

# MVP Scotland Annual Report

April 2024 - March 2025



Mentors in Violence Prevention

Challenging Gender Based Violence, Everyone's Responsibility

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# What is Mentors in Violence Prevention?

Mentors in Violence Prevention supports a whole school approach to gender-based violence prevention and is signposted in the Scottish Government '[Preventing and responding to gender based violence: a whole school framework](#)'. It contributes to [Equally Safe](#), Scotland's strategy for preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls, and to Scotland's [Violence Prevention Framework](#). MVP is funded by Scottish Government 'Safer Communities Grant Funding'.

Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) is a peer education leadership programme in which senior pupils are trained and supported to deliver lessons to their younger peers. Developed in the United States by US Educator Dr Jackson Katz PhD, it was introduced to Scotland in 2012 and adapted for the culture and context of Scottish learners.

MVP lessons explore and challenge the attitudes, beliefs and cultural norms that underpin gender-based violence and give learners a language and framework to explore the issues. It utilises a peer education model in which senior pupils are trained as mentors and supported to deliver lessons to their younger peers. Two mandatory core lessons cover the impact of gender stereotypes, bystander theory and the scope of violent behaviour. Scenario lessons are then delivered which cover a range of topics including sexual harassment, consent, image-based abuse and coercive control.

The programme uses a bystander approach which allows learners to explore sensitive topics from the standpoint of an observer, rather than as a victim or perpetrator. Options for safe interventions are explored within a supportive environment.

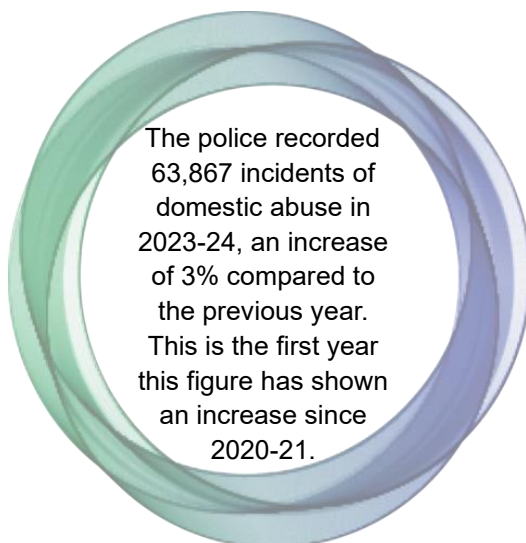
Supporting young people to recognise harms and develop healthy relationships is at the heart of the [MVP programme](#).



# Context

In 2025, the television series 'Adolescence' sparked nationwide discussions about misogyny and the negative influences of the manosphere. Violence against women and girls is not, however, a new phenomenon. The [World Health Organisation](#) (WHO) estimates that about 1 in 3 women worldwide have been subjected to physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetime. MVP is a programme designed to challenge violence against women and girls and all gender-based violence, that is, any violence directed at people due to their gender or gender identity.

The [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) enshrines the right of children to protection from all forms of violence. [The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\) \(Scotland\) Act 2024](#) was enacted in Scotland on 16 July 2024 with the aim of ensuring that children's rights are respected and protected in Scotland. Protecting children's rights is a core aspect of MVP lessons. The United Nations names gender equality as one of the sustainable development goals ([Goal 5 Gender Equality](#)) with gender equality woven through most of the other Goals.



Recorded incidents of domestic abuse from [Police Scotland 2023-2024](#) highlight a 3% increase from the previous year. This is the first year this figure has shown an increase since 2020-2021. Figures for 2024-2025 will be released later in 2025.

[Police Scotland 2024-2025](#) have seen recorded incidents of sexual crime increase by 3%, from 14,484 to 14,892. At least 34% of these had a victim under the age of 18. These crimes are now at the second highest level seen since 1971, the first year for which comparable groups are available.

Between 2023-24 and 2024-25 recorded crimes of rape and attempted rape have increased by 15%. Recorded crimes of sexual assault increased by 2% and of these, 86% had female victims.

Abuse carried out by boys and young men against girls and young women often takes place in school environments, although it can also be in the context of intimate relationships. A study into [Sexual Harassment in Scottish Secondary Schools](#) found that almost 70% of pupils experienced sexual harassment and 34% experienced unwanted sexual touching. In over 70% of cases, pupils didn't report sexual harassment, even if it was severe and included unwanted sexual touching. In addition, the [Rise Report 2022](#), while

based on small numbers, found that in Scotland over a third (36%) of young women respondents had been in an intimate relationship with someone who was abusive or harmed them physically or emotionally and nearly three quarters knew someone who had been in such a relationship.

The [Behaviour in Scottish Schools Research Report](#) found that there has been an increase since 2016 in levels of misogyny and gender-based abuse from male pupils. [NASUWT Teachers' Union's](#) survey of Scottish teachers found female teachers were more likely than their male counterparts to experience violence in school.



## The reach of MVP

This year, 234 Local Authority schools have been confirmed to be delivering MVP as part of their curriculum. This is an increase from 210 confirmed schools in 2024-2025. This year 21 schools are delivering for the first time, 30 schools have restarted after a gap and 183 schools have delivered for two or more years.

Based on an average of 27.6 mentors per school, this means that this year 6,458 mentors (senior phase pupils) have delivered a minimum of 8,611 MVP lessons to younger pupils. In 60% of schools, staff are delivering additional lessons to supplement peer delivery, a 5% increase on last year.



## Staff Professional Development

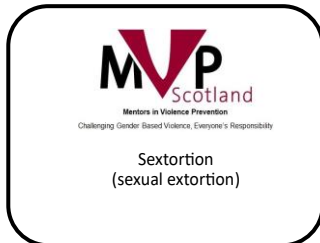
This year, 260 staff were trained by the national team to deliver MVP and approximately 200 by Local Authority Trainers. This involved learning about gender- based violence, exploring the MVP programme and its rationale, and planning how to implement the programme. Participants included school staff and a range of partners including Women's Aid, Community Learning and Development, Police Scotland, Voluntary Agencies and central Local Authority staff.



Participants from 12 local authorities participated in two Train the Trainer events resulting in an additional two local authorities with their own training teams.

# New resources

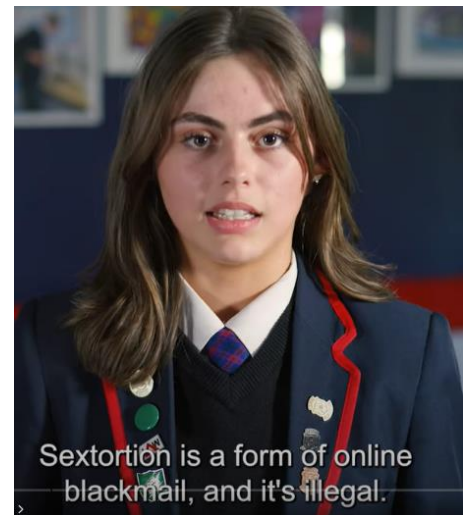
## Sextortion Scenario



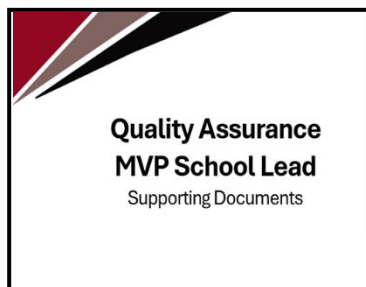
To reflect current concerns, new scenarios are developed in collaboration with young people, staff and topic experts. This session, the topic of sextortion (sexual exploitation) was raised by staff and mentors as an area for development.

This was researched by the national team and partnerships were established with Fearless and Police Scotland who

were consulted during the development phase. The scenario was trialled in three schools with MVP mentors and pupils in the BGE, as well as by youth workers in a youth group setting. Changes were made in response to feedback throughout the process. The scenario was widely welcomed by staff and mentors with agreement that this would be useful to deliver to mentees. The sextortion film created by Fearless, featuring some MVP mentors, is shown as part of the scenario.



## Quality Assurance



Quality Assurance Booklets have been launched for MVP trainers, local authority coordinators and school leads.

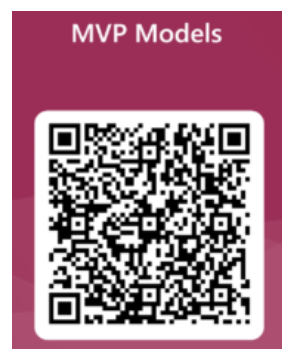
These resources will ensure a more consistent approach to the MVP programme. The main difference going forward is that schools will collect their own impact data, although this will be shared with their local authority coordinator and the national team.



## School Models

This year we invited schools to share the model they use to deliver MVP. Schools can complete a google form accessed via a link or a QR code. This information is then shared on the [MVP website](#).

Practitioners have shared that this is useful for them especially when they are at the beginning of their MVP journey.



### ESAS MVP Mapping

One of the actions from the Equally Safe Delivery Plan is that by the end of 2026 all secondary schools should be registered with Equally Safe at School (ESAS) and all key staff should have undertaken the ESAS e-learning module. Education Scotland are working with Rape Crisis to create a mapping tool which aims to support schools to understand how to best implement policy and guidance and how a range of resources can be used to work most effectively and efficiently together.

ESAS works alongside other tools by offering a broad framework for addressing gender-based violence. It complements programs like Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) and the Rape Crisis Sexual Violence Prevention Programme by raising awareness, providing training, and resources.



Schools can include MVP in their ESAS action plan and include peer education sessions delivered through MVP as part of their curriculum. MVP mentors can use the skills and insights developed through MVP to feed into the ESAS staff-student action group.

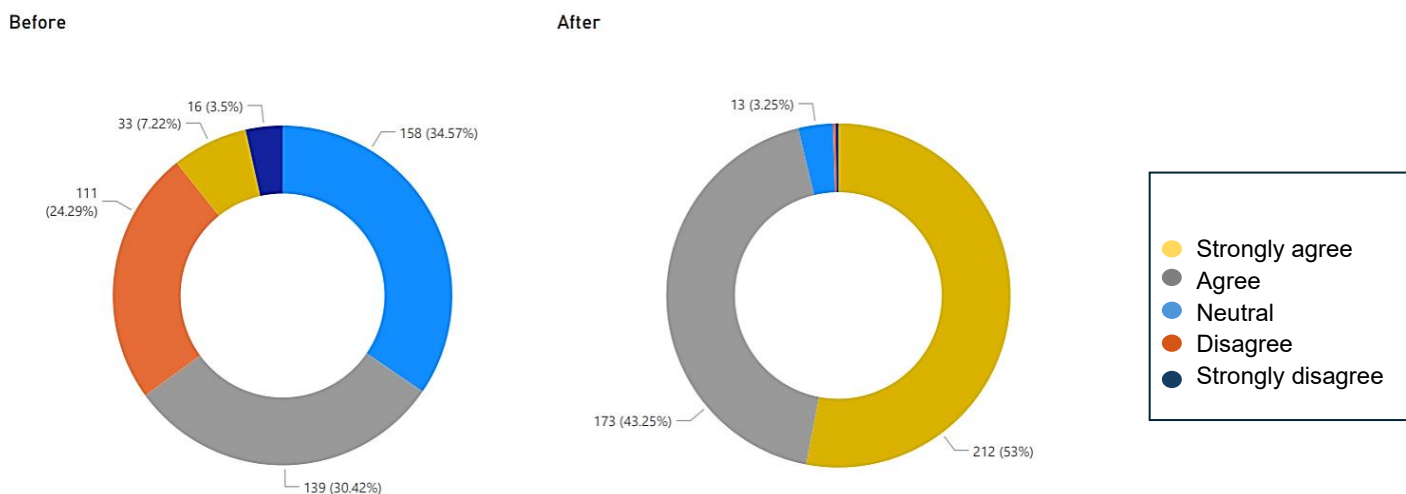


# Impact

## 1. Impact of Professional Learning

Leadership is key to the success of preventing gender-based violence in schools: knowledgeable and confident staff are therefore crucial. Surveys for pre- and post-learning were received from professional learning participants. These staff comprised mainly teachers but included Community Learning & Development, Police Scotland and other partners. The number of participants to complete surveys before the professional learning was 457 and 401 were completed after training. The graph below outlines the changes in responses to the following statement:

*I have the necessary skills to educate others about sexual harassment, dating violence & sexual assault in my work.*

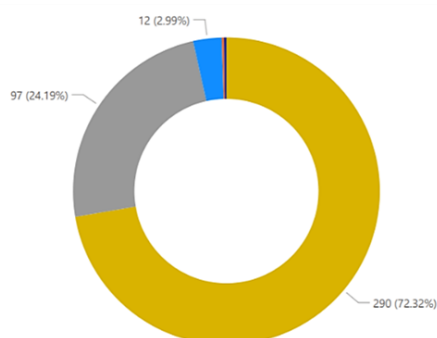


Following training, the percentage of participants who agreed or strongly agreed with the statement increased from 37.6% to 96.3% and the percentage that disagreed or strongly disagreed decreased from 27.8% to 1.5%. This highlights a positive shift in perceptions of skill set around educating others about gender-based violence and sexual assault.

The graphs below summarise the responses to a number of statements related to the professional learning:

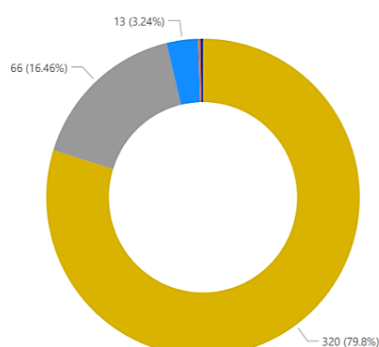


1. I feel more prepared to intervene in difficult situations involving friends, colleagues and peers.



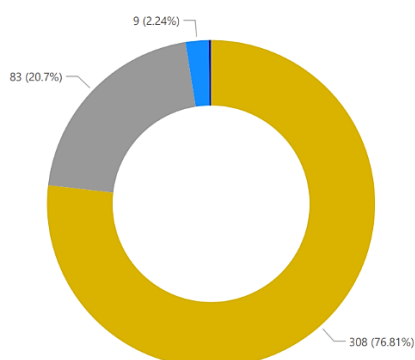
As part of the post training evaluation, 96.4% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that this professional learning helped them to feel more prepared to intervene in difficult situations involving friends, colleagues and peers.

2. The professional learning helped to raise my awareness about gender-based violence.



As part of the post training evaluation, 96.2% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that this professional learning helped to raise their awareness of GBV.

3. I would recommend this professional learning to my friends and colleagues.



As part of the post training evaluation, 97.5% of participants said they would recommend this professional learning to others. This is 391 out of 401 participants.

The majority of participants strongly agreed that the information presented was important to know, raised their awareness of gender-based violence and helped them feel prepared to intervene in difficult situations involving friends, colleagues and peers. The responses suggested that the training is highly valued.

## Examples of what staff found useful included:

“Overall, a very useful course, I found the information about how I could intervene when I witness violence very useful and now feel comfortable on how I would handle a situation” *East Ayrshire Council*

“Both days were inspiring and thought provoking. Absolutely a great thing that we feel passionate about implementing in our school”  
*Midlothian Council*

“Exploring definitions of abuse alongside ways to show respect, developing an understanding of the scope of GBV and its prevalence in the media”  
*City of Edinburgh Council*

“The whole program was fabulous, and supported throughout”  
“The activities that can be transferred into lessons with young people”  
“Raising awareness of how easy it is to actually do something when faced with a situation where something isn't right”  
*Clackmannanshire Council*

“All the opportunities to discuss things. It was a good mixture of information and practical tasks. In a very open and safe space. Trainers were very approachable”  
*North Lanarkshire Council*

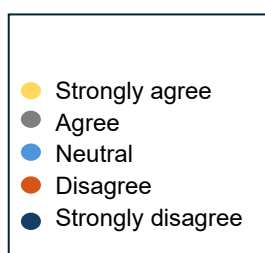
“All of it, but particularly specific laws around consent and how to educate young people about these and possible grey areas”  
*South Ayrshire Council*

## 2. School Lead Impact Survey

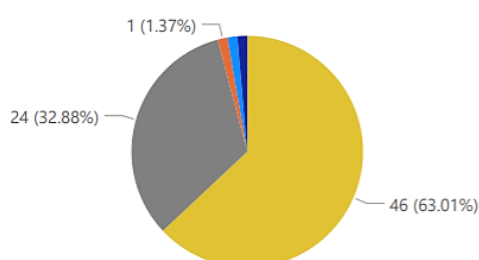
MVP School Leads were asked to complete a survey exploring the impact of MVP at the end of the academic year. The survey was divided into 3 distinct parts: impact on Mentors, impact on Mentees and impact on the culture and ethos of the school. Seventy-three responses were received from staff across nineteen Local Authorities. The results are below:

### 2.1 Impact on Mentors (senior pupils)

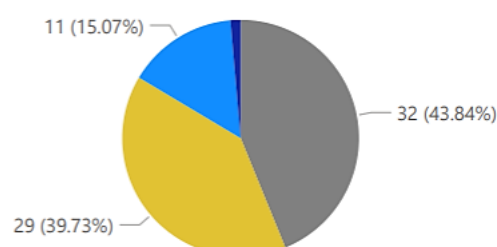
Responses received are detailed below:



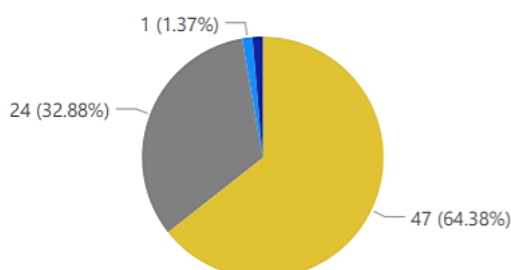
MVP has helped mentors better understand gender-based violence



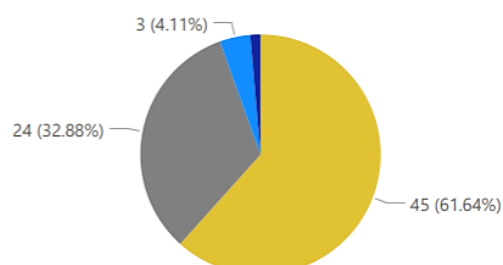
Following training and delivery, MVP mentors are more likely to take action when they are aware of abuse taking place.



MVP has helped mentors increase their understanding of healthy and unhealthy relationships.



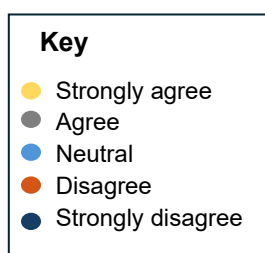
Mentors' leadership skills have improved through involvement with MVP.



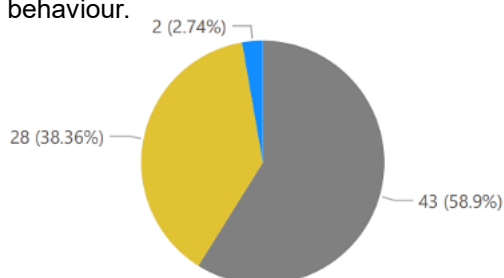
Most staff agreed or strongly agreed that mentor understanding of healthy and unhealthy relationships had increased as had their understanding of gender-based violence. In addition, the majority agreed or strongly agreed that mentors would be more likely to act if they were aware of abuse taking place. Most felt mentor leadership skills had improved.

## 2.2 Impact on Mentees (younger pupils receiving MVP lessons)

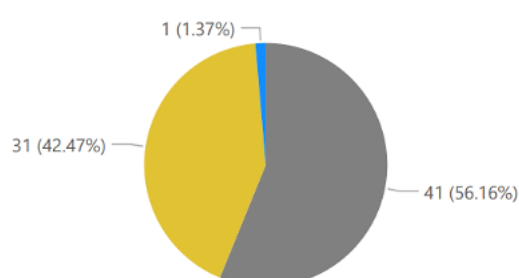
Responses received are detailed below:



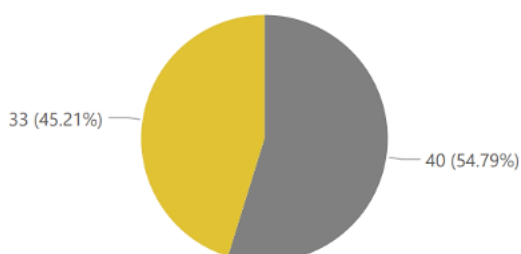
Mentees have an increased knowledge of different ways they can help if they are aware of abusive behaviour.



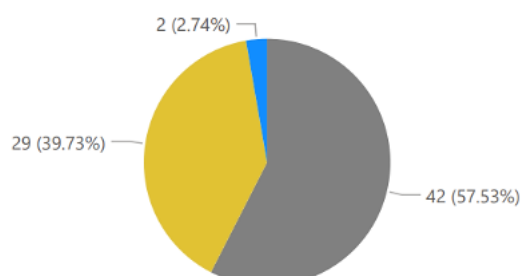
MVP has helped mentees increase their understanding of healthy and unhealthy relationships.



MVP has helped mentees understand that violence can be more than just physical acts.



Through MVP, mentees have an increased understanding that gender stereotyping can be harmful.



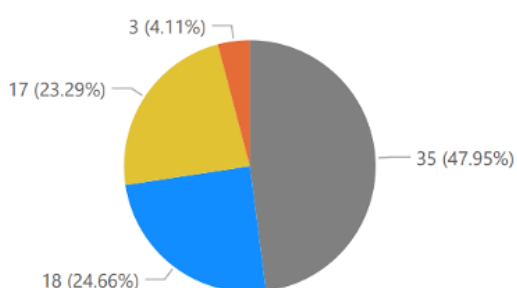
Staff agreed or strongly agreed that mentees had an increased understanding of healthy and unhealthy relationships and that violence can be more than physical acts. Nearly all agreed or strongly agreed that mentees had an increased knowledge of different ways they can help if they are aware of abusive behaviour and that gender stereotyping can be harmful to health. No staff disagreed or strongly disagreed with any of the statements.

## 2.3 Impact on ethos and culture of the school

Responses received are detailed below with the key to responses as follows:

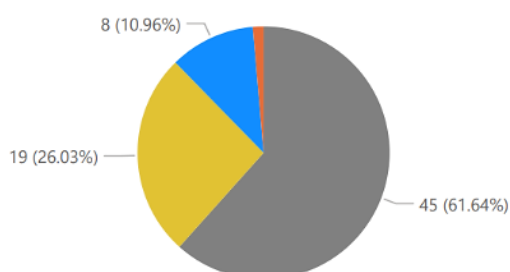


Following delivery of MVP, the number of younger pupils who raise a concern or ask for help for themselves or a friend has increased.



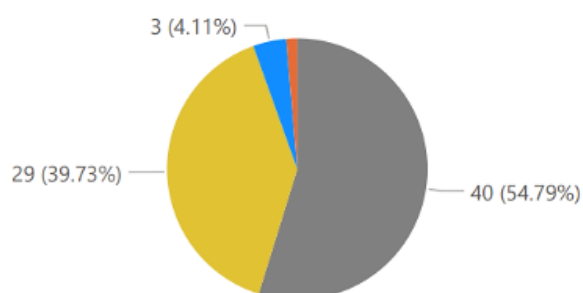
Fifty-two out of seventy-three school leads (71%) agreed or strongly agreed that younger pupils are more likely to raise a concern or seek help following MVP sessions.

MVP has contributed to building positive relationships in our school community.



Sixty-five out of seventy-three school leads (88%) agreed or strongly agreed that MVP has contributed to building positive relationships in their school community.

MVP has helped to ensure that gender-based violence is viewed as unacceptable in our school.



Sixty-nine out of seventy-three school leads (95%) agreed or strongly agreed that younger pupils viewed gender-based violence as unacceptable in their school.

## 2.4 What staff said about the impact

### On mentors:

- “One Mentor built up the confidence to speak to a whole year group in order to recruit new Mentors”. *Glasgow City Council*
- “We have seen a lot of instances where boys who would have previously struggled in school and had a negative view of what masculinity means, become more confident in themselves and strong advocates for educating others”. *Renfrewshire Council*
- “Two Mentors came across a bullying incident where one pupil was getting picked on by numerous others, they intercepted and defused the situation before taking the pupil to safety and reporting it to SLT”. *Moray Council*

### On mentees:

- “We have an increased number of students, especially in S1, reporting that they are unhappy with an incident that they have been aware of. They are reporting in order that it can be dealt with”. *Scottish Borders Council*
- “Younger pupils have spoken to mentors about problems they encounter and sought help if they are unsure what to do”. *City of Edinburgh Council*
- “An S2 pupil brought their friend to their pastoral care teacher after convincing them that images and messages they had been exposed to online were harmful and wrong”. *East Renfrewshire Council*
- “We had an S1 boy who was using inappropriate language towards another pupil. I had a male MVP mentor speak to this pupil and there have been no more reports of inappropriate language towards others”. *East Dunbartonshire Council*

### On school ethos and culture:

- “Led to a number of pupils being part of our ESAS action group”. *Scottish Borders Council*
- “Decrease in physical altercations between males and females in S1 and S2. This was never a serious issue but the immature pushing and shoving at interval and lunch between boys and girls has minimised”. *Renfrewshire Council*
- “While we are all aware of the increase in gender-based violence and behaviour, involvement in MVP ensures that it is discussed openly and recognised as unacceptable”. *Highland council*



# GBV Early intervention Professional Learning

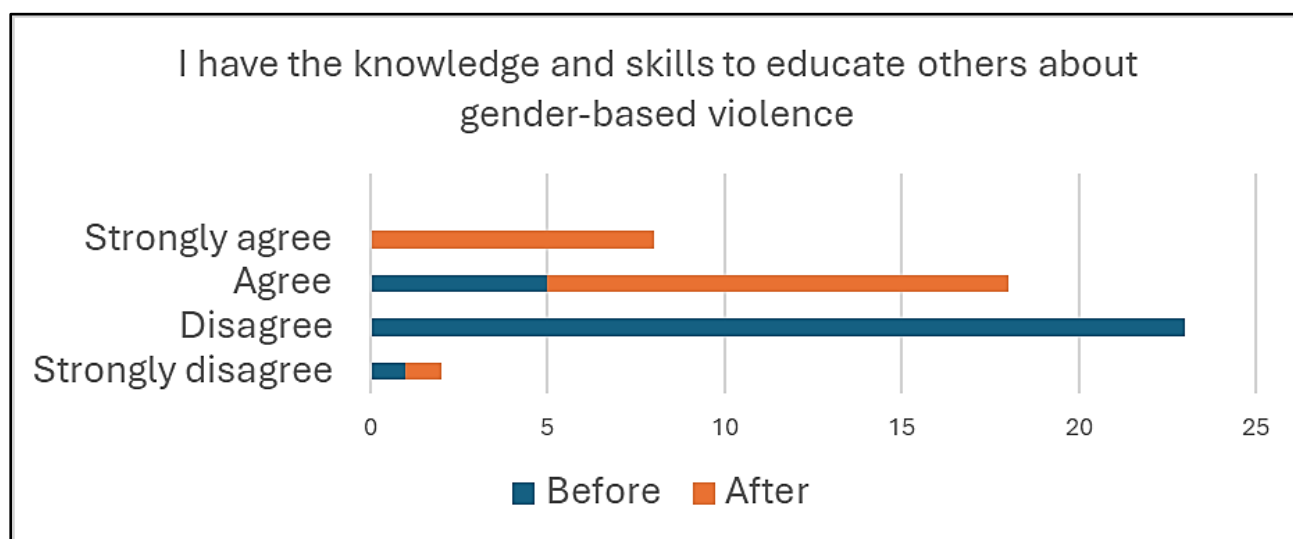
A key development this year has been the delivery of the Gender-Based Violence Early Intervention professional learning pilot. This initiative was in response to requests for support from primary schools and the clear statistics illustrating how even young children can be harmed by gender-based violence.

Four local authorities took part in the pilot with participants providing valuable feedback that helped to shape the Train the Trainer materials. Two Train the Trainer (TTT) days then took place in which lead staff were trained in the materials to enable them to deliver training in their own local authority. Staff were asked to come in pairs with two areas of expertise covered by the staff: the health and wellbeing curriculum and gender-based violence.

## Impact of the pilot professional learning

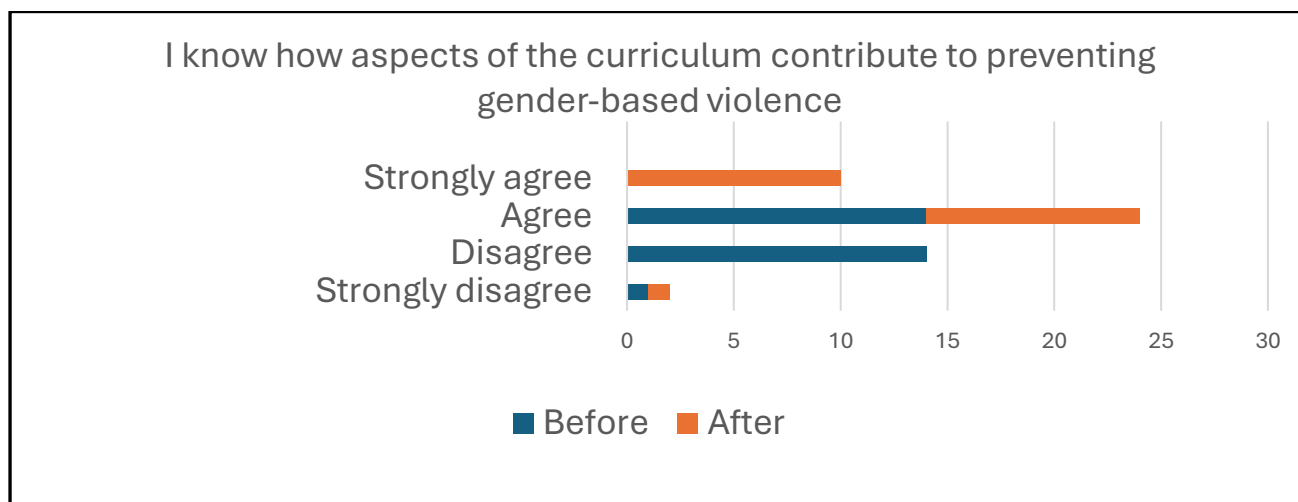
Staff were given pre and post surveys to gather their views and to assess impact. The number of participants who completed surveys before the professional learning was 29 and 23 were completed after training.

Below are staff responses which show the shift in self-reported knowledge and skills related to teaching others about gender-based violence.



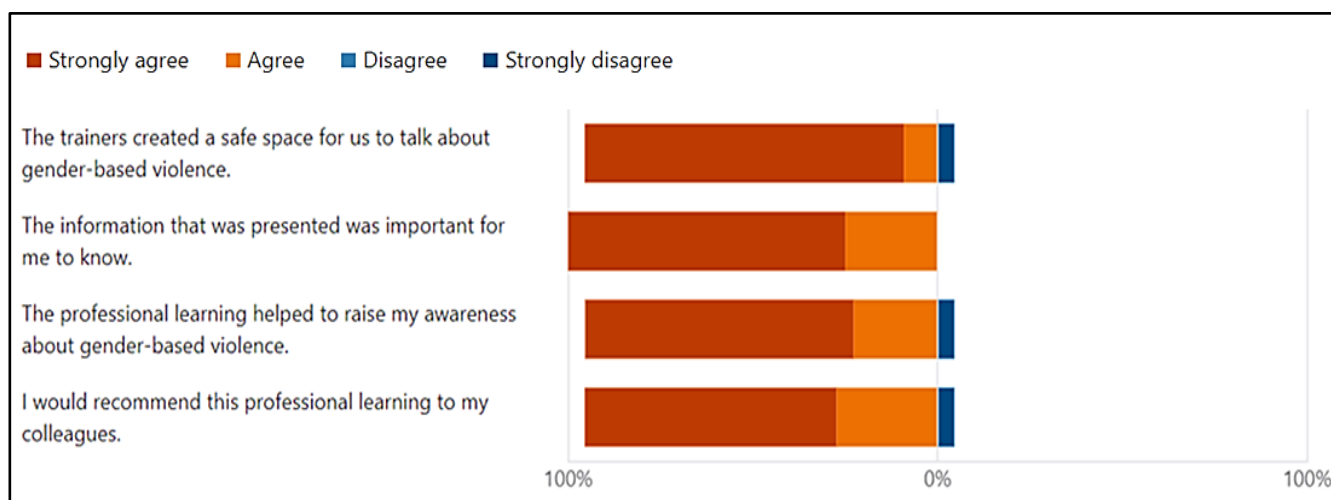
There was a shift from 17% to 95% in terms of those who agreed or strongly agreed with the statement 'I have the knowledge and skills to educate others about gender-based violence'.

Below are the responses regarding knowledge of how to incorporate prevention into the curriculum.



There was a shift from 48% to 100% in terms of those who agreed or strongly agreed with the statement 'I know how aspects of the curriculum contribute to preventing gender-based violence'.

The graph below summarises responses to a number of statements related to the professional learning:



As can be seen from the responses this training was highly rated by nearly all participants. When asked what they particularly valued in the professional learning, the following aspects were mentioned:

- Their increased knowledge and understanding
- Time to plan
- Reflection on their own practice
- Signposting to resources
- Group activities/talking to colleagues

## Feedback on the GBV Early Intervention TTT professional learning

Following the pilot two TTT events took place with 29 staff across 10 local authorities attending. Post surveys were undertaken to see if this GBV Early Intervention TTT model was meeting the intended aims and to see if improvements could be made. Eighteen out of the 29 staff completed the survey (62%). Participants were asked to rate the following statements on a scale with 1=very poor and 5=very good.



Statement	Score
<i>How would you rate the training overall?</i>	4.94 average
<i>Do you feel the training met the aims that were set out?</i>	4.89 average
<i>Do you feel the training was relevant and appropriate?</i>	4.94 average
<i>Would you recommend this training to other staff?</i>	Yes=100%

Examples of what staff found most useful about the training included:

- "The pace of the day and the openness for discussion as we progressed through the material"
- "The resources listed that can be used to go hand in hand with the training being rolled out"
- "Looking at the differences in implementing between primary and secondary - very interesting, good mix and conversations"
- "Challenging stereotypes"
- "Opportunity to discuss and see how this aligns with other work"
- "A very useful course. An area that needs looking at in more depth in our schools"

The main challenge moving forward will be the capacity of trainers to roll out the professional learning given the number of primary and early year and childcare settings.

# Jackson Katz Events

This year, Dr Jackson Katz, founder of Mentors in Violence Prevention, visited Scotland to promote the role of men in preventing violence against women and girls. Education Scotland worked with partners to organise two events; a day event aimed at young people and an evening event for practitioners.

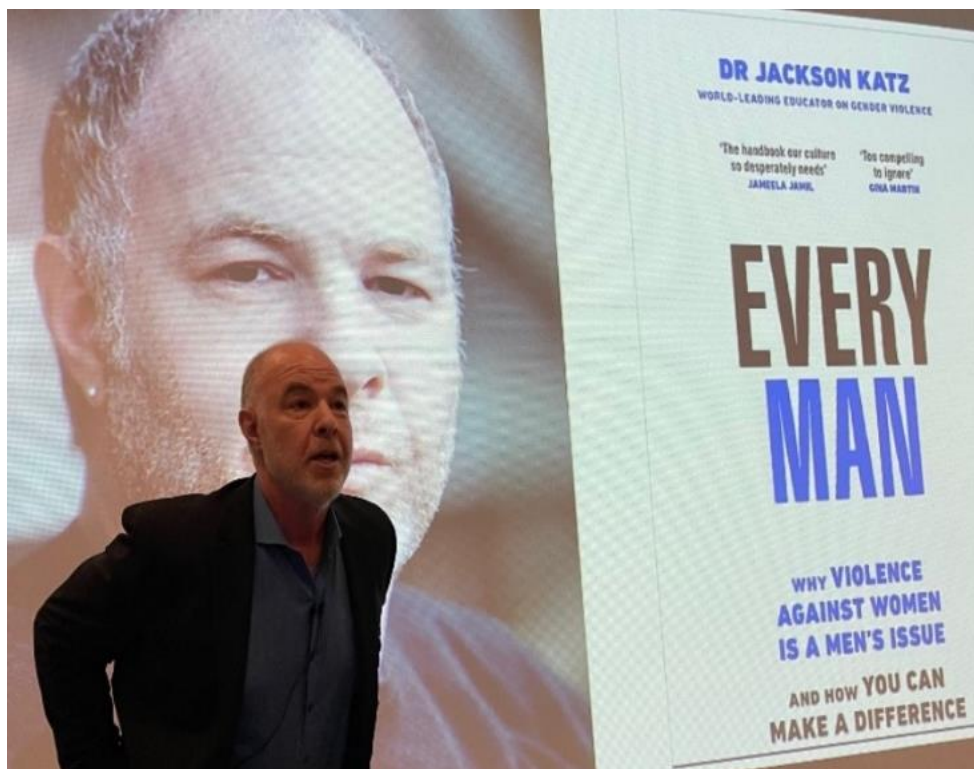
## Evening event 2 June 2025: The Role of Men and Masculinities in Preventing Violence Against Women



### An evening with Jackson Katz

THE ROLE OF MEN AND  
MASCULINITIES IN PREVENTING  
VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

The event for professionals was organised in partnership with Glasgow Caledonian University. There were speakers from Education Scotland, the Healthy Masculinity Alliance, Time for Inclusive Education (TIE) and the keynote speaker Dr Jackson Katz. It was attended by over a hundred professionals.

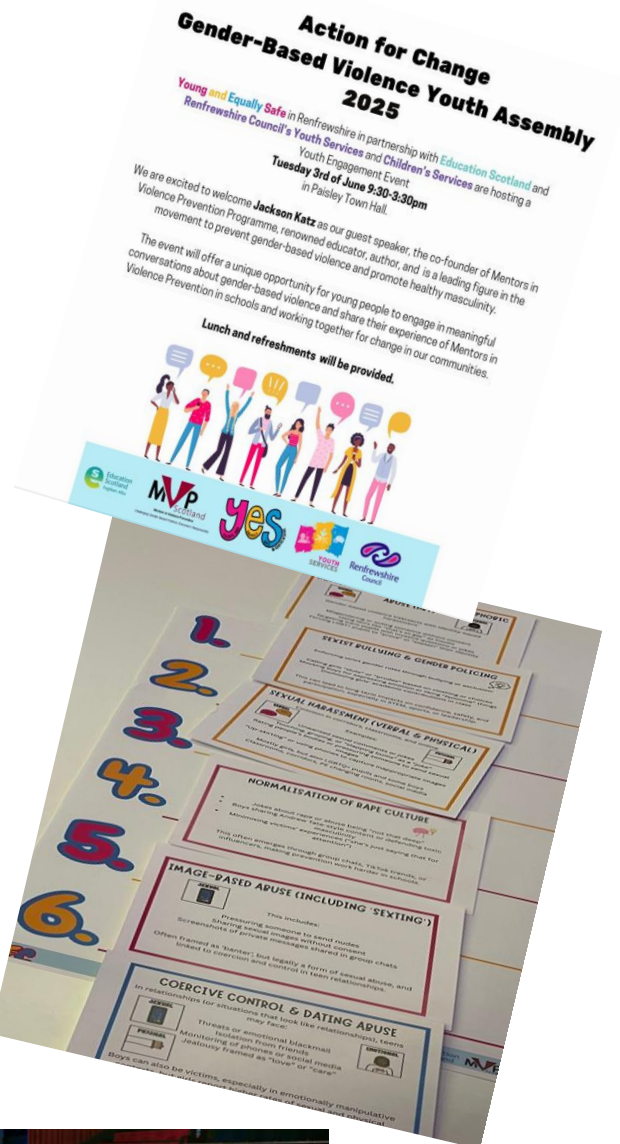


## Jackson Katz Day event 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2025- Action for Change Youth assembly

This event was organised by Young and Equally Safe in Renfrewshire in partnership with Education Scotland and Renfrewshire Council's Youth Services and Children's Services. The event was opened by Renfrewshire's Provost Lorraine Cameron who spoke from a local perspective. A Senior Education Officer from Education Scotland spoke from a national perspective.

The event brought together young people, MVP mentors, youth work and education professionals from local authorities in Scotland to engage in interactive sessions around gender-based violence and to consider how to take action.

A standout moment was a keynote speech by Jackson Katz on positive masculinity, emphasising the critical role of everyone, but especially men and boys in preventing gender-based violence

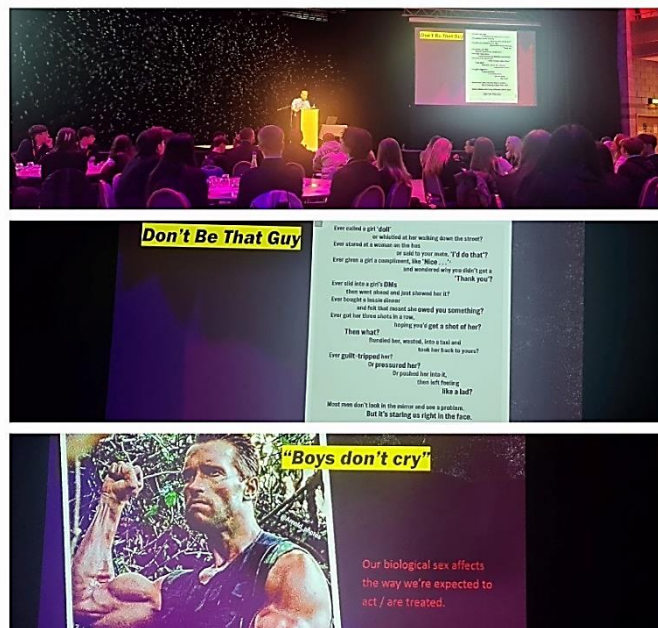




# Local Authority Events

## Fife Young Persons GBV Conference - Fife

A collaboration between Fife Education and Fife's VAWG partnership, this event was attended by almost 150 senior MVP mentors and their staff support teams in the run up to the 16 Days of Activism. Guest speaker Alan Bissett, Scottish author and script writer for the film that featured in the 'That Guy' campaign, spoke about his book 'Lads' and the rise in misogyny amongst young men. MVP mentors from Balwearie High school delivered the MVP misogyny scenario and colleagues from Youth Justice delivered a session on positive masculinity using the 'Imagine a Man' tool kit from Youthlink Scotland.



## VAWG Conference - North Lanarkshire

North Lanarkshire Council and NHS Lanarkshire hosted a full-day event in Feb 2025 at St Ambrose High School, focused on preventing and responding to gender-based violence in schools. The session featured keynote addresses from Laura Bates, founder of the Everyday Sexism Project, and Michael Conroy from Men at Work.

The event marked the relaunch of the MVP programme within the authority and included contributions from Lanarkshire Rape Crisis Centre on the Equally Safe in Schools (ESAS) initiative.

Around 100 delegates attended, representing all 23 secondary schools in the authority, alongside stakeholders from Scottish Government, Education Scotland, Community Learning and Development (CLD), and the broader community and voluntary sector.

## Promoting Positive Masculinity Conference - Perth and Kinross Council

Professionals from a range of backgrounds came together to hear more about the current issues relating to promoting positive masculinity and consider what needs to happen next.

There were keynote speeches from Learning and Families Councillor, Cllr John Rebbeck and Alan Bissett, Scottish author and playwright to set the scene for the conference and in the afternoon an opportunity to engage in a range of workshops from local agencies and groups including RASAC, White Ribbon as well as MVP Mentors and MVP staff looking at misogyny in the classroom.

## Partnership with the University of Northern Iowa

Professor Michael Fleming from the University of Northern Iowa met with the MVP national team to discuss implementation of MVP and our shared /unique challenges. He brought with him a delegation of 22 students and 2 staff.



MVP Scotland, in partnership with the MVP co-ordinator for Glasgow City Council, hosted the delegation. The delegates took part in a highly interactive workshop and found that many of the stereotypes across the Atlantic were similar to Scotland.



## Conclusion

Our core work this year has been to continue to support local authorities and schools engaged in delivering the Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) programme. The aim was to both increase the reach of the programme and to improve the quality assurance related to delivery. The development of the quality assurance booklets will support all staff involved to ensure MVP is delivered to a high standard wherever it is adopted.

It is a tribute to the teachers, youth workers, Local Authority Co-ordinators and partners that MVP has continued to run in so many schools and restart or begin in many others, despite the competing demands in schools. The commitment of mentors and the relevance of the topics are two key reasons that MVP has endured.

A key development this year has been the delivery of the Gender-Based Violence Early Intervention professional learning pilot. Four local authorities took part with participants providing valuable feedback that helped to shape the Train the Trainer materials. This led to the delivery of two Train the Trainer days where lead staff were trained in the materials to enable them to deliver the materials in their own local authority. Feedback was highly encouraging.

The development of the new sextortion scenario is another welcome resource, and we look forward to hearing from schools about how it is received.