

### **Girls and gangs: Session 3.** Trusting me breaking free

Aims:

- To explore the how to guard your personal space
- To built awareness of how non-verbal communication can influence feeling
- To explore how negative comments/behaviour deflates and positive/comments inflates

Objective:

- Gain awareness of how to protect your personal space
- Become alert to own and others use of non verbal communication
- Gain awareness of how to turn a negative comment into a positive

1. Warm up energiser: personal space(10mins)

**Intention:**

This exercise is for participants to gain an understanding of how to recognise non verbal communication as a prerequisite to danger. How a person looks, walks, stands, whether they keep eye contact, hands on hips, can communicate assumptions about a person; however prevention is better than cure. Therefore this exercise deals with safety first, knowing how you feel. If you in a situation where you feel uncomfortable or in danger you should trust your instincts and use appropriate strategies to alleviate your feeling and avoid the situation. You have a right to your own personal space, no person has a right to enter it without your permission. Explore situation where it is appropriate for people to be in your space but you still need to be aware e.g. London tube rush hour, public swimming baths, lifts

#### **Warm up energiser: personal space**

Student are to stand in 2s facing each other about 10 paces apart, number them 1 and 2. When instructed by the facilitator they are to keep eye contact with their partner. When told 2 will walk towards 1 keeping eye contact, when 1 feel they are in their space or to close they should put up their hand to signal stop, keep eye contact (10secs). Facilitator will instruct 2 to place their hands on their hips, keep eye contact (10secs). 2 will then turn to the right (10secs) then turn and walk back to where they started.

Facilitator to discuss feeling:

How did 1 feel?

How did 2 feel?

What was most uncomfortable?

What was comfortable?

When first felt uncomfortable?

How did it feel to be able to say stop?

## 2. Strategies for leaving gang life (or better still not getting involved in the first place)(20mins)

### **Intention:**

This exercise is to gain an understanding of what the groups' perceptions are about why girls get involved in gangs or involved in relationships with gang members and explore what kind of circumstances would make them vulnerable targets. The aim is to see that there are a lot of ways in which girls can fall susceptible to gangs, background, class and where you live are just a few things which can have a strong influence on vulnerability. Once involved girls can be made to feel alone, afraid, suicidal, used, obligated and most important that there is no way out. This exercise will look at various ways of preventing involvement but also to know where or who you can go to for help or advice was needed such as police, Samaritans, child line, parents, teachers, family, GP.

### **Strategies for leaving gang life**

Split into groups of 3, give out flip chart paper and pens, and list how girls can make themselves vulnerable to violent gangs.

Feedback to main group, discuss how girls can be vulnerable and get involved with gangs?

Split into groups of 3, give out flip chart paper and pens, and list how would you get away, what help is available?

Feedback to main group, discuss if you were involved in a with a gang/gang member how would you get away, what help is available?

Facilitator should discuss strategies for prevention using feedback from small groups.

## 3. Positive Shower? (30mins)

### **Intention:**

Many young people involved in gangs will say that they have received negative comments about themselves whether from other young people, parents, teachers or so called friends. Participants should be asked to share some of these comments and to explain how they made them feel. Facilitator can give some example such as being told by a teacher 'you're not smart enough and will end up in jail' or a friend teasing about size or quality of dress; how would that make participants feel. Some responses may be feel sad, angry, unloved, stupid, a tramp, fat, bully. The aim is to become aware of how negative comments can make a person feel and also gain an understanding of how negative comment can shatter confidence and influence negative behaviour.

Being awareness of how to turn a negative comment to your advantage can alleviate pressure on self and build self esteem and confidence. Participants are to take away their positive showers/affirmations and read them daily.

### **Positive Shower**

Participants will be asked to write down 4 to 6 negative things which they have had said to them (or others that they know) as regards lifestyle, looks, ability or learning, i.e. "you will never amount to anything". With the help of the facilitators participants will be guided to come up with positive alternatives saying i.e. "you have the ability to be anything you want"

Break into two groups of 4 facilitators to take part. Person 1 sits on chair; person 2 sits on chair opposite person 3 and 4 stand in middle on both sides of chairs. Person 1 closes eyes while person 2 reads the words person 1 wrote, person 3 and 4 read a generic positive list put together by facilitators. The sayings are to be read continuously for 1 minute. Person 2 then replaces person 1 and so on Group to reconvene and discuss session

Facilitator should explore how each participant felt, how did they feel, were they nervous, if so why? At did they feel at various points of the exercise? How did it feel being sat in the chair? How did it feel standing up? What words/saying stroke most emotionally, why? Would they recommend this exercise to other? Why/why not?

End session