Research Report

Evaluation of three European schools-based domestic violence prevention education programmes

Relationships without Fear (England)
La Máscara del Amor (Spain)
Filles et Garçons, en route pour l’Égalité (France)

First Evaluation Report: November 2012

Becky Hale, Claire Fox and David Gadd
CONTENTS

Executive Summary 4 – 5

Chapter 1: Method

Introduction 6
The REaDAPt project 6
Measures used 7 – 10
Procedure: questionnaire studies 10 – 12
Procedure: focus group studies 13 – 14

Chapter 2: Findings from the evaluation of Relationships without Fear

Key findings 15
Relationships without Fear 16
Description of Stoke on Trent / Newcastle under Lyme 17
Diagram to show overview of data collection 18
Findings part 1: primary school questionnaires 19 – 30
Findings part 2: secondary school questionnaires 31 – 41
Findings part 3: focus groups 42 – 54
Conclusion 54 – 55

Chapter 3: Findings from the evaluation of La Máscara del Amor

Key findings 56
La Máscara del Amor 56
Findings part 1: questionnaires 57 – 59
Findings part 2: focus groups 60 – 62
Conclusion 63
REaDAPt First Evaluation Report

Chapter 4: Findings from the evaluation of Filles et Garçons, en route pour l’Egalité

Key findings 64
Filles et Garçons, en route pour l’Egalité 64 – 65
Findings part 1: questionnaires 66 – 75
Findings part 2: focus groups 76 – 79
Conclusion 79

Chapter 5: Comparative analyses and conclusions

Comparisons between secondary school interventions 80
Differences in ages of participants 80 – 81
Participants’ opinions about situations 81 – 83
Average ADV pre-test scores for boys and girls 84
Evidence of effectiveness 85 – 86
Overarching themes 87 – 89

References 90

Annex: summary of content and methods used in each programme

Relationships without Fear 91 - 92
La Máscara del Amor 93
Filles et Garçons, en route pour l’Egalité 94 – 95
Executive Summary

This report discusses research findings from the REaDAPt Project: a programme of work funded by the European Commission’s DAPHNE III violence prevention programme. The research described here sought to evaluate the effectiveness of three pre-existing Relationship Education and Domestic Abuse Prevention Tuition interventions provided in schools.

These programmes were as follows:

1. **Relationships without Fear**, a six week programme that is delivered in primary and secondary schools (to young people aged 8 to 16 years) by external facilitators.
2. **La Máscara del Amor**, a six week programme delivered by teachers to young people typically aged 14-16 years.
3. **Filles et Garçons, en route pour l'Égalité**, a one-off session delivered by an external facilitator to young people aged 13-25 years in schools, vocational training centres and information centres.

A fourth programme, developed out of the ReADAPt Project, and piloted by the Maltese Regional Dialogue and Development Foundation, is currently undergoing evaluation. All four interventions have been evaluated using a pre-test, post-test survey design, utilising the Attitudes towards Domestic Violence (ADV) Questionnaire, and focus groups with young people who completed the programmes. The research element of the project has been overseen by researchers at Keele and Manchester Universities in the UK, and subject to a critical evaluation provided by the Responses to Interpersonal Violence (RIV) team at the University of Linköping. The West Midlands European Centre has contributed to the REaDAPt project by disseminating the project’s outputs. Further details of these outputs, including the REaDAPt Education Toolkit, can be found at [www.readapt.eu](http://www.readapt.eu).

The key findings of the project were:

- Preventative programmes can secure attitude changes in young people, so that they become less accepting of domestic violence.
- Preventative programmes are most effective at changing attitudes if delivered over a number of weeks.
- Boys are generally less engaged with relationship education and domestic abuse prevention programmes than girls.
- One reason for this has to do with the way in which men are often represented in the materials used in such programmes; another has to do with the tendency to start with a lesson many young men claim to know already, namely that violence is wrong.
- Relationship education programmes do not always succeed in encouraging young people to seek help from adults.
- Educators delivering such programmes have a number of challenges to surmount. There are tensions between promoting gender equality and depicting violence as a gendered phenomenon. There are also tensions between encouraging young people to express and explore their own perceptions and the need to challenge sexist stereotypes and victim-blaming.
• Soliciting young people’s perspectives on the content and delivery of relationship education and domestic abuse prevention tuition is the key to enhancing programme effectiveness.
Chapter 1: Method

Introduction

It is now well established that younger adults and teenagers are at greater risk of domestic abuse victimization than older adults (Lundgren, 2011; Smith et al., 2011; Fsadni & associates, 2011; Zorilla et al. 2011). Many people will experience domestic abuse or dating violence for the first time when they are teenagers. Some children, will of course, witness it between their parents. Others will encounter it in their own relationships, either as victims or as perpetrators, or sometimes as both. Reducing the social acceptability of domestic abuse among young people and encouraging them to seek help is therefore crucial to redressing the problem of relationship violence in the longer term. Unfortunately, there is an absence of rigorously evaluated educational interventions designed to help children know how to respond should domestic abuse arise as they enter their own romantic relationships during adolescence and adulthood. While there are a growing number of interventions, few are evaluated using reliable research scales embedded in pre and post-test designs applied on a whole class basis.

The REaDAPt Project

REaDAPt - Relationship Education and Domestic Abuse Prevention Tuition - was a two year project funded by the European Commission’s DAPHNE III violence prevention programme. The project sought to develop a programme of activities that could be used by educators looking to teach young people about relationships and their potential for abuse and violence within them, and provide advice and support for those affected by domestic violence whether in their own relationships, or those of their parents, friends or other family members. In pursuit of this goal, the project provided an evaluation of three schools-based preventative programmes, located in the UK, France and Spain. It also provided an evaluation of interventions undertaken in Malta that utilised the REaDAPt Educational toolkit. The Project’s research team used a questionnaire to examine levels of attitudinal change among those exposed to the programmes. They also looked at whether young people’s willingness to seek help from adults changed as a consequence of exposure to the programme. Focus groups were used to solicit young people’s perceptions of the programmes to which they had been exposed.

The project involved seven partner organisations in six countries: UK, Spain, Malta, France, Sweden and Belgium. The project was led by academics at Keele University in the UK, who designed and oversaw the research reported on here. Arch in the UK, Du Côté des Femmes de Haute Garonne, in France and Dirección General de Prevención de la Violencia de Género y Reforma Juvenil in Spain provided the educational interventions that the Keele team evaluated. The Malta Regional Development and Dialogue Foundation (MRDDF) oversaw the development of a new programme of educational interventions that utilised the REaDAPt toolkit in Maltese schools. The project was also supported by the Response to Interpersonal Violence (RIV) team at the University of Linköping. The RIV team provided critical evaluation of the project outputs before they were finalised. The project was also supported by the West Midlands European Centre, who led on disseminating the project outputs.
Measures used

ADV
The Attitudes towards Domestic Violence Questionnaire (ADV) was developed by Dr Claire Fox (Keele University) and Prof David Gadd (University of Manchester), in close collaboration with the charity Arch, based in North Staffordshire. It was created to provide an evaluation tool to assess the effectiveness of Arch’s Relationships without Fear programme using a pre-test post-test design. In developing this measure the authors drew inspiration from the Normative Beliefs about Aggression Scale (Huesmann & Guerra, 1997).

The ADV consists of 12 items such as: Suppose a woman really embarrasses her partner/husband, do you think it is wrong for HIM to hit HER? Each statement on the ADV has four response options (it’s really wrong, it’s sort of wrong, it’s sort of OK, and it’s perfectly OK) and they are scored 1 to 4. Half of the items were worded so that the participants were asked if this situation was “wrong” and the response options are ordered “it’s really wrong” to “it’s perfectly OK”. The other half of the items were worded so that respondents were asked if this situation was “OK” and the response options were ordered “it’s perfectly OK” to its “it’s really wrong”. Figure 1 illustrates this with examples of the two different question/response formats. The reason for variations in the question phrasing (i.e. is the situation ‘OK’ or ‘wrong’) and the corresponding variation in response order, was to counter the tendency of participants to respond the same way to each question without fully processing what they are being asked (known as ‘response bias’).

Questions asking if the situation is “wrong” were recoded so that a low score (minimum score = 12) corresponded to respondents with an attitude showing low acceptance of domestic violence. The maximum score that could be obtained was 48 (showing an attitude with high acceptance of domestic violence). For each pupil who completed this questionnaire their total score on the ADV was calculated and then divided by 12 (because there are 12 statements) in order to get their mean score (average score) on the ADV. Accordingly pupils’ mean scores ranged from 1 (which shows low acceptance of domestic violence) and 4 (which shows high acceptance of domestic violence). It is the mean scores that were used in analyses investigating ADV responses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do you think it is OK for a man to hit his partner/wife if HE is drunk?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s perfectly OK</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suppose a woman hits her partner/husband, do you think it is wrong for HIM to hit HER?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s really wrong</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 1:* Example questions from the standard ADV questionnaire
The ADV questionnaire was initially created in English and piloted in 9 primary schools and 2 secondary schools in England using 542 children and young people. It has also been piloted in French and Spanish. Factor analysis performed on the English data indicated a clear single factor scale with an acceptable internal reliability coefficient of .85. This suggests that the questionnaire items are measuring a single construct – children’s attitudes towards domestic violence (i.e. there are no sub-scales within it). The pilot study also found that almost two thirds (66.2%) of children aged 9–14 years old reported that hitting a partner was ‘perfectly OK’ or ‘sort of OK’ in at least one of the items. Three quarters of boys (75.2%) answered ‘OK’ to at least one of these situations compared to 56.8% of girls. The pilot study also showed that children’s attitudes (boys and girls) became less accepting of domestic violence from before to after the 6 week programme and that girls were less accepting of domestic violence overall compared to boys.

In the REaDAPt project, the ADV was completed by all of the French and Spanish participants. In the UK, the secondary school students and children in year 6 at primary school completed it. The French students also answered a second version of the ADV that was modified so that it referred to violence in boyfriend/girlfriend relationships (see Figure 2).

---

**Do you think it is OK for a boy to hit his girlfriend if HE is drunk?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>[ ]</th>
<th>[ ]</th>
<th>[ ]</th>
<th>[ ]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It’s perfectly OK</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s sort of OK</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s sort of wrong</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s really wrong</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Suppose a girl hits her boyfriend, do you think it is wrong for HIM to hit HER?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>[ ]</th>
<th>[ ]</th>
<th>[ ]</th>
<th>[ ]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It’s really wrong</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s sort of wrong</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s sort of OK</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s perfectly OK</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 2: Example questions from the modified version of the ADV questionnaire (used in France) referring to a boyfriend/girlfriend relationship.*

**NOBAGS**

The Normative Beliefs about Aggression Scale (NOBAGS) was developed by Huesmann & Guerra (1997) and comprises of two subscales: the Retaliation Beliefs subscale and the General Beliefs subscale. The Retaliation Beliefs Subscale consists of 12 items and measures children’s attitudes towards things that can happen among children, for example: suppose a boy says something bad to another boy, James. Do you think it’s OK for James to scream at him? Do you think it’s OK for James to hit him? The General Beliefs subscale consists of 8 items and measures attitudes towards aggression in general using statements such as: in general, it is wrong to hit other people.

For all questions on both subscales there are four response options (it’s really wrong, it’s sort of wrong, it’s sort of OK, and it’s perfectly OK) and they are scored 1 to 4, and as with the ADV, half of the items were negatively worded to avoid response bias. These items were
recoded for analyses. Subsequently on the Retaliation Beliefs subscale children could get a total score that ranges from 12 (showing an attitude with low acceptance of retaliation aggression) and a maximum score of 48 (showing an attitude with high acceptance of retaliation aggression). On the General Beliefs subscale, the children could get a minimum score of 8 (low acceptance of aggression) and a maximum score of 32 (high acceptance of aggression). A total score on each subscale was calculated for each child who participated and these scores were used in the statistical analyses. Examples of the questions and response options are given in Figure 3.

Example retaliation belief questions

Suppose a boy says something bad to another boy, James. Do you think it’s OK for James to scream at him?

[ ] It’s perfectly OK  [ ] It’s sort of OK  [ ] It’s sort of wrong  [ ] It’s really wrong

Suppose a boy says something bad to a girl. Do you think it’s wrong for the girl to scream at him?

[ ] It’s really wrong  [ ] It’s sort of wrong  [ ] It’s sort of OK  [ ] It’s perfectly OK

Example general belief questions

In general, it is wrong to hit other people

[ ] It’s really wrong  [ ] It’s sort of wrong  [ ] It’s sort of OK  [ ] It’s perfectly OK

If you’re angry, it is OK to say mean things to other people

[ ] It’s perfectly OK  [ ] It’s sort of OK  [ ] It’s sort of wrong  [ ] It’s really wrong

Figure 3: Example questions from the NOBAGS questionnaire
Help seeking questions

Young people in the UK were also asked questions about how likely they would be to seek help from an adult. Primary school children were asked how likely they would be to seek help from an adult if someone they knew was not very nice to them. Secondary school pupils were asked how likely they would be to seek help from an adult if a boyfriend/girlfriend ever hit them, and how likely they would be to seek help from an adult if their main carer (e.g. parent, guardian) was hit a partner. Further details about the scoring for these questions are given in UK findings section.

Table 1
Summary table of measures completed - by country

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>France</th>
<th>Spain</th>
<th>UK primary schools</th>
<th>UK secondary schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADV</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADV version 2(^1)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOBAGS</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help seeking questions</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Procedure: questionnaire study

Questionnaire administration

France: The programme that was evaluated in France is called *Filles et Garçons, en route pour l'Egalité* (*Girls and Boys, Let's go to Equality*). This programme usually consists of one session delivered by a specialist facilitator (external to the schools). The pre-test questionnaire was completed by students one week before the session was delivered. One week after the session, the facilitator returned to the school and the post-test questionnaire was completed.

Spain: The Spanish programme is called ‘La Máscara del Amor’ (*Masks of Love*). This programme consists of six sessions that are delivered by teachers. Before the programme commences, teachers attend a two day training event where they are provided with the materials to deliver the programme. The pre-test questionnaire was administered by teachers at the start of the first lesson of the programme, and the post-test questionnaire was administered at the end of the final session of the programme. Students did not put their names on the questionnaires; their pre-test and post-test questionnaires were matched by their answers to two questions: what are the last 3 digits of your telephone number and what month were you born in?

\(^1\) The modified version of the ADV referring to violence within boyfriend/girlfriend relationships
UK: The English programme that was evaluated is called Relationships without Fear (RwF). This programme was delivered by specialist facilitators (external to the school). The pre-test questionnaire was completed by pupils at the start of the first session of RwF, and the post-test questionnaire was administered to pupils at the end of the last lesson of RwF. In both cases the RwF facilitator administered the questionnaire.

A sample of students who had not received RwF also completed the pre-test questionnaires and post-test questionnaires (approximately 5 weeks apart). Their responses were compared with the pupils who had received the programme. Thus the young people who received the programme are referred to as the intervention group, and those that did not receive the programme are referred to as the control group. When Arch confirmed a class/school was receiving RwF, they passed on the details to the REaDAPt Research Assistant who then identified an appropriate school to act as the control group for this school. Each matched control and intervention pair completed the questionnaires at approximately the same time and consisted of children in the same year group. Children in the control group attended schools that were in close proximity to the schools of their intervention group counterparts, and had similar demographic characteristics, for example the number of pupils who were in receipt of free school meals. The Research Assistant administered the pre-test and post-test questionnaires in the control schools.

The inclusion of a control group in the English strand of the evaluation, meant that in addition to pre-test and post-test scores for the intervention group being compared, the scores obtained (at pre-test and post-test) from the control group could also be compared with the scores obtained from the intervention group. This approach to programme evaluation is more rigorous than looking at the pre-test to post-test changes for the intervention group only. This is because including a control group helps to identify whether it is the intervention that has had an impact on the pupils’ attitudes, rather than some other factor(s) that could have caused the attitude change. For example, if the control group’s scores have not changed from pre-test to post-test, but the intervention group’s scores have changed, it can be said with more certainty that the programme has had an impact on the intervention group’s attitudes. However, if the control group’s attitudes have also changed then it could be argued that the intervention has not had an impact, and perhaps another factor has resulted in the attitude change, for example developmental trends or media campaigns. To be confident that differences between the attitudes of the control group and intervention group are due to the intervention, the control group and intervention group need to be comparable, and this is why the Research Assistant sought to match control schools and intervention schools on a number of demographic characteristics.

The children in the intervention group also completed a follow-up questionnaire approximately 3 months after they had received the final session of RwF. This was done to assess the medium-term impact of RwF on their attitudes.

Ethical considerations

In all countries, the participants were assured that their responses would be kept confidential. Students were told that they did not have to answer any questions they did not want to, and that their participation was voluntary. Students were also debriefed after completing the questionnaires. In all countries, permission for data collection was gained from the schools, and in the UK permission was also gained from the pupils’ parents. This
was done by sending letters to parents that explained the research study and the content of the questionnaire. Parents could opt their child out of the research by returning a form at the bottom of the parent letter. Just two parents opted their children out of the intervention group (across the primary and secondary schools). The teaching staff in primary schools managed the opt-out process in the control schools, and children who were not allowed to complete the questionnaire were moved to another classroom before the Research Assistant arrived. Approximately three children per primary school class were not allowed to participate, and there were six parental opt-outs in the control secondary schools.

Data Analysis

All of the completed questionnaires (from all countries) were sent to the Research Assistant who matched the pre-test and post-test questionnaires, and then entered the data into SPSS. Percentages were calculated for the responses of each question to determine what percentage of young people thought the situations were ‘sort of OK’ and ‘perfectly OK’. This provided an indication of the prevalence of domestic violence acceptance. Differences between the pre-test and post-test scores were calculated and the statistical significance examined by performing a two way mixed ANOVA (analysis of variance). This analysis enabled the research team to find out if there were any statistically significant differences from pre-test to post-test, as well as finding out if there were any gender differences in attitude change. In the UK, these analyses were also performed to determine if there were any differences between the control group and intervention group.

Additionally the Cronbach’s Alpha was calculated to assess the reliability of the ADV when used with each intervention site. The Cronbach’s Alpha indicates the correlation between total scores from half of the questionnaire items with the total scores of the remaining half of the questionnaires items, taking into account all possible combinations of how the questionnaire can be split in half (Cramner, 2003). Values above 0.7 indicate an acceptable level of reliability. In the case of the ADV – across all intervention sites – the values of the Cronbach’s Alpha were between 0.80 and 0.90. The Cronbach’s Alpha for the NOBAGS retaliation aggression subscale was 0.85, and for the general aggression subscale was 0.82.

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>France</th>
<th>Spain</th>
<th>UK primary</th>
<th>UK secondary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow-up</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>✓ (Intervention group only)</td>
<td>✓ (Intervention group only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparison between control and intervention groups</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Procedure: focus group study**

**Conducting the focus groups**

Focus groups were conducted in all three countries to explore students’ opinions about the programme. In all cases the focus group facilitator was *not* the person who delivered the programme to the students. This was to ensure that focus group participants felt comfortable sharing their opinions of the programme without fear of offending the person who delivered it.

In total five focus groups were conducted in the UK, one in France and two in Spain. There were between four and seven participants in each focus group. Further details of the individual focus groups are provided in the country’s specific sections of this report.

The focus groups were semi-structured; the facilitator had several questions that s/he wanted to discuss, but also allowed the discussion to be guided by the students. This meant asking students to expand upon interesting points and allowing (relevant) topics that students raised to develop. The students were asked what they liked and disliked about the programme, what they thought about the content, teaching methods, and whether or not other students in their class had enjoyed the programme. Students were also asked for their suggestions of how to improve the intervention and whether or not they thought children in other schools should receive the programme.

The facilitators were cautious not to become involved in the discussion and not to share their own opinions. Their role was to pose the questions and promote discussion between the students by encouraging them to elaborate on points and share their opinions.

**Ethical considerations**

Students were told the focus groups would involve discussions about the domestic violence prevention programme they had received (what they liked, what they disliked) and they were reassured that they would not be asked questions about their own personal experiences. Students were told their participation was voluntary and that if they did choose to take part, they were free to leave at any point without giving a reason. Students were also reminded that during the focus group discussion other participants would be sharing their opinions, and thus what was said during the discussion was not to be repeated to anyone else afterwards. However, despite asking students not to repeat what was discussed, it was not possible to guarantee this and so students were also told to only share opinions that they felt comfortable with other people knowing. The focus group facilitator also explained to students that the focus group would be recorded and typed into a transcript (with all names removed) and a report would be produced which would include short quotes taken from the transcript. After explaining these issues to the students, they were asked to confirm their decision to participate and the researcher ensured students gave consent to the focus group being recorded, and for quotes to be used in reports.
Data Analysis

The focus group discussions were typed into transcripts verbatim and analysed. The analysis was structured around 3 key questions: What did the young people like about the programme? What did the young people dislike about the programme? What improvements could be made to the programme? Transcripts were read and re-read, each time identifying places in the discussion that addressed these questions. A summary of students’ responses are presented in the findings section for each country.

The questionnaire and focus group findings are presented by country in the following sections, followed by a cross country overview.
Chapter 2: Findings from the Evaluation of Relationships without Fear

Key Findings

In total 1133 young people aged 7-15 took part in the research evaluation of the programme called *Relationships without Fear* delivered by Arch in the Staffordshire region of the UK. The research found:

- *Relationships without Fear* generally reduces the children’s acceptance of domestic violence.

- *Relationships without Fear* also reduces younger children’s acceptance of beliefs about retaliatory forms of aggression.

- The programme improved the attitudes of both boys and girls, but girls were less accepting of retaliation aggression and domestic violence from the outset. Although their attitudes to domestic violence improved, boys’ acceptance of domestic violence rarely diminished to levels below where most girls started during the course of the programme.

BUT

- The programme does not appear to be successful in changing younger children’s general beliefs about aggression.

- Nor does the programme appear to succeed in promoting children’s willingness to seek help from adults regarding domestic violence.

- While the programme is generally welcomed by pupils of all ages, there is evidence that its effectiveness could be improved by changing its content and delivery.

- Some children took unintended messages away from the programme – especially in relation to stranger danger and the culpability of victims.

- Some boys and girls perceive the programme as ‘boring’ and ‘sexist’ and justified their disengagement from it accordingly. The dichotomisation of men as either victims or perpetrators tends to compound this problem.

- Some children noted that the full package of sessions was not delivered and/or that parts of the curriculum were covered too briefly.

- While more participatory exercises were requested by some children, during role play activities some children find themselves re-enacting abusive experiences that are similar to those on-going in their personal lives or even in the classroom.

- The use of real-life case studies where the victim dies were upsetting for some of the younger adolescents. Some girls suggested they were more worried about relationships having been exposed to the programme.
Relationships Without Fear

*Relationships without Fear (RwF)* is an anti-violence education programme developed by the Arch RwF team that has been operational for eight years. Arch work with children aged from 8 to 16 years of age and the programme is tailored to each individual year group. The programme is delivered by the project team who work closely with teachers. For each year group, one hour sessions are delivered once a week for six weeks.

For primary school children in years 4 and 5, the programme focuses on building and maintaining friendships. In year 6, the programme builds on the work done in years 4 and 5 and introduces material about adult relationships. In secondary school, the focus of the programme is on domestic violence in intimate partner relationships. The young people who participated in the study were attending schools in the Stoke on Trent and Newcastle under Lyme areas. Information about these areas and the participating schools is given in Figure 1.

This section of the report presents the statistical analyses that were conducted to assess the extent of attitude from before to after the programme, as well as comparing the responses of pupils in the intervention group with pupils from the control group. Figure 2 gives an overview of the questionnaire data collection that was conducted in the UK schools. The questionnaire responses of children who received the programme (the intervention group) were compared with the responses of children who did not receive the programme (the control group). Both groups completed pre-test and post-test questionnaires; the intervention group also completed follow-up questionnaires three months after the post-test.

Because different measures were completed by the primary school children and secondary school children, the questionnaire findings for the two school tiers are presented separately in ‘part 1’ and ‘part 2’. Part 3 is an outline of the findings from focus groups that were conducted with students. Five focus groups were conducted: two groups of pupils from a primary school, and three groups from a secondary school. The findings from the focus group are discussed in relation to all five groups (rather than separately for primary and secondary schools).
Stoke on Trent and Newcastle under Lyme

The schools used in the REaDAPt project were from the Stoke on Trent and Newcastle under Lyme areas, located in the West Midlands region of England, roughly midway between Birmingham and Manchester. Stoke-on-Trent has a population of about 241,000 people, while Newcastle under Lyme has a population of about 122,000 people. The region is often referred to as ‘the Potteries’, though little of the industries around which the towns grew - pottery, coal mining and steel - remain. The Pottteries are home to two universities, Keele - located near Newcastle under Lyme – and Staffordshire – located within Stoke-on-Trent. In 2009, the majority of people living in Stoke on Trent and Newcastle under Lyme were classified by government as white (91.2% and 95% respectively), a greater proportion than the average for England (87.5%). The region is home to a sizeable ethnic minority population with origins in Pakistan and Bangladesh dating back to a period of migration that commenced at the end of the 1960s. The region has also witnessed a growth in ethnic diversity since the 1990s, partly as a product of the government's dispersal policy with regard to asylum seekers and partly as a product of recruitment to the universities.

Stoke on Trent in particular has witnessed a marked economic decline dating back to the 1970s, and continues to suffer levels of economic deprivation some way above the national average. In 2009/10 the unemployment rate for England was 7.9%. In Newcastle under Lyme, the unemployment rate was slightly lower than this at 6.5%, whereas in Stoke on Trent, the unemployment rate was higher at 10.8%. In 2010, 5% of people living in Stoke on Trent were claiming job seekers allowance and 12% were claiming incapacity benefits. This compares to 4% claiming job seeker’s allowance and 7% claiming incapacity benefits in England.

Levels of educational attainment are below the national average in Stoke-on-Trent, but above it in Newcastle under Lyme. In 2009/2010 55.1% of pupils in England achieved five A* to C grades at GCSE including maths and English. In Newcastle under Lyme 56.9% of pupils achieved this, while only 46.8% achieved this in Stoke on Trent. In 2004 the percentage of people aged 16 to 74 without qualifications in England was 28.85%. This compared to 34.32% in Newcastle under Lyme and 42.88% in Stoke on Trent.

The schools used in the REaDAPt project reflect the diversity of the Stoke on Trent and Newcastle under Lyme areas. In some of the participating schools, the pupils’ exam results were above the National average; in other schools the pupils’ exam results were below average. Social deprivation can be assessed by the number of pupils in receipt of free school meals. This varied by school. The sample of schools used in the REaDAPt project included 8 primary schools and 3 secondary schools where the number of pupils receiving free school meals was below the national average, and 4 primary schools and 2 secondary schools where the number of pupils receiving them was above the national average (these data were unavailable for a further 2 primary schools). Whilst the majority of schools who participated in REaDAPt hosted pupils from predominantly White British backgrounds, one had students who were predominantly South Asian, and two others were more ethnically mixed though still predominantly white British in their intake.

Statistics taken from the Office for National Statistics, Neighbourhood Statistics website:
http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk

Figure 1. Description of the Stoke on Trent and Newcastle under Lyme areas
Overview of UK data collection

Figure 2. Diagram to show the year groups that participated, how the intervention groups and control groups were matched and the questionnaires completed. This applies to both pre-test and post-test data collection, but not follow-up data collection. Only the intervention group completed follow-up questionnaires (3 months after they completed the post-test questionnaire).
Findings Part 1: Primary School Questionnaires

Summary

The primary school strand of the evaluation of the *Relationships without Fear* programme revealed mixed findings in relation to the impact of the programme on the children’s attitudes:

- Overall, the *Relationships without Fear* programme appeared to have an impact on children’s attitudes towards retaliation aggression and domestic violence, but had less impact on their general attitudes towards aggression and their help seeking behaviours, specifically:
  - Children become less accepting of retaliatory aggression during the intervention; this effect held across the year groups and for boys and girls.
  - Year 6 children receiving *RwF* became less accepting of domestic violence from before to after the programme.
  - *RwF* had no impact on children’s general beliefs about aggression.
  - *RwF* also appears to have no impact on attitudes towards help seeking behaviour.
  - Girls were less accepting of aggression and domestic violence compared to boys.
  - Year 6 children were found to be more accepting of aggression than the younger age-groups.

- The majority of children thought that the *RwF* lessons were ‘very good’ and they enjoyed taking part in the lessons ‘a lot’. The majority of children also thought that the number of lessons they had was ‘just right’.

- One of the most frequently identified topics that children said they had learned about was anger management – that is, recognising and dealing with their own anger.

Participants

Between March 2011 and February 2012 the *Relationships without Fear* programme was delivered to children in years 3, 4, 5 and 6 at a number of schools in the Newcastle under Lyme / Stoke on Trent area. 803 children (398 boys and 405 girls) took part in the primary school strand of the UK research. Table 1 shows how many children in each group (control and intervention) completed the questionnaires, and Table 2 breaks these groups down by year group. Seven intervention schools and seven control schools took part. Within the intervention group, 234 girls and 210 boys took part and within the control group, 171 girls and 188 boys took part.

Table 1 shows the breakdown of questionnaires completed. The majority of children completed both pre and post-test questionnaire, providing data that could be used to assess

---

2 Year 3 children are aged 7-8 years old; year 4 children are aged 8-9 years old; year 5 children are aged 9-10 years old; and year 6 children are aged 10-11 years old.
the impact of the intervention. A small number of children only completed one of the questionnaires – either pre-test or post-test, because they were absent on the day that one of the questionnaires was administered. This incomplete data was excluded from the analysis of intervention effectiveness.

Table 1

The number of children who completed the pre-test and post-test questionnaires

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre-test only</th>
<th>Post-test only</th>
<th>Pre-test and post-test</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intervention</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>710</td>
<td>803</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2

The number of children who completed the pre-test and post-test questionnaires

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
<th>Year 6</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intervention</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>441</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>253</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>800*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Three children were in a mixed year group class and did not provide their specific year group

Measures completed

All primary school children completed the Normative Beliefs about Aggression Scale – (NOBAGS). Additionally year 6 children completed the Attitudes towards Domestic Violence Questionnaire (ADV).

A single question was used to assess the likelihood of children seeking help was also included all the primary school questionnaires. The question asked: suppose someone you know was not being very nice to you (it could be an adult or a child), how likely would you be to seek help from the adult? Children had to respond to indicate how likely they would be to seek help where 1 = not at all likely, 2= not likely, 3= somewhat likely and 4 = very likely.

It should be noted that it is preferable to measure concepts with a number of items in order to tap into the different elements of a concept and give a more accurate measure; this is not possible when using a single question (Howitt and Cramer, 2005). However, we used a single item to give the RwF team an approximate assessment of the extent of help seeking in young people, as well as being mindful of the length of the questionnaire. Even so, we
acknowledge that single items are limited in the amount of information they provide and will not give a precise measurement of help seeking behaviours.

The findings from the primary school questionnaire are presented in the following order:

1. Examining year group and gender differences in the intervention group
   a. for retaliation beliefs;
   b. general beliefs;
   c. help seeking.
   d. and attitudes towards domestic violence (year 6 only).

2. Comparisons between the intervention group and the control group
   a. for retaliation beliefs;
   b. general beliefs;
   c. help seeking;
   d. and attitudes towards domestic violence (year 6 only).
Intervention groups – year group and gender differences

Retaliation Beliefs – year group differences

The pre-test and post-test scores for each year group within the intervention condition were compared: firstly, to determine if there was a significant change in the children’s retaliation beliefs from before to after the programme; and secondly to see if there were any differences between year groups and the extent of attitude change that occurs. The scores of year 3 and 4 children were combined because there was a small number of year 3 children (n = 26). Figure 3 indicates that across all year groups, children have become less accepting of retaliation aggression from before to after the programme (their scores have decreased from pre-test to post-test). This pre-test to post-test difference was found to be significantly different across all year groups when statistical analysis was performed. There is also an overall difference in beliefs across the year groups with year 6 children being more accepting of retaliation aggression at pre and post-test, compared to the other year groups. In short, children appeared to become less accepting of retaliation beliefs.

![Figure 3. Retaliation belief scores from before to after the programme, for years 3/4, 5 and 6.](image-url)
Retaliation Beliefs – gender differences

The pre-test and post-test scores from the retaliation beliefs sub-scale for boys and girls (from the intervention condition) were compared. The results showed both boys and girls became less accepting of retaliation from before to after the programme (their scores have decreased) and at both time points girls were less accepting of retaliation compared to boys. The statistical significance of the changes from pre-test to post-test was tested and the analysis showed that there was a significant difference between pre-test and post-test scores for boys and girls.

In summary, both boys and girls acceptance of retaliation beliefs lessened, although boys generally remained more accepting of retaliation than girls.

General Beliefs – year group differences

Children’s pre-test and post-test scores on the General Beliefs sub-scale were compared by year groups. Figure 4 indicates that children’s scores decreased slightly from before to after the programme. However, statistical analysis showed that the difference between pre-test and post-test scores was not statistically significant. Again, there was an overall difference between the year groups with year 6 children being more accepting of aggression than the other year groups. In short, there is no evidence that children in years 3 to 6 changed their general beliefs about aggression.

![Figure 4. General belief scores from before to after the programme, for years 3/4, 5 and 6.](image)
**General Beliefs – gender differences**

Further analysis confirmed that there was no significant change in either the boys’ scores or the girls’ scores, although at both time points boys’ scores were higher than the girls, showing boys were more accepting of aggression in general.

**Help Seeking – year group differences**

Children were asked a single question about help seeking: ‘Suppose someone you know was not being very nice to you (it could be an adult or a child), how likely would you be to seek help from an adult?’ Figure 5 shows children’s help seeking scores by year group. For each year group there is little difference between children’s pre-test and post-test scores. This was confirmed in the statistical analysis where no significant differences in help seeking from before to after the programme were found in any of the year groups. In short there is no evidence that children’s willingness to seek help improved after receiving the programme.

![Figure 5. Help seeking scores from before to after the programme, for years 3/4, 5 and 6.](image)

**Help Seeking – gender differences**

Further analysis to determine if there were gender differences in help seeking showed that the differences between pre-test and post-test scores for both boys and girls were not statistically significant. That is, the programme did not change the likelihood of boys or girls seeking help from an adult.
Attitudes towards Domestic Violence

Figure 6 shows boys’ and girls’ scores on the Attitudes towards Domestic Violence questionnaire (ADV) completed by the year 6 children from the intervention condition. The graph shows that boys and girls became less accepting of domestic violence from before to after the programme (their scores have decreased) and at both time points, girls were less accepting of domestic violence in comparison to boys. The statistical significance of the changes from pre-test to post-test was tested and the analysis showed that there was a significant difference between pre-test and post-test scores for boys and girls.

Figure 6. ADV scores from before to after the programme, by gender
**Intervention groups compared with control groups**

*Retaliation Beliefs*

The pre-test and post-test Retaliation Beliefs scores from the intervention group and the control group were compared. Figure 7 shows that the intervention group’s scores have decreased from before to after the programme (they have become less accepting of retaliation), whereas the control group’s scores have increased. The statistical significance of these pre-test to post-test changes was tested, and a significant interaction between condition and time was found. The analysis showed that there was a significant decrease between the pre-test and post-test scores for the intervention group (they became less accepting of retaliation aggression from before to after the programme). There was also a significant difference in the control group’s scores from pre-test to post, but their scores became significantly more accepting of retaliation aggression. On this basis, it seems probable that the intervention was helping to reduce acceptance of retaliation; acceptance that might otherwise have increased.

![Figure 7. Control group and intervention group pre-test and post-test scores on the Retaliation Beliefs subscale](image)

---

3 Because data was not collected from a year 3 control group, comparisons between the control group and intervention group only include children from years 4, 5 and 6.
**General Beliefs**

Figure 8 shows that on the General Beliefs Subscale, there was a small decrease in scores from pre-test to post-test in the intervention group (showing less acceptance of aggression). In the control group, the scores increased from pre-test to post-test (showing more acceptance of aggression). Statistical analysis was performed on these data and a significant interaction between condition and time was found. The analysis showed that there was a significant change between the pre-test and post-test scores for the control group (they became more accepting of aggression). **There was no significant difference in the intervention group’s scores from before to after the programme.** It is therefore possible that while the intervention did not reduce the general acceptance of aggression, it kept levels of acceptance stable when they might otherwise have increased slightly.

![Figure 8. Control group and intervention group pre-test and post-test scores on the General Beliefs subscale](image-url)


**Help Seeking**

Both the control group children and intervention group children were asked about the likelihood of seeking help from an adult. **Figure 9 shows that the scores obtained from the intervention group were very similar from before to after the programme.** In the control group, children’s help seeking scores were slightly lower at post-test compared to pre-test. Statistical analysis showed that the differences in adult help seeking from pre-test to post-test for both groups were not significantly different. We cannot therefore assume that the intervention fosters help seeking.

*Figure 9. Control group and intervention group pre-test and post-test help seeking scores*
Attitudes towards Domestic Violence

The ADV scores obtained from year 6 children were also compared and are shown in Figure 10. The scores from children in the control group increased from pre-test to post-test indicating more acceptance of domestic violence. The scores from the children in the intervention group decreased, indicating less acceptance of domestic violence from before to after the programme. The statistical significance of these pre-test to post-test changes was tested, and a significant interaction between condition and time was found. The analysis showed that there was a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores for the control group (they became more accepting of domestic violence from pre-test to post-test), whereas the intervention group became less accepting of domestic violence from before to after the programme and this change was also significant. In short, the intervention appeared to reduce children’s acceptance of domestic violence and without it acceptance might have increased.

Figure 10. Control group and intervention group pre-test and post-test ADV scores
Primary School Summary

In summary, *Relationships without Fear* had an impact on the retaliation beliefs of children, with them becoming less accepting of retaliatory aggression during the intervention; this effect holds across the year groups and for boys and girls. Year 6 children receiving *RwF* also became less accepting of domestic violence from before to after the programme. *RwF* had less impact on children’s general beliefs about aggression. It appears to have little impact on attitudes to help seeking behaviour. In general, girls are less accepting of aggression and domestic violence compared to boys. Year 6 children were found to be more accepting of aggression than the younger age-groups; a finding that is consistent with previous research.

When comparing the responses of the intervention group with the control group, there is again some indication that the programme is having an impact on children’s attitudes. For example, children who were *not* receiving the programme became more accepting of retaliation aggression from pre-test to post-test. This contrasts with the children in the intervention group whose attitudes were less accepting of retaliation aggression from before to after the programme. The same pattern was also found with children’s attitudes towards domestic violence. This could reflect some sort of developmental trend.

Overall, the *Relationships without Fear* programme appeared to have an impact on young people’s attitudes towards retaliation aggression and domestic violence, but had less impact on their general attitudes towards aggression and their help seeking behaviours.

Evaluation Questions

The children who received the intervention were also asked to answer some evaluation questions (at the end of their post-test questionnaire) giving them the opportunity to share their opinions about the programme. The majority of children thought that the lessons were ‘very good’ and they enjoyed taking part in the lessons ‘a lot’. The majority of children also thought that the number of lessons they had was ‘just right’.

The children identified a number of favourite activities and these included: the dealing with anger activity, the relationships/feelings cake, creating helpline posters, the gingerbread man activity, the fish activity, the circle of support, the relationship contract, designing and colouring the front cover of their programme folder, the DVD they watched and the work they did on boundaries. Some of these activities were not favoured by all children who identified them as their least preferred activities, in particular the dealing with anger activity, the relationships cake, the fish activity and the work they did on boundaries. Additionally, children also cited writing (about relationships) and the uncomfortable situation role plays. That said, a large proportion of the children responded ‘none’ when asked to name their least preferred activity.

The children were asked to identify what they had learned from the lessons and the following messages emerged: treat others with respect, how to be a good friend and the importance of friendships, characteristics of a good relationship, how to get help, the different types of abuse, understanding acceptable boundaries, and anger management – that is, recognising and dealing with their own anger. This latter point was identified by over half of the children.
Findings Part 2: Secondary School Questionnaires

Summary

The key findings of the secondary school strand of the evaluation are:

- *Relationships without Fear* had an impact on young people’s attitudes towards domestic violence; they became less accepting of DV from before to after the programme.
- The programme improved the attitudes of both girls and boys. Girls were less accepting of domestic violence compared to boys at the outset. The programme tended to reduce boys acceptance of domestic violence to a level similar to that among girls who had not received the programme.
- Students not in receipt of the programme also had an improvement in their attitudes, but it was not as pronounced as it was for the students who did participate in the programme.
- The programme did not have an impact on young people’s help seeking behaviours.
- Students identified that the programme taught them the following: characteristics of a good relationship; the importance of being kind to others; how to get help in domestic violence situations; the prevalence of domestic violence; the different types of abuse; how domestic violence affects men and women; and that the victim is not to blame.
- There was confusion about key messages. Some young people did continue to blame victims for their victimisation, and some young people identified stranger danger as the greater problem.
- Often the full programme was not delivered, leaving some young people feeling they had missed out on crucial elements.
- There is sometimes a conflict between teachers who wish to correct their students’ misperceptions and a programme that seeks to allow young people to share their views under the premise that there is no right answer.

Participants

Between September 2011 and February 2012 the *Relationships without Fear* programme (*RwF*) was delivered to pupils in years 9 and 10 at a number of secondary schools in the Newcastle under Lyme / Stoke on Trent area. 330 pupils (183 boys and 147 girls) took part in the secondary school strand of the UK research from three intervention schools and two control schools. Table 3 shows how many pupils in each condition (control group and intervention group) completed the questionnaires. Within the intervention group, 91 girls and 110 boys took part and within the control group, 56 girls and 73 boys took part.

Table 3 shows the breakdown of questionnaires completed. A proportion (68%) of the pupils completed both pre and post-test questionnaire. This is the data we have used to assess the impact of the intervention. Some pupils, however only completed one of the questionnaires –

---

4 Year 9 pupils are 13-14 years old and year 10 pupils are 14-15 years old.
either pre-test or post-test – while in other instances it was not possible to match pre-test responses with post-test responses with sufficient confidence.

Table 3

The number of pupils who completed the pre-test and post-test questionnaires

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre-test only</th>
<th>Post-test only</th>
<th>Pre-test and post-test</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intervention</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Measures completed

All students completed the Attitudes towards Domestic Violence Questionnaire (ADV). Participants were also asked two questions to determine their help seeking behaviour. The first one (HS1) asked: ‘Suppose a boyfriend / girlfriend ever hit you, how likely would you be to seek help from an adult?’ The second help seeking question (HS2) asked: ‘Suppose you found out that an adult who looks after you was being hit by their partner, how likely would you be to seek help from an adult outside of your friends and family (e.g. a teacher, school nurse, social worker)? Both HS1 and HS2 were scored 1 to 4, where 1 = not at all likely, 2 = not likely, 3 = somewhat likely and 4 = very likely. Thus the higher the score on these questions, the more likely participants were to seek help in each of these situations.

The findings from the secondary school questionnaire are presented in the following order:

1. The percentages of students who thought the situations were ‘OK’ and ‘perfectly OK’

2. Examining gender differences in the intervention group
   a. Attitudes towards domestic violence
   b. Help seeking question 1
   c. Help seeking question 2

3. Comparisons between the intervention group and the control group
   a. Attitudes towards domestic violence
   b. Help seeking question 1
   c. Help seeking question 2
Participants’ opinions about the situations

Aggregating ‘OK’ responses across the different situations at pre-test\(^5\) showed that just over a third of the young people (36.9%) reported that hitting a spouse/partner was ‘perfectly OK’ or ‘sort of OK’ in at least one of the situations. 7.9% of the young people thought that hitting was OK in three or more of the situations. The boys were more likely to say that hitting was “OK” compared to the number of girls, with half of boys saying that at least one of the situations was OK (50.3%) compared to 20.8% of girls who thought at least one of the situations was OK. Table 4 shows that hitting was seen as most acceptable in situations where the spouse/partner was hit first, whereas hitting was seen as least acceptable if the spouse/partner had embarrassed the perpetrator.

\(^5\) This includes the pre-test responses of pupils whose questionnaires could be matched to their post-test questionnaires plus the pre-test responses of pupils whose questionnaires could not be matched with their post-test questionnaires. Pupils from the intervention group and control group are included.
Table 4

% of young people that thought it was ‘OK’ for a man/woman to hit his/her partner for the
different conditions: Pre-Test by Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Overall (%)</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OK for a woman to hit her husband/partner if he hits her</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a man to hit his wife/partner if she hits him</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a woman to hit her husband/partner if he cheats on her with another woman</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a woman to hit her husband/partner if she says she is sorry afterwards</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a man to hit his wife/partner if she cheats on him with another man</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a man to hit his wife/partner if he thinks she deserves it</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a woman to hit her husband/partner if she thinks he deserves it</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a man to hit his wife/partner if he is drunk</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a woman to hit her husband/partner if she is drunk</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a man to hit his wife/partner if he says he is sorry afterwards</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a woman to hit her husband/partner if he really embarrasses her</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a man to hit his wife/partner if she really embarrasses him</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Intervention group – gender differences**

*Attitudes towards Domestic Violence*

The pre-test and post-test scores on the ADV were compared by gender (for the intervention condition only). **Figure 11 shows that boys and girls became less accepting of domestic violence during the intervention** (their scores decreased from pre-test to post-test). Statistical analysis revealed that these changes were significant – that is, there was a difference between the pre-test and post-test scores for boys and girls that was highly unlikely to have been caused by chance.

*Figure 11. ADV scores from before to after the programme, by gender*
Help Seeking

Students’ responses to HS1 and HS2 were analysed separately (for the intervention condition only). Figure 12 shows pupils’ pre-test and post-test scores for HS1 (which asked: suppose a boyfriend / girlfriend ever hit you, how likely would you be to see help from an adult?). The Figure highlights that help seeking in this situation is relatively low (scores for girls are below 2.8 and for boys below 2.4) and that girls are more likely to seek help than boys. The graph also shows that the girls’ and boys’ scores are similar from pre-test to post-test. The statistical significance of these scores were analysed, but no statistical difference between boys’ and girls’ pre-test and post-test scores was found. This means that there is no evidence the intervention improves young people’s willingness to seek help from adults in situations in which they are experiencing violence from a partner.

Figure 12. HS1 scores from before to after the programme, by gender
Figure 13 shows pupils’ pre-test and post-test scores on HS2 (suppose you found out that an adult who looks after you was being hit by their partner, how likely would you be to seek help from an adult outside of your friends and family?). Girls are more likely to seek help in this situation than boys are. The pupils’ pre-test and post-test scores are very similar. Statistical analysis confirmed that there was no significant difference between pupils’ pre-test and post-test scores. This means that there is no evidence the intervention succeeds in improving young people’s willingness to seek help on behalf of adults close to them experiencing domestic violence.

![Figure 13. HS2 scores from before to after the programme, by gender](image)
Findings: Intervention groups compared with control groups

Attitudes towards Domestic Violence

The ADV pre-test and post-test scores for the intervention and control groups are shown in Figure 14. The graph shows that the post-test scores were lower than the pre-test scores for both groups (indicating that the pupils became less accepting of domestic violence from pre-test to post-test). However this change was more pronounced in the intervention group, suggesting that the pupils became less accepting of domestic violence from before to after they received Relationships without Fear. Statistical analysis showed that there was a significant difference from pre-test to post-test for both groups. The intervention may therefore have accentuated positive changes that were impacting on young people aged 13-14 years.

![Figure 14. Control group and intervention group pre-test and post-test scores on the ADV](image)
Help Seeking

The pre-test and post-test scores on HS1 (help seeking if they are hit by a boyfriend / girlfriend) for the control group and intervention group were compared. This was repeated for HS2 (help seeking if their parent / carer is hit by a partner). Figure 15 shows the pre-test and post-test scores for HS1. Within each condition, the pre-test and post-test scores are very similar. These changes were not significant in statistical terms.

Figure 15. Control group and intervention group pre-test and post-test scores on HS1

Figure 16 shows the HS2 pre-test and post-test scores for the control and intervention group. The figure shows that within each condition the pre-test and post-test scores are very similar. There was no statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores for both conditions. In short, there is no evidence the intervention increases help seeking.
Figure 16. Control group and intervention group pre-test and post-test scores on HS2
Secondary School Summary

The pupils in the intervention group became less accepting of domestic violence during the intervention. However, there was also a change in attitudes for those in the control group. This is difficult to explain but it could be due to the children in the control group schools having received some sort of education on DV during that time, or having been exposed to a new media campaign. The changes in help seeking behaviour from before to after the programme were marginal for both conditions. Girls were more likely than boys to seek help, and they were also less accepting of domestic violence in comparison to the boys. Overall, the Relationships without Fear programme appeared to have an impact on young people’s attitudes towards domestic violence, but not their help seeking behaviours. Over the last year, it is possible that Relationships without Fear has accelerated the impact of more diffusely broadcast anti-domestic violence messages on a subsample of the population of young people.

Evaluation Questions

The post-test questionnaire completed by the students receiving the intervention also included some evaluation questions to ask students for their opinions about the programme. The students were asked what they thought about the lessons and the majority said that the lessons were either ‘good’ or ‘very good’. However, a third reported that they enjoyed taking part in the lessons ‘a lot’ with the greater proportion of students (56%) saying they enjoyed taking part in the lessons ‘a bit’ (the remainder of students either didn’t answer this question or reported that they had not enjoyed the lessons). The majority of students thought that the number of lessons they had was just right.

Students were asked to identify what they had learned from the programme, and the following areas were identified: characteristics of a good relationship and the importance of being kind to others, how to get help in domestic violence situations, the prevalence of domestic violence, the different types of abuse and how domestic violence can affect both genders and that the victim is not to blame.
Findings Part 3: Focus groups

Summary

Five focus groups were conducted with children who had received *Relationships without Fear*. The focus groups revealed a number of important issues relating to the content and delivery of *Relationships without Fear*.

- Boys are more likely to become disengaged with *RwF* compared to girls.
- Boys said that at times the programme was boring.
- Some of the boys thought that the programme was 'sexist'.
- ‘Fairness’ in lessons is important to primary school children, this was shown in their complaints about the ‘unfairness’ they sometimes experienced in school. For example, boys thought it was unfair that they missed part of their lunch break to attend the *RwF* lessons, the girls thought it was unfair that when the boys misbehaved in lessons the whole class would be punished, and all of the children thought it was unfair they had to sit boy-girl in their lessons. This should be considered when delivering *RwF* lessons.
- Additionally, young boys familiar with the rhetoric of gender equality and being fair to one another might become confused by the messages of a programme that focuses on males perpetrating violence. This may be especially confusing if the boys have knowledge or experience of females being aggressive, for example aggressive girls in the playground or authoritarian mothers.
- Young people disliked the heavy emphasis on class discussions and reading/listening to case studies.
- Some students said they did not understand the lessons on power and control.
- The baron/baroness activity was praised by students, but it should be noted that this activity appears problematic. This is because the 'lessons learned' from the baron/baroness activity suggest that some students had not grasped the underlying message of the task (that the baroness was experiencing domestic violence because her husband was controlling and threatening her).
- The message that some girls took from the programme is that the behaviour of a partner or boyfriend would suddenly change and become violent, without any warning. Thus they were concerned about their future relationships.
- Another message that students took from the lessons was that strangers posed a particular threat, and that girls should be wary of men they have just met, thus missing the point that domestic violence is perpetrated by a person known to the victim.
- One of the activities aimed at helping children cope with 'uncomfortable situations' actually made them feel more uncomfortable. This activity required children to role play a situation where a boy or girl (aged 11-13 years) is made to feel uncomfortable by an opposite sex-peer. The young people especially disliked this activity.
- Younger adolescents (13-14 year olds) felt that they were too young to be given case studies where domestic violence led to the victim’s death, especially if these case studies were based on true stories.
- Teachers who attempt to actively engage with the lesson being delivered by an Arch worker can create problems. The focus group discussions indicated that if a teacher attempts to challenge a student’s viewpoint, this student is at risk of becoming
disengaged with the lesson. This situation is aggravated if the teacher is disliked and/or chastises the student for having a particular opinion.

Participants

In total, five focus groups were conducted. As Table 5 shows, two focus groups were conducted with year 6 children (aged 10-11 years old) at a primary school in Stoke on Trent. Three focus groups were conducted with year 9 pupils (aged 13-14 years old) at a secondary school in Newcastle under Lyme.

Table 5

*Summary of focus groups*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus group number</th>
<th>School type</th>
<th>Focus group participants</th>
<th>Programme delivered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Focus group 1      | Primary school – year 6 | 7 children  
- 5 girls  
- 2 boys | 5 lessons of RwF delivered (one missed) |
| Focus group 2      | Primary school – year 6 | 6 children  
- 3 girls  
- 3 boys | 5 lessons of RwF delivered (one missed) |
| Focus group 3      | Secondary school – year 9 | 7 pupils  
- 3 girls  
- 4 boys | 5 lessons of RwF delivered (one missed) |
| Focus group 4      | Secondary school – year 9 | 4 pupils  
- 1 girl  
- 3 boys | 4 lessons of RwF delivered (two missed) |
| Focus group 5      | Secondary school – year 9 | 7 pupils  
- All girls | 4 lessons of RwF delivered (two missed) |

**What did the young people like about the programme?**

In general, the young people enjoyed the programme and were positive about the content and the way it was delivered.

We should have had [the programme] from the start of the year until the end of the year, and that would actually be more fun (Focus group 1, girl 3).

[Arch worker] is really nice, and she explained to us nicely and fun-ly (Focus group 1, girl 2).

I did enjoy it, the lessons that we did (Focus group 2, boy 3).

[The lessons] were fun, you could get involved with them (Focus group 3, boy 3).

Overall I think it was quite good (Focus group 5, girl 3).

[RwF] was helpful (Focus group 5, girl 6).
REaDAPT First Evaluation Report

The young people talked about specific activities that they enjoyed, for example, several of the primary school children in focus group 1 liked the DVD that was used to show a family situation where domestic violence had occurred. They had remembered a lot of details from the DVD and thought that it was very informative.

I like it because they were showing what families, what happened, and they were showing good advice about what you have to do if you’re in a bad situation (Focus group 1, girl 2).

I like it because it was showing you how it could start and what you would do and talking to people like Teenage Health (Focus group 1, girl 1).

The poster activity where children had to make a helpline poster was identified by one girl in focus group 1 as an example of a good activity in the programme. She thought that it was a useful way to learn the helpline telephone numbers:

I like it when we were writing the numbers down around the sheet because … it helped me remember some of them (Focus group 1, girl 1).

The secondary school pupils thought the statistics that Arch presented to them in the first lesson (e.g. how many women are victims of domestic violence) were interesting, and in some cases surprising.

It was interesting…because if we thought something was like true, then we would be surprised if it was false (Focus group 4, girl 1).

Girl 3: I think it’s good that like they said how many people died each year
Girl 4: it makes you more aware
Girl 5: it like sticks in your head
Girl 3: exactly, it does stick in your head though, doesn’t it?
(Focus group 5).

The secondary school pupils also enjoyed an activity where they were presented with a fairy tale which outlined a baroness whose husband forbid her to leave the castle, threatening her death if she did leave. In the story the baroness does decide to leave the castle, but when her husband finds out he orders the gate keeper to kill her. The story also explained that the baroness had sought help from friends and family, but they were either unable to help or refused to. The story was used to depict a domestic violence situation, using a fairy tale format to aid student understanding and interest. Students had to debate the role that each character had in this scenario, and ultimately decide who was responsible for the baroness’ death.

Students enjoyed this activity because they liked having the opportunity to discuss their ideas. Additionally, for one group of girls (focus group 5) using fictional settings and characters, was preferable to using real-life examples. They felt the use of real-life stories was upsetting and not appropriate for young people of their age (13-14 years old). These points will be discussed later, but it should also be noted that whilst this activity received praise from students, some of the ‘lessons learned’ from this activity suggest that some students had not grasped the underlying message of the task (that the baroness was experiencing domestic violence because her husband was controlling and threatening her).
This may be due, in part, to the unrealistic nature of the story/activity – again, this point will be picked up on in the next section.

[The baroness activity] was quite interesting because we all had different views on it (Focus group 4, Boy 1).

Because it is used as a fairy tale, it’s not based on a true story even if it is, it just makes it less harsh…even if the baroness did die, because it’s like a baroness, and if it’s a fairy tale it doesn’t make it as bad (Focus Group 5, Girl 2).

The young people enjoyed the interactive nature of some of the lessons, although as the next section highlights, students thought that the programme could be improved with a greater emphasis on interactive and kinaesthetic activities.

[True/false card sorting activities] were quite good because you got involved in them (Focus group 5, girl 3)

Pupils liked activities that made them think and raised their awareness of situations that they had not considered or fully understood previously. This particularly applied to an activity where pupils had to identify reasons why someone might stay in an abusive relationship. One of the reasons presented to students, was that a person may stay in a violent relationship because their partner had threatened to hurt the pets if they left, and the person remained in the relationship to protect the animals from harm.

Then she’d tell you the truth at the end, and like everyone was really shocked – that woman had stayed because of the pets, in an abusive relationship (Focus group 5, girl 5).

It’s like some of [the reasons to stay] that you think, that we thought, like the one with the pets, like you wouldn’t think that someone would stay because of their pets, but they actually do, because imagine how that animal feels (Focus Group 5, Girl 2).

The pet one, that was true, and I thought that it would be false (Focus group 4, girl 1).

**Issues and Concerns, Likes and Dislikes**

Some students identified specific activities and/or teaching methods that they disliked, as well as making some suggestions about aspects of the programme that they thought could be improved. Additionally during the focus group discussions, some issues regarding the pupils’ interpretation of activities and the messages they got from these activities did emerge. These discussions provide insight into some of the students’ misconceptions about domestic violence and also the unanticipated messages that students can take away from the lessons, which may not always be what the facilitators intended. These misconceptions and messages provide a useful means of identifying aspects of the programme that pupils didn’t enjoy and/or did not understand, and subsequently highlight areas for improvement. This section will present aspects of the programme that pupils said they disliked, as well as discussing pupils’ interpretations of the programme’s content.
Teaching methods

The students did acknowledge that the programme included some activities where they were able to get involved and share their opinions. However, many felt that this needed to be done to a greater extent. They expressed dislike for the heavy emphasis on class discussions and reading/listening to case studies. They felt this teaching method was over-used and this led to some thinking the programme was repetitive and also ‘boring’.

I felt like we were going over the same stuff, there were too many lessons for the things, there wasn’t enough to put in the lessons, we were recapping things that we sort of already knew, just different scenarios but the same (Focus group 3, girl 2).

She told us too many stories (Focus group 3, boy 1).

Some [boys] said it was interesting at times but sometimes it was boring (Focus group 4, boy 1).

Girl 2: some of [the lessons] were quite, like they dragged on
Girl 4: like they wasn’t to do with us, we were just listening (Focus group 5)

The programme is ‘sexist’

Some of the boys thought that the programme was ‘sexist’, and were unhappy with the programme’s greater emphasis on male perpetrators compared to female perpetrators. Likewise, one girl suggested that girls might not like how females are presented as victims.

That’s not fair when it’s always men beating women - it’s sexist against men (Focus group 2, Boy 1).

Boy 2: I don’t think the lads liked the lessons
Girl 1: I don’t think the lads liked the lessons that much because most of the time it seemed like the male gender was getting the blame for abuse, and I don’t think the lads felt that happy with that
Boy 3: it was sexist
Girl 3: so it seemed a bit like sexist. But the women, but like the girls as well, I think some of them got offended when they turned round and said that we weren’t as strong as men in domestically abusive situations (Focus group 3)

Whilst women are more likely to be victims of domestic violence incidents compared to men, for the primary school children in particular, the greater emphasis on female victims came across as being unfair. This notion of ‘unfairness’ emerged a number of times (in relation to several issues) during the primary school focus groups. For example, boys thought it was unfair that they missed part of their lunch break because of the RwF lessons, the girls thought it was unfair that the boys misbehaved in lessons (in general) and that the whole class would then be punished, all of the children thought it was unfair they had to sit boy-girl in their lessons, and one of the classes receiving RwF thought it was unfair that they didn’t seem to be doing the same ‘fun’ activities as the other class receiving the programme.
This suggests that whilst it is important to raise children’s awareness of male perpetrators, it is also necessary for facilitators to recognise how this message might be interpreted by young people and younger children in particular. Young boys familiar with the rhetoric of gender equality and being fair to one another might become confused by the messages of a programme that focuses on males perpetrating violence. This may be especially confusing if the boys have knowledge or experience of females being aggressive, for example aggressive girls in the playground or authoritarian mothers.

*Activities that are upsetting and/or made pupils uncomfortable*

The children in focus group 1 disliked the ‘uncomfortable situations’ role play. In this activity, children were put into small, mixed-sex groups and were given an uncomfortable situation which they had to perform to their classmates, and then act out what they would do in this situation. The children disliked this activity because of the content of the role plays, as the discussion below demonstrates:

Interviewer: OK, what didn’t you like about the lessons then? Or what activities did you like the least?
Boy 1: some of the acting
Interviewer: Some of the acting?
Girl 3: some was horrible
Boy 1: yeah cause erm you have to squeeze their bum, and give them a kiss
(Focus group 1)

The children went on to explain that they were presented with a scenario to act out where a boy or girl (aged 11-13 years) is made to feel uncomfortable by an opposite sex-peer. The scenarios include things like a girl who keeps trying to kiss her boyfriend when he does not want her to, and a boy who tries to get a girl to skip lessons with him so that they can be alone together. When the children saw these scenarios they said they immediately felt anxious about them and asked the Arch worker if they could role play something else. They were allowed to do this, so for example, Boy 1 who said he had to ‘squeeze a girl’s bum’ linked arms with her instead in the role play, to demonstrate unwanted physical contact but without the embarrassment or inappropriateness of what the scenario had initially required him to act out.

For some of the girls in the focus groups this activity actually tapped into incidences of harassment that the girls were already starting to experience from boys in their classroom raising questions about the potential risks of re-enactment.

The secondary school pupils in focus group 3 said that they were told to tell the Arch worker if they became uncomfortable during any of the lessons by raising their hand. However, as they pointed out, it would be embarrassing to do this, and in fact telling the Arch worker (in front of their peers) that they felt uncomfortable would actually make them feel even more uncomfortable.

Interviewer: how would you have felt about putting your hand up if you felt uncomfortable about something?
Girl 2: kind of scared, otherwise I’m going to look a right chicken
Boy 2: awkward, I wouldn’t have liked everyone to know
(Focus group 3)
The girls in focus group 5 also said that they felt awkward when looking at real-life case studies, especially when they had to imagine that it was one of their friends who was the victim.

Girl 4: I found that [activity] a bit awkward, yeah
Girl 5: because you wouldn’t want your friend to die, would you?
Girl 2: no exactly
Girl 6: you wouldn’t want your friend to get into that anyway
Girl 4: no because like, like because you hear about it in stories and like it is based on like a true story, but like it just felt awkward to be like talking about it as if it was your friend
(Focus group 5)

They felt that they were too young to be given case studies where domestic violence led to the victim’s death, especially if these case studies were based on true stories. Interestingly, in contrast to other pupils who thought that RwF was good for preparing young people for future relationships, these girls thought the programme was more suitable for older adolescents who would be more likely to have had a relationship.

Girl 3: I would just make [lessons] more for the age group
Girl 4: yeah not like tell them things like about people
Several: dying
Girl 4: because we’re only like 13
Girl 5: I’m 14
Girl 4: OK
Girl 3: it’s like, it’s like stuff that year 11s do
Girl 4: yeah
Girl 3: like even in like
Girl 4: school
Girl 3: yeah
Girl 4: because they like have had boyfriends and stuff
(Focus group 5)

Role of the school teacher

The presence of the students’ usual teacher in the RwF lessons can have an impact on the pupils’ behaviour and contributions in the RwF lessons. This can inadvertently influence what the pupils get out of the sessions, as shown in focus group 3.

Our form tutor though, he was like every time you said something he’d put the point against it even though it was your opinion, he’d put a point against it, and it’d just do my head in. (Focus group 3, girl 2).

Yeah he was like stirring it a bit, even though it was our opinion, he like, he had to be right (Focus group 3, girl 1).

He’s boss, he’s our form teacher (Focus group 3, boy 1).
The pupils felt like they weren’t being given a voice, and they perceived their teacher’s challenges to their opinions as “stirring”. They did not appear to think his views were constructive or informed, but instead thought he expressed his views in order to annoy the pupils. However, it does appear that the teacher was attempting to show students why a victim of domestic violence does not deserve this treatment, as the excerpt below shows:

Girl 2: there was one story about how [female victim] had been rude and stuff, erm, and if we said it was her own fault for like saying that she’d gone out with this older lad who was different to her
Girl 1: it got flipped back to me and we just argued about it
Girl 2: and then [the teacher] would say like erm, just something opposite of why she didn’t deserve it and stuff
(Focus group 3)

While the teacher was attempting to challenge the students’ view that the violence was the victim’s fault, the students did not seem to like their teacher, and because they felt like they could not share their opinions without being chastised, they became disengaged with the activity. Whilst some of their comments may have been attempts to engage their teacher in an argument, it is likely that some students in the class genuinely believed that in some circumstances/situations the victim is the one at fault and not the perpetrator. One of the aims of the RwF programme is to explore students’ attitudes in a safe and non-judgemental manner, and although some of their attitudes will be challenged by the Arch worker, it is important that students feel able to express their opinions without being reprimanded. If students do not feel comfortable to share their views, the Arch worker may not become aware of them, and the opportunity to constructively explore and challenge these attitudes is missed.

This issue highlights the role of the school teacher in these types of lessons. In the lesson outlined above, the Arch worker was present, but deferred to the teacher and allowed him to lead this discussion. In this particular class, the teacher was a hindrance to pupils’ participation in the lesson rather than enhancing it.

Anxiety about future relationships

For some of the secondary school pupils, learning about domestic violence made them anxious about future relationships. In particular the message obtained by some of the girls was that a partner’s or boyfriend’s behaviour would suddenly change, without warning, from being non-abusive to being abusive.

Cause it was just like, cause like, she kind of give the impression that you know, that you can be in a happy relationship and then one morning the boyfriend and the girlfriend they will like wake up and just snap, and then it’ll all turn nasty, and that’s the impression that I got. (Focus group 3, girl 2).

Yeah but that’s what made me think like, she was saying like [the husband] don’t show their true feelings until after they were married so you wouldn’t know would you? (Focus group 5, girl 4).
Hearing about other people's situations, it's like, worrying like to get into a relationship if you think that something is going to happen. (Focus group 5, girl 2).

These comments indicate that more time needs to be spent discussing the ‘warning’ signs of a domestically abusive situation, and in particular highlighting issues of power and control. The RwF programme does include activities where students learn about acceptable and unacceptable behaviours, the different types of abuse, as well discussing power/control within relationships. However it is not clear that students have linked these concepts together to understand how abusive relationships can start with emotional/psychological abuse and controlling behaviours, and that these behaviours can develop over time and/or evolve into others forms of abuse instead of being the sudden, unforeseen “snap”. Indeed some students themselves identified that they either didn’t understand the lessons on power and control, or that some types of abuse (like emotional abuse) were not always covered.

Girl 1: the power and control thing
Boy 1: I didn’t understand that
(Focus group 3)

Interviewer: what about emotional / psychological abuse?
Boy 2: no we didn’t do that
Boy 1: we didn’t do that
(Focus group 4)

‘Stranger danger’

Related to students’ anxiety about future relationships, was the concern of some students about the risk posed by strangers.

Boy 1: we talked about this 14 year old girl who left her parents and everything to go and live with this
Boy 2: stranger
Boy 1: this man
Boy 2: and he said he was in trouble and he used her for prostitution
(Focus group 4)

Girl 3: make sure you know the person well
Girl 5: made you aware to contact people
Girl 2: don’t have a one night stand sort of thing
Girl 5: and don’t block out your friends
Girl 2: it’s true
Girl 3: make sure you know like the person because like
Girl 4: yeah
Girl 5: don’t get with a stranger
(Focus group 5)

Boy 3: [girls] don’t go with a stranger that you hardly know
Girl 1: yeah a man who thinks, who just takes advantage of you (Focus group 4)
The message that these students took from the lessons was that strangers posed a particular threat, and that girls should be wary of men they have just met. However, the aim of the programme is to address violence within relationships, and that domestic violence occurs at the hands of someone well known to the victim, often someone they have known for a long time, and may well be married to and/or have children with.

**Misconceptions about ‘blame’**

As outlined earlier, the pupils were given a fairy tale about a baroness who was trapped by her husband in a castle. If she left the castle, her husband had ordered the gate keeper to kill her. Despite her husband’s warnings, the baroness did leave the castle, and she was killed by the gate keeper on the orders of her husband. The students had to identify that the baroness was not to ‘blame’ for her death, and that it was her husband who was wrong for using control and threats to keep her trapped in the castle. This scenario was intended to depict a situation of domestic violence. However, due to some students not understanding the concepts of power and control within a relationship and/or not covering psychological/emotional abuse in their lessons, they argued that the baroness was responsible for her own death:

Boy 2: we had to choose the person who was to blame  
Boy 1: who was responsible for the actions  
Girl 1: because the husband said the wife couldn’t get out and leave the castle, and she did  
Boy 1: he said, you’re not allowed to leave or you die. But I thought it was the baroness’ fault because he did warn, I know like/  
Boy 2: he did warn her, she still went down  
Boy 1: he did order for her death if she leaves  
Girl 1: it wasn’t [her fault] because she should go out  
Boy 1: but it’s kind of her fault because if she left, you know, she’s kind of like thingy … because she knows, like she was told like if she left, she’d get killed, and she left. (Focus group 4)

**Suggested Improvements**

Pupils’ main criticisms about the teaching methods used were that they were too teacher-led, with too much emphasis on class discussions and going through case studies. The teaching methods used could include a few different activities within one lesson to prevent boredom, as well as tasks with a kinaesthetic element. The students identified that they enjoyed activities that were student-led and interactive, and suggested role plays, doing their own research, making posters and presentations to present to the class, and games.

Do half time writing or something and half time play a game or something that involves relationships (Focus group 1, girl 2).

They could put some more games in like, like better ones instead of saying read that (Focus group 2, girl 1).
Vary [lessons], like sometimes you do role plays, sometimes you do story-telling, sometimes you’re on netbooks (Focus group 3, boy 2).

Like go online, the netbooks or something so it’s more interesting (Focus group 3, boy 3).

We could have like made an A4 PowerPoint presentation (Focus group 3, boy 1).

We could watch videos like showing the effects of it (Focus group 3, girl 1).

You have to find the information, not like people telling you (Focus group 4, girl 1).

Make a poster on the computer (Focus group 4, boy 2).

Girl 4: I’d really like to do more activities
Girl 3: it would be good if we could like, in groups like a role play (Focus group 5)

Girl 2: I think it’s just like getting people more involved in the situations
Girl 1: yeah
Interviewer: what do you mean?
Girl 2: like in the situations of what we’re doing sort of thing
Girl 3: like getting involved in the activities and everything (Focus group 5)

Although the groups did suggest they would like to do role plays, the children in focus group 1 did participate in a role play activity, but did not enjoy this activity due to experiencing discomfort because of the scenario content. However, despite the children’s discomfort with the activity, they still thought that it was an important part of the programme, but that the stories should be changed before they are given to the children (rather than the children having to amend them).

Interviewer: so what do we think to that activity, yes it should carry on being in the lessons or no you’d rather get rid of it?
Girl 2: it should and it shouldn’t
Boy 1: it should and not
Girl 1: it should
Boy 1: not like the kissing parts
Interviewer: you think the stories should be changed?
Girl 2: yeah the stories should be changed, like don’t have that kissing (Focus group 1)

Another way to improve the programme is to make it more interesting for boys. The focus groups indicated that boys were more likely to become disengaged with RwF compared to girls because they thought it was ‘sexist’ and/or because they thought it was boring.

In terms of addressing their boredom, more interactive lessons, especially those with a kinaesthetic element are likely to appeal to boys. This point was mentioned by some girls in focus group 1:
Interviewer: You’ve mentioned boys in particular, is there anything that you think the boys would like about the lessons on relationships?

Girl 2: have erm like videos, or more fun activities like/  
Girl 4: board games  
Girl 2: instead of like erm writing or something  

(Focus group 1)

Girl 1 also suggests that the programme should be linked to boys’ interests:

They won’t take it seriously unless they’ve got something that they like in it like cars or more games or Lego (Focus group 1, girl 1).

The Arch workers usually alerted students to male victims during the starter activity of the first lesson where they presented students with statistics of the prevalence of domestic violence. Thus students had some awareness of male victims, for example:

She said the rate in men’s deaths were going up (Focus group 4, boy 2).

Never thought you’d hear that men get abused (Focus group 5, girl 5).

However, the amount of information and understanding that can be gained from these statistics is limited. For example, the statistics used do not highlight the fact that men are more likely to be assaulted and/or killed by another man than a female partner. Additionally there is no opportunity to explore with students how male victims cope with domestic violence, and the complexity of making sense of ‘retaliatory’ violence in such scenarios. The students’ comments also highlight the importance of moving away from dichotomised depictions of men as either “victims” or “perpetrators”. Instead, the facilitators should discuss the numerous roles played by men including those who are not involved (as a victim or perpetrator) but perhaps are supportive friends to victims. The many different ways in which some men seek to challenge other men’s violence perhaps needs greater attention.

In addition to the improvements identified by pupils, the programme could be improved by ensuring that students have an accurate understanding of power and control within relationships and how this contributes to the maintenance of an abusive relationship. They need to have a holistic understanding of power and control, unacceptable and acceptable behaviours, the different types of abuse (including emotional/psychological) and how all these aspects are related – rather than view them as detached issues. This would help to alleviate concerns about future relationships, and allow pupils to identify how domestic abuse situations start and evolve. It would also address boys’ misconceptions regarding women in the position of the baroness (i.e. being controlled and threatened by her husband) and help them understand that this is an example of domestic violence.
Summary

The young people in the focus groups spoke positively about the programme and were able to identify activities they had enjoyed and topics they had learned. They were also able to highlight areas that could be improved. In particular, that time spent examining and discussing case studies should be reduced, and more student-led activities should be introduced into the programme, ideally with a kinaesthetic element where appropriate. Primary school and secondary school students also identified that boys were less engaged with the programme compared to girls, and that one reason for this is the portrayal of men as perpetrators. While acknowledging that men are more likely to be perpetrators, the programme could include a more informed consideration of the role males in domestic violence situations rather than the dichotomised ‘victim’ and ‘perpetrator’ roles. Boys’ complaints that the programme is sexist could be addressed through greater attention to the resilience of some men and boys, along with their capacity to challenge perpetrators or support victims, using examples where male friends, teachers or parents have provided this support.

The facilitators of the programme should also ensure that young people learn about all types of abuse including emotional/psychological abuse and that they understand what is meant by power and control within relationships. It is important that pupils are able to make links between different topics covered in the RwF programme (the types of abuse, unacceptable behaviour, power and control etc) and that they can explain how these issues are related to each other. The focus group discussions indicated that there is a risk that students view these topics as detached issues because they are covered in different lessons, and facilitators may need to be very clear about how material covered in lesson(s) in the previous week(s) are pertinent to material being covered in the present and future lessons. These points will need to be reiterated to students and it is recommended that facilitators set tasks to assess students’ holistic understanding of the lessons, and in doing so identify areas of confusion, like for example, the boys’ misunderstanding about who was ‘responsible’ in the baroness activity.

Conclusion

- *RwF* has a positive impact on the attitudes of the boys and girls across year groups 3, 4, 5, 6, 9 and 10. Primary school boys and girls become less accepting of retaliation aggression from before to after the programme. There is also a statistically significant difference between the control group and intervention group. That is, in comparison to children in the control group, children who have received the programme become less accepting of retaliation from pre-test to post-test. Similar findings are found for attitudes towards domestic violence. Year 6 boys and girls, as well as secondary boys and girls become less accepting of domestic violence from before to after the programme.

- In secondary school pupils, there was a significant difference between pre-test and post-test scores for the intervention group (they became less accepting of domestic violence from before to after the programme); however this trend was also found in the control group where a statistically significant difference was also found between the pre-test and post-test scores. The change was more pronounced in the intervention group, so it could
be that *RwF* accentuated positive changes that were impacting on young people in general.

- Taken together these findings highlight the importance of *RwF* for improving the attitudes of young people.

- However, the findings also indicate there are changes that could be made to *RwF* to ensure even greater impact on the attitudes of young people. The findings also indicate that some students are not engaging with the programme, and this could contribute to the programme having less impact on their attitudes.

- Firstly, there were no significant differences in help seeking behaviour from before to after the programme. This could be because not all groups received the full six session programme due to unforeseen factors like *RwF* staff absence. This situation is highlighted in Table 5 where either four or five sessions had been delivered to the pupils. As a consequence of this, some of the programme objectives may not have been fully addressed and the messages like the importance of seeking help from adults may have been diluted. That said, it should also be noted that single items were used to measure help seeking which may not fully represent children’s help seeking behaviour. Therefore, the *RwF* team are recommended to further investigate children’s help seeking before and after the programme. If findings from the REaDAPt evaluation are replicated, then the *RwF* team should consider addressing the issue of help seeking to a greater extent and how they can increase the likelihood that children will seek help. This could include implementing procedures to help ensure the full six sessions are delivered where possible.

- Secondly, boys are not engaged with the programme as much as girls. The questionnaire data showed that at pre-test and post-test, boys were more accepting of aggression and domestic violence in comparison to girls. In the focus groups, the students suggested that *RwF* can sometimes seem ‘sexist’ because the focus is on female victims. In addition to this, some of the students thought the lessons could be kinaesthetic – which was often the preferred teaching methods of boys. Addressing these points could help to prevent boys from becoming disengaged in the programme.

- Thirdly, we recommend that teaching methods are modified so that there is less emphasis on case studies and discussions. Whilst this is an important teaching method to maintain in the programme (indeed the young people said they enjoyed this) activities need to be more student-led, and where appropriate, more kinaesthetic.

- Finally, we recommend that *RwF* facilitators are alerted to some misconceptions that young people are at risk of developing. In the focus groups, the main misconceptions that emerged were the risk posed by strangers (rather than someone known to a victim) and students not being able to understand how power and control within relationships (including the use of emotional/psychological abuse) are important in the instigation and maintenance of domestic violence situations.
Chapter 3: Findings from the Evaluation of La Máscara del Amor

Key Findings

- Participation in La Máscara del Amor appears to reduce both boys’ and girls’ acceptance of domestic violence.
- Exposure to the programme tends to reduce boys acceptance of domestic violence to a level similar to that at which girls commence the programme.
- Levels of acceptance of domestic violence in the schools where the programme is currently being delivered appear to be comparatively low.
- Those who have undertaken the programme feel that it needs to become participative in its delivery, but also more factually informative in terms of the information provided about which support services young people should contact and within which circumstances.
- Participants in the programme were critical of teachers who lacked confidence in their understanding of the issues of domestic violence and who were unable to answer key questions about it.

La Máscara del Amor

La Máscara del Amor (The Masks of Love) is delivered in Murcia by Dirección General de Prevención de la Violencia de Género y Reforma Juvenil. In contrast to the other programmes being evaluated for the REaDAPt project, La Máscara del Amor is delivered by teachers who take part in a two day training session prior to developing and delivering their own sessions. The sessions last for two hours and there are six sessions in total.

Students who received La Máscara del Amor in 2011, also participated in the evaluation of the programme by completing the Attitudes towards Domestic Violence questionnaire before the programme (the pre-test) and after the programme (the post-test). Their scores at the time points were compared to determine the extent of attitude change (i.e. the statistical significance of attitude change) from before to after the programme. The findings from this analysis are presented in this report. Two focus groups were also conducted with students to explore their opinions about the programme and how it could be improved. The findings from these focus groups are presented in the last section of this report.
Findings Part 1: Questionnaires

Summary

The Key findings were:

- Overall La Máscara del Amor had an impact on students’ attitudes – both boys and girls became less accepting of domestic violence from before to after the programme.
- At pre-test and post-test girls were less accepting of domestic violence in comparison to the boys.

Participants

Between May-June 2011 La Máscara del Amor was delivered to 20 schools in Murcia, Spain and pupils completed the ADV questionnaire before and after the programme. The young people that took part were aged 13-21 years old, with the majority aged 15-17 years. A large number of pupils did not complete the front page of their questionnaire correctly which created difficulties with matching up questionnaires. Subsequently, 138 pre-test and 108 post-test questionnaires were not matched and had to be excluded from analysis. 452 pupils completed both pre-test and post-test questionnaires, 212 were male and 234 were female (6 did not provide this information), with the majority aged 15 – 17 years old (n = 405).

Findings

Students’ opinions about the situations

Aggregating ‘OK’ responses across the different situations at pre-test\(^6\) showed that less than a third of the young people (32.9%) reported that hitting a husband/wife was ‘perfectly OK’ or ‘sort of OK’ in at least one of the items. Indeed only 56 young people thought three or more of the situations were ‘OK’ or ‘perfectly OK’ with the remainder of the pupils reporting that none of the situations (or just one or two of the situations) were acceptable. The views of males and females were similar, although boys tended to be more likely to say that hitting was “OK” in most of the situations.

Hitting was seen as more acceptable in situations where the spouse/partner was hit first or the spouse/partner had cheated on the person. Whereas hitting was seen as less acceptable if the perpetrator apologised afterwards or was drunk.

---

\(^6\) This includes the pre-test responses of pupils whose questionnaires could be matched to their post-test questionnaires (n = 452), plus the pre-test responses of pupils whose questionnaires could not be matched with their post-test questionnaires (n = 138).
Table 1

% of young people that thought it was ‘OK’ for a man/woman to hit his/her partner for the different conditions: Pre-Test by Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Overall (%)</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OK for a woman to hit her husband/partner if he hits her</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>17.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a man to hit his wife/partner if she hits him</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a woman to hit her husband/partner if he cheats on her with another woman</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a man to hit his wife/partner if she cheats on him with another man</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a man to hit his wife/partner if he thinks she deserves it</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a woman to hit her husband/partner if she thinks he deserves it</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a man to hit his wife/partner if she really embarrasses him</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a woman to hit her husband/partner if he really embarrasses her</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a man to hit his wife/partner if he is drunk</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a woman to hit her husband/partner if she is drunk</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a man to hit his wife/partner if he says he is sorry afterwards</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a woman to hit her husband/partner if she says she is sorry afterwards</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data were examined to determine if there were statistically significant differences between the pre-test and post-test scores for boys and girls. Figure 1 shows that at both time points boys are more accepting of domestic violence than girls. The graph also indicates that both boys and girls become less accepting of domestic violence from before to after the programme (their scores have decreased from pre-test to post-test). Statistical analysis showed that these differences were statistically significant for boys and girls.
Summary: Questionnaire Findings

Overall the La Máscara del Amor is having an impact on students' attitudes. Both boys and girls became less accepting of domestic violence during the programme. Girls were less accepting of violence compared to boys before the intervention, and remained so afterwards.
Findings Part 2: Focus Groups

Summary

- The focus groups revealed that students wanted the programme to include more opportunities for student participation, for example class discussions.
- The majority of students who receive *La Máscara del Amor* are older adolescents (aged 15-17 years) and may be less likely to seek help from adults and more likely to seek support from their peers. A crucial point from the focus groups is that the programme needs to include material about support services that the young people can access to help their friends, as well as providing guidance on what a young person can do if their friend is a victim of domestic violence.
- Students had a lack of confidence in their teachers’ ability to deliver the programme effectively. They observed that their teachers lacked understanding of domestic violence issues and subsequently were unable to adequately address students’ questions.

Participants

Two focus groups were conducted at a secondary school in Murcia with students who had received *La Máscara del Amor* programme earlier in the year. Three boys and four girls aged 15-17 years participated in one focus group and two boys and five girls (also aged 15-17 years) took part in a second focus group.

Programme Content

The students who participated in the focus groups liked *La Máscara del Amor*. In general, they were happy with the way the content was structured.

> I like (*La Máscara del Amor*) because it starts from basic concepts towards more developed ideas (Focus group 1, girl 2).

But some students thought that violence or abuse in relationships does not take place very often:

> Violence is not very common. It only takes place in extreme situations (Focus group 1, girl 1).

Students thought that learning about different types of abuse and identifying triggers that can lead to a violent relationship were the most interesting topics. Regarding the different types of abuse, the students realised the importance of psychological abuse.

> Through the programme I knew that, apart from the physical abuse, there are many other ways the perpetrator can abuse his partner (Focus group 2, boy 2).

> The psychological abuse can be the worst one and I did not pay attention to it before (Focus group 2, girl 7).

Warning signs and triggers that can lead to a violent or an unhealthy relationship were identified as key issues.
Being able to identify triggers and to understand intuitive feelings is difficult but useful to know what is happening in a relationship (Focus group 1, boy 2).

We learnt about how warning signs work, especially when there is a jealous partner (Focus group 1, girl 4).

Most of the students agreed on dealing with intimate partner issues, although some of them did not feel comfortable when, somehow, a classmate justified violent or unhealthy behaviours, especially towards girls and women.

When speaking about certain topics some classmates made sexist comments that made me feel uncomfortable (Focus group 1, boy 3).

I agree with [focus group 1, boy 3] but we have to tackle all of those issues (Focus group 1, boy 4).

Programme Facilitator and Teaching Methods

Overall students thought the training provided to facilitators was not enough. The students were not confident in their teachers' knowledge and understanding of the material they were delivering.

[The teacher/facilitator] has a lack of knowledge on these topics; she was only interested in completing all the sessions (Focus group 1, girl 3).

The facilitator should inspire us with more confidence (Focus group 1, girl 2).

If you had any doubts [the teacher] didn’t answer properly. She doesn’t know what to do if a case arises in the classroom (Focus group 2, boy 2).

With regard to teaching methods, participants thought that La Máscara del Amor has too much theoretical content and this discouraged participation.

I would have set more time for debates instead of theoretical content (Focus group 1, girl 1).

Neither the facilitator nor some activities encouraged students to participate (Focus group 1, boy 2).

The students most preferred activity was watching the short films, but they thought more time needed to be allocated to discussing the content of the films.

Short films are the best activities because they identify real situations (Focus group 2, boy 2).

The most interesting activities are those that include a short film, but we do not have enough time to debate (Focus group 1, girl 1).
Areas for Improvement

After attending *La Máscara del Amor* lessons students were able to identify how a perpetrator behaves and what a violent relationship is. Despite that, they wanted to know more about support services and resources and what they could access to help their friends. This is a crucial point given that these are comments from older adolescents, who are more likely to seek help from their peers rather than adults.

I know that I have to report serious cases to police, but I have no information on where I can ask for help if me or a friend of mine are involved and the violence is not very severe (Focus group 2, girl 2).

I would like to know more on how to help a friend who is suffering violence and how to reject a friend who is a perpetrator (Focus group 1, girl 1).

Students asked for real experiences from practitioners and even from survivors, so that they could find out about how the intervention process is structured.

It would be good to hear more directly from victims or survivors. It would make the programme more realistic (Focus group 2, girl 2).

I would like to know more about resources and practitioners that work together with the victim (Focus group 1, boy 1).

Students said that some classmates, especially boys, did not pay much attention to the lessons and said that it was not useful for them. Meanwhile some girls felt embarrassed when speaking about topics that touched on issues that were pertinent for them or their peers.

Some classmates felt bored. Some others did not feel free to comment, whilst others did not take it seriously, saying things like ‘it will never happen to me’ (Focus group 1, boy 2).

Sometimes it was uncomfortable when you know somebody was involved in a similar situation (Focus group 2, girl 2).

When they were asked whether or not they would recommend the implementation of *The La Máscara del Amor* in other schools, all focus group participants agreed that it should be implemented, but they insisted on introducing the suggested changes.

Summary

To summarise, participants in the focus groups conducted in Murcia liked *La Máscara del Amor*. Indeed, they thought it was necessary to disseminate the programme to other secondary schools. The students recognised that they had increased their knowledge and understanding of domestic violence issues and how to identify and prevent unhealthy and violent relationships. They enjoyed the programme as a whole, although they strongly recommended that some activities were made more participatory, through the inclusion of debates and discussion, especially in relation to the short films. Their comments highlight that more training for teachers and facilitators is required and specific content on support services must be considered.
Conclusions

- *La Máscara del Amor* has a positive impact on the attitudes of young people. Boys and girls became less accepting of domestic violence from before to after the six session programme.

- Girls typically start and end the programme with lower levels of acceptance of violence than boys. The focus groups revealed that some boys felt uncomfortable, but unable to challenge other boys’ sexism in the sessions. They also reveal that some girls, by contrast, may need a space of their own to discuss issues relating to violence that is already affecting them and their peers.

- Three key recommendations to improve the programme were made by the young people who participated in the focus groups. These improvements might enhance the effectiveness of *La Máscara del Amor*.

  1) The focus group discussions highlighted that some students lacked confidence in their teachers’ understanding of the topic and ability to deliver the programme effectively. If this is so, then teachers need further support in delivering this programme so that they are better equipped to answer students’ questions.

  2) Although positive about the programme, some focus group participants suggested that the activities should be less theoretical and more participatory for students. Additionally they would like class discussions and access to resources which present real-life case studies of people who have been victims of domestic violence.

  3) The programme needs to provide more specific information about what children confronting domestic abuse can or should do, with regard to service provision and possible sources of support for both victims and perpetrators.
Chapter 4: Findings from the Evaluation of Filles et Garçons, en route pour l'Egalité

Key findings

- When delivered as a single session intervention Filles et Garçons, en route pour l'Egalité does not normally achieve positive attitudinal change among either boys or girls, nor does it achieve increases in the willingness to seek help from an adult.

- There is some evidence that when the intervention is delivered over two sessions it does achieve some reductions in girls, but not boys, acceptance of domestic violence.

- When change does occur it is most evident in relation to attitudes towards domestic violence between girlfriends and boyfriends, as opposed to adult men and women and their partners.

- The sites where the programme is currently being delivered appear to include young people with very high levels of acceptance of domestic violence. In some instances, young women's acceptance of violence in these sites is higher than that of young men of the same age.

- Despite these high levels of acceptance of domestic violence, as measured by our scales, participants can be put off by a programme that assumes that those attending it do not know that violence towards a partner is wrong.

- In addition, the contents of the programme are regarded by those who undertake it as more relevant to girls than boys. In this intervention adult men appear only to be represented as perpetrators, while a young boy is depicted as both a victim of violence perpetrated by his father towards his mother and as a potential perpetrator.

- Given its brevity, the programme risks leaving some participants with misperceptions of domestic violence conducive with victim-blaming.

Filles et Garçons, en route pour l'Egalité

*Filles et Garçons, en route pour l'Egalité (Girls and Boys, Let's go to Equality)* is delivered by Du Côté des Femmes de Haute Garonne, in Muret. The programme spans a broad age-range, and is usually delivered to those aged 13-25 years of age. Sessions are tailored to the specific age groups and the programme is provided in schools, vocational training centres and information centres. It is delivered by the project team who work closely with teachers. Typically a single session is delivered, but sometimes the programme is delivered over two sessions. The evaluation assessed the effectiveness of both modes of delivery using the ADV. The ADV was used in its standard form where questions are asked about the acceptability of certain behaviours a man or women might perpetrate against a partner. It
was also used in an adapted form where questions were asked about the acceptability of the same behaviours between boyfriends and girlfriends. One focus group was conducted with former recipients of the intervention.
Findings Part 1: Questionnaires

Summary

- The findings regarding intervention *Filles et Garçons, en route pour l’Égalité* show limited effectiveness, confined primarily to girls in the school where the intervention was delivered over two sessions.
- There was also no statistically significant change in the attitudes of boys and girls from schools 2, 3 and 4 on the spouse/partner version of the ADV.
- Where a significant attitude change did emerge, it was more often in the boyfriend/girlfriend version of the ADV, which could be due to the programme’s focus on these types of relationships.
- The students in the French sample had attitudes indicating a high level of acceptance of domestic violence situations. The participating students in France thought that domestic violence situations were ‘sort of OK’ or ‘perfectly OK’ to a much greater extent than the English and Spanish samples.
- The limited impact of the programme is likely to be a reflection of the students’ high scores to begin with. With students starting out with attitudes showing a high acceptance of violence, such a short-term intervention is unlikely to be effective.

Participants

During May and June 2011, and also January/February 2012 *Filles et Garçons, en route pour l’Égalité* was delivered to teenagers at four schools in France. They completed the ADV questionnaire before and after the programme, answering the questions in relation to spouse/partner relationships and also in relation to boyfriend/girlfriend relationships. The young people that took part were aged 11-19 years old, with the majority aged 13-17 years. The mean age of the participants was 14.88. Not all pupils completed the front page of their questionnaire correctly which created difficulties with matching up questionnaires. Subsequently, 52 pre-test and 50 post-test questionnaires were not matched and had to be excluded from the analyses that explored changes in attitude from before to after the programme. 462 pupils completed both pre-test and post-test questionnaires, 189 were male and 271 were female (2 did not provide this information). A breakdown of the participants in each school is given in Table 1.
Table 1

*Participant information by school*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Number of students</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Number of students used in analyses</th>
<th>Partner/spouse version</th>
<th>Boyfriend/ girlfriend version</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School 1</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>35 Girls, 32 boys, 6 missing</td>
<td>Aged 13-15 years old: 13 years (23), 14 years (40), 15 years (9), 1 missing (Mean age = 13.81)</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Partner/spouse version: 38</td>
<td>Boyfriend/ girlfriend version: 39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2 sessions)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 2</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>76 Girls, 52 boys, 1 missing</td>
<td>Aged 15-19 years old: 15 years (5), 16 years (65), 17 years (45), 18 years (12), 19 years (1), 1 missing (Mean age = 16.52)</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>Partner/spouse version: 110</td>
<td>Boyfriend/ girlfriend version: 115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1 session)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 3</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>144 Girls, 98 boys, 1 missing</td>
<td>Aged 13-17 years old: 13 years (1), 14 years (16), 15 years (194), 16 years (25), 17 years (6), 1 missing (Mean age = 15.08)</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>Partner/spouse version: 208</td>
<td>Boyfriend/ girlfriend version: 200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1 session)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 4</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>51 Girls, 67 boys, 1 missing</td>
<td>Aged 11-17 years old: 11 years (1), 12 years (2), 13 years (81), 14 years (30), 15 years (2), 16 years (2), 17 years (1), 1 missing (Mean age = 13.34)</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>Partner/spouse version: 78</td>
<td>Boyfriend/ girlfriend version: 78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1 session)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In *School 1 Filles et Garçons, en route pour l'Egalité* was delivered during two sessions of 2 hours; the first session included a brainstorming activity about relationships between girls and boys. The second session used the "letter to Julie" and a short movie about domestic violence "Through a Child's Eyes". In all other schools *Filles et Garçons, en route pour l'Egalité* was delivered during a one session of 2 hours and included the "letter to Julie".

---

*Some questionnaires were excluded from analyses because the pre-test and post-test could not be matched, or because students didn’t complete some of the questions leading to missing data.*
Findings

The findings are presented in the following order:

1. The percentages of students who thought the situations were OK and perfectly OK

2. Examining gender differences on the spouse/partner version of the ADV for each school separately

3. Examining gender differences on the boyfriend/girlfriend version of the ADV for each school separately

Students’ opinions about the situations

Aggregating ‘OK’ responses across the different situations at pre-test\(^8\) showed that when students were asked about the situations in relation to spouses/partners 60% of students thought at least one of the situations was OK, with nearly a quarter (24.3%) indicating that four or more of the situations were OK. For the boyfriend/girlfriend questions, just over half of the pupils thought at least one of the situations were OK (52.6%), with 21.2% indicating that four or more of the situations were OK. Responses from males and females were similar, although girls tended to be slightly less accepting of as many of the scenarios than boys.

Table 2 shows that hitting was seen as more acceptable by spouses/partners when they had been hit first and also if the spouse/partner had cheated on them. It was seen as less acceptable if the spouse/partner was drunk or apologised afterwards. Table 3 shows the same trends when looking at boyfriend/girlfriend relationships. In the majority of situations, boys think that it is more acceptable to hit than girls do (for both spouse/partner, and boyfriend/girlfriend questions). Although for some situations (e.g. OK for a woman to hit her husband/partner if he hits her) girls were more accepting than boys, and also showed the highest level of acceptance across all groups from all 3 countries. The figures are slightly higher in response to the spouse/partner questions compared to the boyfriend/girlfriend questions in the majority of the situations.

---

\(^8\) This includes the pre-test responses of pupils whose questionnaires could be matched to their post-test questionnaires plus the pre-test responses of pupils whose questionnaires could not be matched with their post-test questionnaires.
Table 2

% of young people that thought it was ‘OK’ for a man/woman to hit his/her partner for the different conditions: Pre-Test by Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Overall (%)</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OK for a woman to hit her husband/partner if he hits her</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td>38.6</td>
<td>41.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a man to hit his wife/partner if she hits him</td>
<td>33.1</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>31.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a woman to hit her husband/partner if he cheats on her with another woman</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>24.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a man to hit his wife/partner if she cheats on him with another man</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>20.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a woman to hit her husband/partner if he really embarrasses her</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a man to hit his wife/partner if she really embarrasses him</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a woman to hit her husband/partner if he thinks she deserves it</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a woman to hit her husband/partner if she thinks he deserves it</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a man to hit his wife/partner if he is drunk</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a woman to hit her husband/partner if she is drunk</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a woman to hit her husband/partner if she says she is sorry afterwards</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a man to hit his wife/partner if he says he is sorry afterwards</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3

% of young people that thought it was ‘OK’ for a boy/girl to hit his/her boyfriend/girlfriend for the different conditions: Pre-Test by Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition Description</th>
<th>Overall (%)</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OK for a girl to hit her boyfriend if he hits her</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>33.1</td>
<td>37.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a boy to hit his girlfriend if she hits him</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>29.0</td>
<td>25.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a girl to hit her boyfriend if he cheats on her with another girl</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>23.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a boy to hit his girlfriend if she cheats on him with another boy</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for girl to hit her boyfriend if he really embarrasses her</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a boy to hit his girlfriend if she really embarrasses him</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a girl to hit her boyfriend if she thinks he deserves it</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a boy to hit his girlfriend if he thinks she deserves it</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a boy to hit his girlfriend if he is drunk</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a girl to hit her boyfriend if she is drunk</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a girl to hit her boyfriend if she says she is sorry afterwards</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a boy to hit his girlfriend if he says he is sorry afterwards</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Spouse/partner version of the ADV

On account of the four schools used in the French sample receiving different interventions, and that a different number of students in each school participated in the research, we conducted analyses separately by school.

Gender differences: School 1

Each school's pre-test and post-test scores were compared by gender. Figure 1 presents results from School 1, where 38 pupils completed both the pre-test and post-test questionnaires. The overall mean of the boys’ and girls’ mean (average) scores on the ADV questionnaire (the husband / wife version) are shown. The Figure indicates that girls’ attitudes became less accepting of domestic violence from before to after the programme (their scores have decreased from before to after the programme). However boys’ attitudes have become marginally more accepting of domestic violence. This demonstrates the importance of examining the effects separately for boys and girls.

Figure 1: Mean ADV (husband/wife) scores from before and after the intervention, for boys and girls at School 1

The statistical significance of these pre-test to post-test changes were tested, and a significant interaction between gender and time was found. The analysis showed that there was a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores for girls (they became less accepting of domestic violence from before to after the programme), but there was no significant difference in the boys’ scores from before to after the intervention.
Gender differences: Schools 2, 3 and 4

The analyses were repeated for School 2 (where 110 pupils completed the pre-test and post-test questionnaires), School 3 (where 208 pupils completed both questionnaires) and School 4 (where 78 pupils completed both questionnaires). In each case the pre-test and post-test scores for boys and girls were examined for significant differences from before to after the programme. All analyses were not significant, that is in Schools 2, 3 and 4 the intervention did not have an impact on boys’ or girls’ attitudes.
Boyfriend/girlfriend version of the ADV

Gender differences: School 1

Figure 2 shows the findings for School 1 where 39 pupils completed the pre-test and post-test questionnaires. The Figure indicates that girls and boys became less accepting of domestic violence from before to after the programme when asked about boyfriend/girlfriend relationships.

Figure 2: Mean ADV (boyfriend/girlfriend) scores from before and after the intervention, for boys and girls at School 1

As before, the statistical significance of changes in pre-test to post-test scores was tested, and the analysis showed that there was a significant difference between pre-test and post-test scores for boys and girls.
Gender differences: School 2

In school 2, 115 pupils completed the pre-test and post-test questionnaires. Figure 3 shows both boys and girls became less accepting of violence from before to after the intervention, and this attitude change is more pronounced in girls’ attitudes. At both times, girls are less accepting of domestic violence in comparison to boys.

Figure 3: Mean ADV (boyfriend/girlfriend) scores from before and after the intervention, for boys and girls at School 2

As before, the statistical significance of pre-test to post-test changes was tested. This showed that there was a significant difference between pre-test and post-test scores for boys and girls, with all pupils becoming less accepting of domestic violence from before to after the programme.

Gender differences: Schools 3 and 4

The analyses were repeated for School 3 (where 200 pupils completed the pre-test and post-test questionnaires) and School 4 (where 78 pupils completed both questionnaires) to determine if there was a significant difference between pre-test and post-test scores for boys and girls at each school. No statically significant differences were found, suggesting that the programme was not effective in changing the attitudes of boys and girls in either school.
Conclusion

The findings are mixed in terms of the impact of *Filles et Garçons, en route pour l'Egalité* on pupils’ attitudes. The programme had little impact on the students’ attitudes towards domestic violence within spouse/partner relationships. For Schools 1 and 2, the programme had more impact on students’ attitudes towards domestic violence within boyfriend/girlfriend relationships, which could be due to the programme’s focus on these types of relationships. However, there were no statistically significant differences in pupils’ pre-test and post-test scores for schools 3 and 4.

Thus, the programme appears to have had the greatest impact on School 1. At this school girls became less accepting of domestic violence between spouses/partners, and boys and girls became significantly less accepting of domestic violence between boyfriends/girlfriends from before to after the programme. At School 2 the young people also became significantly less accepting of domestic violence between boyfriends and girlfriends from before to after the programme.

One explanation for the programme having the greatest impact on pupils from School 1 could be because these pupils had two sessions and this contributed to a significant change in attitudes. Additionally, the limited impact of the programme is likely to be a reflection of the students’ high scores to begin with. For example, 39.4% of the French students thought that it was OK for a woman to hit her husband/partner if he hit her first. This compares to 21.3% of English students and 18.1% of Spanish students. This trend is repeated throughout the questionnaire items with the French students believing each situation was OK to a much greater extent than the English and Spanish students. Domestic violence is a complex problem and given the students’ comparatively high acceptance of domestic violence, a single session will not be adequate to challenge these attitudes and examine all the pertinent issues.
Findings Part 2: Focus Group

The key findings were:

- Students liked the discursive nature of the lessons
- However, some boys became disengaged with the Letter to Julie activity because the letter was addressed to a girl and the content of the letter was from a girl’s perspective.
- Some boys chose not to participate in the programme because they said they already knew it was wrong to hit a woman, and so they perceived the lessons would not be relevant to them.
- Despite participating in the programme some students still thought it was the victim’s responsibility to avoid and/or handle domestic violence situations. They did not sufficiently understand the difficulties a victim faces when trying to leave an abusive relationship. This is likely to be a reflection of the students’ high acceptance levels to begin with. A programme consisting of one or two sessions does not provide enough opportunity to examine such attitudes and discuss all the pertinent issues related to recognising, preventing and coping with domestic violence situations.

Introduction

One focus group was conducted with 5 girls and 2 boys from one of the schools who received Filles et Garçons, en route pour l’Égalité. Pupils at this school were shown the video – Through a Child's Eyes, participated in a class discussion about domestic violence and completed the Letter to Julie activity. Students were asked about what they liked and disliked about the programme, as well as suggestions for improvements that could be made.

What did the young people like about the programme?

The pupils reported that they enjoyed the programme, particularly the letter to Julie activity. They liked this activity because the girl who wrote the letter was the same age as them and therefore they were able to relate to her and to empathise with her situation. The letter also raised their awareness that domestic violence can happen to girls their age.

Interviewer: in relation to the letter, what did you like about this activity?
Girl 3: she’s a student; she was in high school, so it’s like us actually
Interviewer: did you feel concerned?
Girl 2: it can happen to anyone, we say that if it happened in a school it can happen to any of us
Interviewer: What did you like about it?
Girl 5: it can happen to us; it’s just what she said….but you can find yourself in this case too…so that when a friend sends us a letter like that we know how to answer her.

One of the boys in the focus group also agrees with these points:

Boy 1: the letter is written by the hands of the person concerned so we could just understand her feelings and the problems that are posed
One girl also explained that she thought the film ‘Through a Child’s Eyes’ was poignant because it shows how children can start to think that domestic violence is acceptable and normal.

What I liked is that it’s a little boy who was telling it; so it was especially touching. And also the final part – that disputes between parents do affect children, and suddenly the children understand that it is normal to hit (Girl 4)

The students also enjoyed having class discussions and being given the opportunity to share their opinions, which is a different approach to the teaching methods used in their usual lessons.

Boy 2: what is interesting is that [the facilitator] asks us what we have to say, to give our own point of view.

What did the young people dislike about the programme?

Overall the students had positive views about the programme. However they suggested that some (male) classmates had not participated in the programme because they stated they already knew it was wrong to hit a woman.

I informed those that were not present that there was this intervention. They said they did not need to know this because they knew what to do, for example in relation to the letter; they would not do that to a girl (Boy 1)

Additionally one boy explained that boys may have become disengaged with the letter to Julie activity because the letter was written from a girl’s perspective:

When we started the intervention and we read the letter, it was the view of the girl and it was possible that some boys did not feel it was relevant because of that – that this was not the point of view of the boys. It may seem a bit silly but there are also boys who have problems with girls. [Boys] may be the ones who are victims. (Boy 2)

The issue of male victims being overlooked emerged again towards the end of the focus group discussion. Some of the pupils’ comments were akin to the comments made by students in England and although the French pupils did not specifically refer to the programme being ‘sexist’ (as the English pupils did) the comments made by the French students suggested they were unhappy that the experience of male victims had been excluded.

In this intervention it seemed that the women were victims (Girl 3)

The interviewer explains that although there are male victims of domestic violence, comparably, women are more at risk. Boy 1 agrees but suggests that the experience of males can still be acknowledged:

During the intervention, just point out [male victims] without much debate (Boy 1)
What improvements could be made to the programme?

As identified, one improvement cited by students was to consider the experience of male victims, as well as make the letter to Julie more appropriate for boys, for example the recipient could be a boy, or the letter could have been written by a boy.

Another area of improvement has to do with the need to clarify pupils’ understanding of domestic violence situations, particularly the role played by the perpetrator in instigating and maintaining the violence. For example, in the letter to Julie one student thought that the situation could have been prevented if the girl who wrote the letter had not started a relationship with an older boy (rather than understanding that the boy in the story should not have hit his girlfriend). It appears that this student was placing responsibility for the situation on the victim, rather than the perpetrator:

The girl [in the letter], she should not go out with someone so old (Girl 1)

This misconception about the role of the victim also occurred when the students were discussing the film ‘Through a Child’s Eyes’. In particular, there was some dispute about the role of the mother and how she handled the situation with her son. Students were critical of the mother for telling her child not to tell anyone, and for making the situation appear ‘normal’ to the boy.

I think this is for the mother to resolve the problem with her husband and not for the child to manage it (Girl 3)

A child should not find it commonplace, the mother – she must do something (Girl 4)

So although the students correctly identified that this situation should not be presented as ‘normal’ to the boy, they also placed the responsibility for ‘resolving’ the domestic violence and protecting the boy on the mother. In doing so, they have overlooked the father’s role as the perpetrator and that it is his behaviour that is unacceptable. The students have also overlooked the boy’s resilience and how this is enhanced through dialogue with his friend and teacher.

Summary

In summary the students liked the Letter to Julie and the Through a Child’s Eyes film. However, the boys seemed to be less interested in the programme compared to the girls. One reason for this is because some of them believed they would not benefit from the programme due to their pre-existing understanding that it is wrong to be violent towards women. Another reason was that they found it more difficult to engage with the Letter to Julie activity because it presented a female’s perspective both in terms of being the victim and in terms of being the friend who was supporting the victim. Subsequently the students thought that the Letter to Julie could be improved by making it more relevant to a teenage boy. In addition to this they wanted to learn some information about male victims.

There was an indication that some students in the focus group had not fully understood all the pertinent issues in the letter and in the film. While they were able to identify that domestic violence was wrong and that children should not be exposed to it and/or come to view it as ‘normal’ – the emphasis for changing a domestic violence situation was on the victim.
Although domestic violence prevention programmes like *Filles et Garçons, en route pour l’Egalité* do teach young people that victims of abuse need to recognise this behaviour as unacceptable and seek help, it is also important that young people understand how and why it is so difficult for victims to leave an abusive relationship. Additionally young people need to be able to identify that it is the perpetrator whose actions are unacceptable and that they are responsible for the domestic violence occurring – not the victim.

**Conclusions**

- *Filles et Garçons, en route pour l’Egalité* had an impact on the attitudes of students attending school 1 and school 2, with students at these schools becoming less accepting of domestic violence within boyfriend/girlfriend relationships, from before to after the programme. Girls in school 1 also became less accepting of domestic violence within spouse/partner relationships from before to after the programme.

- Reasons for why *Filles et Garçons, en route pour l’Egalité* was more effective in schools 1 and 2, compared to schools 3 and 4 need to be explored.

- The programme appears to have a greater impact on students’ attitudes when more than one session is delivered. Therefore it is recommended that at least two sessions are delivered in schools.

- Furthermore, the high levels of acceptance of domestic violence shown in the pre-test data need further examination and explanation.

- There is evidence to suggest that boys are not as engaged with the programme as girls. With the exception of a few items on the questionnaire, girls were less accepting of domestic violence in comparison to boys, and students in the focus group suggested that the programme may not be perceived by boys as being relevant to them.

- In particular, the focus group participants suggested including some material about the experience of male victims, and modifying the *Letter to Julie* activity, so that it is more appropriate for boys.

- The students enjoyed the *Through a Child’s Eyes* film, the *Letter to Julie* activity and the teaching methods used including sharing their own opinions and having class discussions. This good practice can be built on by making the activities more appropriate for boys, and also ensuring that the young people understand the role of the perpetrator in domestic violence situations. That is, they understand the perpetrator is the one engaging in unacceptable behaviour, not the victim.

- Du Côté des Femmes de Haute Garonne are also encouraged to consider how to increase the participation of disaffected boys who believe this programme is not relevant to them, and either disengage during the lessons or completely fail to attend.
Chapter 5: Comparative Analyses and Conclusion

Comparisons between the secondary school interventions

This section of the report compares findings from the ReADAPt sites in France, Spain and the UK. However, it should be emphasised that while comparisons between ADV responses, scores and significant findings have been highlighted, we are not comparing ‘like for like’. As shown in Table 1 each site has delivered a different programme, and these programmes vary in a number of ways including content, length and whether or not a teacher or facilitator delivered the intervention to students. The context in which the programmes were delivered also varied, for example, in terms of the history of anti-violence publicity in that region and whether personal and social education is mainstream in schools in that country. Additionally, the age of the participants differed between the sites, as did the pre-existing attitudes of the young people who took part in the interventions.

Table 1

Overview of the three programmes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>Spain</th>
<th>France</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programme name</td>
<td>Relationships without Fear</td>
<td>La Máscara del Amor</td>
<td>Filles et Garçons, en route pour l’Égalité</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age range of students (mean age)</td>
<td>13-15 years (13.44)</td>
<td>13-21 years (15.9)</td>
<td>13-17 years (14.88)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of sessions</td>
<td>6 x one hour</td>
<td>6 x two hour</td>
<td>1 x two hour⁹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who delivers the programme</td>
<td>External facilitator</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>External facilitator</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Differences in ages of participants

In the Spanish site 698 participants took part in the research with 452 completing both the pre-test and the post-test questionnaires. In the French site 564 participants took part with 462 pupils completing both the pre-test and post-test questionnaires. In the UK site (secondary school strand) 330 participants completed the questionnaires with 226 completing both questionnaires. A breakdown of the ages of pupils from each intervention site is shown in Figure 1.

⁹ This excludes School 1 who received 2 x two hour sessions
Figure 1: The ages of the young people who completed questionnaires, by intervention site (%)

As Figure 1 indicates, participants in Relationships without Fear were the youngest (aged 13-15 years) with the majority aged 13 years old. The mean age of the participants in Relationships without Fear was 13.44 years. For the most part, students from the Spanish sample were older than the students who participated in England. The Spanish participants were aged 13-21 years old, with the majority aged 15-17 years old. The mean age of the students used in Spain was 15.9 years. In the French sample, it should be noted that three students were aged 11-12 years old accounting for 0.6% of the French participants, but these have not been shown in the graph. Figure 1 shows that there was a greater distribution of age groups in the sample from Filles et Garçons, en route pour l’Egalité with the majority of students aged 13-17 years old. There the mean age of the students who participated was 14.88 years. Therefore in general, the participants from the UK were younger, the participants in Spain were older, and the French sample consisted of a wider distribution of age groups including both younger and older adolescents.

Participants’ opinions about the situations

The ‘OK’ responses were aggregated across the different situations at pre-test and the percentages of students who thought each situation was OK are provided by intervention site in Table 2. The Table shows that in general participants from the UK had similar attitudes to those who took part in Spain. Participants from France were more likely to think the situations leading to domestic violence were acceptable than participants from the UK and Spain.

Across all three intervention sites it was deemed more acceptable for a person to hit his/her spouse/partner if they hit them first. It is also viewed as more acceptable if their spouse/partner had cheated on them. The percentage of participants receiving Filles et
Garçons, en route pour l'Egalité who thought that violence was acceptable was much higher than for the participants receiving Relationships without Fear and La Máscara del Amor on almost every measure.
### Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of young people that thought it was ‘OK’ for a man/woman to hit his/her partner for the different conditions: Pre-Test by Country$^{10}$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relationships without Fear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a woman to hit her husband/partner if he hits her</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a man to hit his wife/partner if she hits him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a woman to hit her husband/partner if he cheats on her with another woman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a man to hit his wife/partner if she cheats on him with another man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a man to hit his wife/partner if he thinks she deserves it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a woman to hit her husband/partner if she thinks he deserves it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a man to hit his wife/partner if she really embarrasses him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a woman to hit her husband/partner if he really embarrasses her</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a man to hit his wife/partner if he is drunk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a woman to hit her husband/partner if she is drunk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a man to hit his wife/partner if he says he is sorry afterwards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK for a woman to hit her husband/partner if she says she is sorry afterwards</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

$^{10}$ For France, the percentages given are in response to the spouse/partner version of the ADV.
Average ADV pre-test scores for boys and girls

The mean ADV scores on the pre-test for boys and girls also show that there are differences between the intervention sites. Figure 2 indicates that boys and girls in the UK sample have lower ADV scores in comparison to the boys’ and girls' scores in the Spanish site, which in turn are lower than the scores of boys and girls in the French site. Across all three intervention sites, girls were less accepting of domestic violence compared to boys. Gender differences were most pronounced in the UK sample, the girls there having a particularly low average pre-test score in comparison to girls at the other two sites. In contrast, the mean score for boys in the UK sample was not that dissimilar from the scores of girls in the Spanish and French samples.

Although, on average, girls in the sample from France were less accepting of domestic violence compared to boys (as shown in Figure 2) the girls did have high acceptance of certain situations (see France Findings Section) and in some cases held similar levels of acceptance to their male counterparts. For example, 41.5% of girls and 38.6% of boys in the French sample thought that it was OK for a woman to hit her husband if he hits her. Not only were the girls in the French site more accepting of domestic violence compared to girls in the Spanish site and girls and boys in the UK site, but for some of the situations (like the one above) they had the highest level of acceptance across all groups.

![Figure 2. Pre-test ADV scores by gender and country](image)

---

11 This includes the pre-test responses of pupils whose questionnaires could be matched to their post-test questionnaires plus the pre-test responses of pupils whose questionnaires could not be matched with their post-test questionnaires.

12 For France, the means given are in response to the spouse/partner version of the ADV. The mean ADV scores on the boyfriend/girlfriend version are boys = 1.51 and girls = 1.43.
Evidence of Effectiveness

Table 2 gives an overview of the findings outlined in the individual intervention site reports. The Table summarises where statistically significant differences between pre-test and post-test scores have been found to indicate that students’ attitudes have become less accepting of domestic violence from before to after the programmes. An ‘X’ signifies where pre-test to post-test changes were non-significant. The Table shows that for Relationships without Fear and La Máscara del Amor there was a significant improvement in the attitudes of boys and girls from before to after the programmes. For Filles et Garçons, en route pour l’Egalité, School 1 shows the most improvement in attitudes, followed by School 2 (for the boyfriend/girlfriend version of the ADV). No significant differences between pre-test and post-test scores were found for Schools 3 and 4.
Table 2

*Summary table of countries/cohorts where statistically significant improvements in attitudes from pre-test to post-test have and have not been found*¹³

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistically significant* improvement from pre-test to post-test for:</th>
<th>Relationships without Fear</th>
<th>La Máscara del Amor</th>
<th>Filles et Garçons, en route pour l'Egalité</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Primary year 6</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>School 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADV version 1</td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADV version 2</td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05

¹³ An improvement in attitudes refers to young people becoming less accepting of domestic violence from before to after the intervention

¹⁴ ADV version 1 refers to the original format where students are asked about domestic violence between spouses/partners. ADV version 2 refers to an amended version of the ADV used in France where students were also asked about domestic violence between boyfriends/girlfriends.
Overarching Themes

A number of themes emerged from three intervention sites:

Firstly, young people generally welcome domestic abuse and relationship education. The things young people value in these programmes are being given an opportunity to think about and share their opinions, participate in class discussions, and learn about issues within domestic violence which they had not considered prior to taking part in the programmes. In particular, students said the programmes raised their awareness and understanding of the warning signs of domestic abuse and the reasons why victims stay in an abusive relationship.

We found that these programmes can be effective in changing attitudes when they are delivered over a period of lessons and that boys and girls can both benefit from them. On the other hand, the shortness of many interventions, present a risk in terms of leaving some young people confused. Such confusion can foster preconceptions about the culpability of victims and the greater danger posed by strangers. It can also lead some young people to be fearful of entering into relationships, reducing rather than enhancing their resilience.

We have consistently found that boys are generally less engaged with schools-based relationship education interventions than girls. Our pre and post-test surveys consistently reveal that boys remain more accepting of domestic violence in comparison to girls even after the interventions. The reasons for this are undoubtedly complex. But there are clearly issues to do with the responsiveness of these interventions to young people’s own experiences of school life, home life and within their own relationships that need to be overcome. In focus group discussions, boys often declared they already knew it was wrong to be violent towards women and girls and thus drew the conclusion that they had nothing to learn from the programme. The depiction of men in the programme content - primarily as perpetrators – added to this resistance, leading some boys and girls to the conclusion that the programmes were sexist. Teenagers often find it difficult to understand the gendered nature of violence. Polarised depictions of men and women often resonate with other forms of gender stereotyping in schools that are a source of discontent for some pupils. For example, some primary school children also felt uncomfortable when they had to sit boy – girl in their lessons. This behaviour management strategy simply confirmed in their minds that teachers are sexist, a characterisation they also applied to the relationship education programme’s focus on the gendered nature of violence. In such contexts, it takes skilled educators to convey both the importance of gender equality and the gendered nature of much domestic violence. These issues are not sufficiently redressed by simply acknowledging that ‘men can be victims too’. Many young people will need time and experience to be able to fully understand this point. They also need the support of skilled educators, and may need to hear the same messages from more than one teacher, as we explain below.

A key tension to be surmounted in the delivery of relationship education programmes has to do with the nature of learning. On the one hand, young people need to be given space in which they can discover for themselves information about relationships and violence. Preconceptions need to be expressed and worked through. But this is not always
permissible in schools. Often young people note a tension between the overt encouragement given to freely express and explore their opinions (regardless of the appropriateness of their opinions) and the desire of teachers to correct ‘wrong answers’ and conclude with a ‘right answer’.

Part of this problem can be overcome by using facilitators from organisations external to schools. In such circumstances, facilitators can present relationship education as an opportunity to explore students’ attitudes in a non-judgmental and constructive manner without any history with particular pupils coming to the fore.

The student – teacher relationship is different because they know one another and as identified, students may feel restricted in expressing their true opinions, especially if they have a challenging relationship with the teacher. Additionally teachers are accustomed to lessons where objectives need to be fulfilled and students have to learn the ‘correct answers’. This may affect how teachers deliver these programmes and how receptive students are to them. Conversely, programmes delivered by teachers run the risk of undermining some students’ willingness to participate. This is particularly problematic given that research has shown that children living with domestic abuse are more likely to be disruptive in school and hence to have poorer relationships with teachers. Some children will be less likely to share views about domestic violence with a teacher whom they know they will have to continue to be taught by and who has a role in appraising their behaviour.

Nevertheless, whether teachers or external facilitators, all educators delivering these interventions do have to set limits on how much pupils can be allowed to express opinions freely. Some students feel uncomfortable with the sexism of their classmates, and some will be dealing with experiences of abuse of their own. A key advantage that teachers have over external facilitators is that they can explore these issues over the longer term, returning to topics that may have been too sensitive for all pupils at a later point in the year, if need be.

Whoever is delivering the intervention, however, it is critical that they are skilled enough to overcome conflict and discomfort in the classroom. When teachers’ lack confidence or knowledge about domestic violence issues, and are unable to answer students’ concerns/questions, this can undermine the core messages of the intervention. This can be dangerous in the longer term, especially if pupils leave with a lack of understanding of both the importance and substance of the issues facing people living with domestic abuse.

Student-led activities are a critical part of ensuring both pupil engagement and depth of learning. Making leaflets, conducting and presenting their own research, and undertaking more kinaesthetic activities such as role plays are often valued by young people. But they do come with certain risks. As already acknowledged, it can mean some students having to entertain the sexism of others, something that may be especially difficult for those who are living with abuse. It can mean a risk of a consensus building around undesirable attitudes. It can disadvantage students who prefer quiet study, or seem childish to those who have already experienced relationships of their own. Role plays, while powerful means of generating empathy can be problematic in contexts where some pupils are already being abusive towards each other. Setting limits on the sources pupils can draw upon, checking everyone is comfortable with the material being covered, providing a safe space for pupils
that wish to learn in other ways or talk privately, are some of the strategies that need to be available to overcome such challenges. Constantly evaluating the impact of the intervention through on-going research is another way of ensuring that mistakes are not reproduced in one cohort to the next and that interventions are having the desired effects.

For the future, however, perhaps the biggest challenge involves equipping young pupils with knowledge about what they should do if they encounter domestic violence in their own relationships, or those of their peers or family members. Our research found little evidence in the programmes we studied that relationship education and domestic abuse prevention tuition persuades many young people of the value of telling adults in such circumstances. This may be a shortcoming of these particular programmes and be resolved by introducing new curriculum content. On the other hand, it is also possible that such programmes simply confirm in young people’s mind that fixing the problem of domestic abuse is rarely easy, that the interventions of adults is not always helpful, or more generally that adult authority cannot always be trusted. Identifying ways and means through which young people can either be better encouraged to access existing support, or even provide the kinds of support that are needed is perhaps the most major challenge confronting the delivery of genuinely preventative interventions.
References


Annex

Summary of content and methods used in each programme

Relationships without Fear

This programme was developed, and is delivered by Arch, based in North Staffordshire.

Aims

- To take a cross-curricular approach to domestic abuse prevention and support, challenging the attitudes and stigma surrounding domestic abuse.
- To prevent further domestic abuse in the relationships of children and young people by giving them the knowledge, skills and advice to enable them to:
  - recognise an abusive relationship
  - seek the appropriate help
- Thus contributing to a long term overall reduction in domestic violence.

Primary school strand (8-11 years)

Topics

- Discussing and identifying what is meant by the term ‘relationship’
- Recognising the differences between healthy and unhealthy relationships
- Addressing the following issues:
  - What is Domestic Abuse?
  - The different types of abuse
  - Understanding boundaries within relationships
- Anger and controlling your anger
- Identifying support networks / where to go for help for parents and children.

Delivery of the programme

- The programme is delivered in schools by specialist practitioners who work for Arch
- The programme consists of 6 sessions, each 1 hour in length
- A number of methods are used including:
  - Group work
  - Brain storming / discussions
  - DVD
  - Role play
  - Worksheets
  - Art work
Relationships without Fear – secondary school strand (12-16 years)

Topics

- Addressing the issues:
  - What is domestic abuse?
  - Who can it happen to?
- The different forms of abuse
- Warning signs
- The realities of leaving an abusive relations, and addressing why some people stay in these relationships
- Identifying support networks and where young people can go for help.

Delivery of the programme

- The programme is delivered in schools by specialist practitioners who work for Arch
- The programme consists of 6 sessions, each 1 hour in length
- A number of methods are used including:
  - Group work
  - Brain storming/discussion
  - Card sorting activities
  - Looking at case studies
  - DVDs
  - Worksheets
La Máscara del Amor

The Regional Government of Murcia runs this educational programme in order to prevent gender-based violence among young people in a formal educational context.

**Aims**

- Enable students to identify that domestic violence (referred to as gender based violence in Spain) is unacceptable and help students to develop attitudes that reflect this.
- Help young people to identify and manage their emotions when they are in a relationship themselves.
- Help students to recognise and tackle situations of domestic abuse – including situations of violence that they could be experiencing, or that their friends and relatives could be involved in. This includes explaining to students how they can seek help in these situations.

**Topics**

- Love and falling in love, this includes ‘myths’ and ideas of what ‘being in love’ means.
- Self-awareness of one’s own attitudes about what is acceptable in relationships.
- Understanding what jealousy is and how this can be related to domestic violence.
- Being able to identify different types of domestic violence including physical, psychological and sexual abuse
- Learn more about perpetrators, and how they are able to control their victims.

**Delivery of the programme**

- In contrast to Filles et Garçons, en route pour l'Egalité and Relationships without Fear, La Máscara del Amor is delivered by school teachers. Prior to the programme being delivered, teachers attend a training session where they are briefed about La Máscara del Amor. They are given their own copy of the programme toolkit, and advised on how to deal with matters relating to domestic violence when discussing these issues with young people.
- Before the programme commences, students have to read the novel “The Private Hell of Marta”, specifically written for La Máscara del Amor. This book tells the story of a young woman who experiences domestic abuse when she starts a new relationship while at university. The book forms the basis of the session content, and is discussed alongside PowerPoint presentations and short films that depict domestic violence situations.
- The lessons/workshops consist of six sessions. Each session takes approximately 50 minutes.
Filles et Garçons, en route pour l'Egalité

The association *Du côté des femmes de Haute-Garonne* delivers this programme and aim to tackle gender-based violence especially among young people.

**Aims**
- Ensure young people gain a better understanding of the body, and biological processes in males and females
- Identify and challenge gender stereotypes
- Discuss emotions that pertain to love and sexual attraction
- Recognise the different forms of violence
- Ensure that young people know who they can approach for help with domestic violence situations and how they can protect themselves and others
- Ensure that young people are aware of organisations and resources that can provide information and support

**Topics**

The programme typically begins with a brainstorming exercise around issues of sexuality, gender stereotypes, and the emotional dimensions of love and attraction, and progresses to an exercise where young people read a letter written by an adolescent girl who is experiencing domestic violence perpetrated by her boyfriend. The young people have to discuss the girl’s situation with their peers, and then individually write a response to her with suggestions of how she can get. Additionally the programme also provides the opportunity to discuss:

- The human body and sexuality (Contraception, abortion, pregnancy, AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections)
- Relationships between boys and girls / men and women, including intimate and sexual relationships
- Identity and sexual orientation.
- How to identify different types of violence, and how to prevent them and/or stop them
- What the law says: forbidden and legal remedies
- Respect of diversity and citizen behaviour

**Delivery of the programme**

- A specialist facilitator from the association *Du côté des femmes de Haute-Garonne* delivers the programme to young people in schools, vocational training centres and information centres.
- A one-off single session, lasting at least 90 minutes is delivered.
- Students work in small groups with a maximum 15 individuals
- Activities include:
  - Brainstorming about relationships between boys girls, and also sexuality
  - Anonymous questions about sexuality
  - Stories about equality
  - “Le Jeu de l’Oie” and “Câlins-Malins” (Games)
  - A quiz about equality between men and women
  - The letter to Julie
At the end of the session, the students complete an anonymous short questionnaire to feedback their opinions about the programme to the association *Du côté des femmes de Haute-Garonne*. The Association use this information to compile a report, which also outlines the topics that were discussed, the atmosphere of the class and their recommendation for future interventions. This report is sent a few days after the intervention to the teaching staff at the school.