, with much of the programme content focused on developing an understanding of what is unhealthy in a relationship and having the self-esteem to deal with difficult situations in a relationship. The percentage of ChildLine interactions with this as a main concern was relatively low, tending to fall over the period from April to September in line with the overall number of interactions. However, the incidences did rise from May to June, as with contact behaviour/abuse/offence.

Sexual abuse

Out of the HEART-related areas of concern examined, sexual abuse was the second most frequently cited in ChildLine interactions, higher than intimate partner abuse and contact behaviour/abuse/offence.

Overall, concerns regarding main HEART outcomes made up a small proportion of counselling sessions with ChildLine, but other concerns which are related to HEART
outcomes are not shown in this dataset (as they were not differentiated in ChildLine’s data structures) so it is not known how frequently they were dealt with.
Endnotes


3 Barter, C., McCarry, M., Berridge, D. and Evans, K. (2009) Partner exploitation and violence in teenage intimate relationships. NSPCC


6 Barnardo’s (2011) Puppet on a string: the urgent need to cut children free from sexual exploitation

7 Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (2011) Thematic assessment of on-street grooming


9 Barnardo’s (2011)


13 ibid


15 Firmin (2010)


19 Firmin, C. (2011)


Barnardo’s (2011)


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HM Government (2010)


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[http://www.met.police.uk/heart_programme/resource_centre.html](http://www.met.police.uk/heart_programme/resource_centre.html)


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