

JUNE 2021

**Barking &  
Dagenham**

# Youth at Risk Matrix

**YARM Report, June 2021**



# Overview

The Youth At Risk Matrix (YARM) has been running for over three years now in Barking and Dagenham (LBBD). It was set up to reduce the number of children becoming involved in exploitative situations or criminality and therefore reducing the number of children entering the youth justice system. The service began with just 2 support workers working alongside secondary schools in the borough to work with young people identified by the school as needing support based on the matrix criteria. Over the three years it has built a good reputation and both primary and secondary schools have asked for more support which has led to an increase in the support workers to eight workers now being in place.

## Key objectives

Key objectives of the work is to :

- work with key partners and stakeholders to identify young people at risk of becoming involved in criminal activity and at higher risk of entering the youth justice system in Barking and Dagenham.
- monitor and MAP those young people identified via the screening tool in Barking and Dagenham
- offer mentoring and diversion activities to the individuals identified by the Matrix
- prevent the further development of becoming involved in more serious offending or exploitation within Barking and Dagenham
- highlight what to look for and support decision making and professional decisions regarding specific young people.
- seek to reduce the fear of crime and improve the public perception in relation to gang related activity

# Section I: Music Sessions

Recently the team has delivered sessions within two schools on positive drill and the spoken word. This aims to promote the use of clean drill music without the need for violence and calling out other young people, however, does support the young people's feeling and past experiences and offers them a platform to address their emotions without putting them at risk or exposing them.

This is done with a professional music producer and artist. The aim of the sessions is to produce 4 music tracks and accompanying videos, and so far the young people engaged with this project have found it helpful and therapeutic.



To access via pdf follow:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/9if9rjhi8248ni7/Video%20May%2027%2C%2011%2031%2049.mp4?dl=0>

## Music sessions under lockdown restrictions

### Teacher feedback

"I have been working with our students for the last 2/3 years and have realised that they all need role models. They need to see and hear positivity on a daily basis. It is very pleasing to see them nurture a skill, master a problem, create an idea and develop their understanding of creative skills in music. Quinton and the supporting tutors have been working very well with our students and they have formed a really good rapport. In collaboration (with Quinton) I think we work quite effective together as we both come from a strong musical background and share a similar passion for music"



To access via pdf follow:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/73v623fbgoayd5l/Video%20May%2027%2C%2010%2038%2006.mp4?dl=0>

## Music sessions

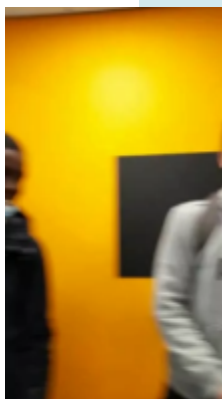
### Young people's feedback

"I found the workshops a good experience for me and if I was to do it again, I would like the organiser to be more present in the sessions."

"I enjoyed the workshop and found it a good experience. I think that online wasn't as good"

"I enjoyed working with Quinton and we learned a lot from the rap industry, and we learned how to freestyle in different ways and I am looking forward to working with him again."

### Feedback from young people, using only one word



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Shared with Dropbox  
dropbox.com

To access via pdf follow:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/rf1lbv5nkeewtj5/f10de59f-7101-4fa9-af54-5654a29d34d9.MP4?dl=0>

## Music sessions

### Feedback from the provider, Quinton

“

*In recent Weeks MMAP Workshops have delivered Collaborative Music Sessions with the Yarm Team in Barking & Dagenham.*

*The staff - led by Leigh Arscott - have been an integral part of our Remote Classes and they have made every effort to attend in person to support where possible. YARM have been organised and astute in a learning environment, encouraging the YP to explore creativity and embolden their peers.*

*The YARM team has maintained good working relationships with the Young People throughout the project. Leigh has ensured that we report back as a means to identifying where improvements/adjustments can be made. The YARM team has been an invaluable cornerstone at the heart of every aspect of our creative writing workshops. Leigh and the others have made themselves available across the working day and beyond. They seem galvanised by a genuine passion and a real belief in what can be achieved. As an external contributor I've been made to feel like I'm part of the team without question. Most notably, there is no place for ego or hierarchy. We have approached the project with mutual respect, listening and actioning suggestions with an unreserved confidence.*

*I'm confident that our strong working relationship has been observed by the YP and subsequently a Safe, Fun & Productive learning environment has been created across the project, which undoubtedly leads to good learning outcomes. In summary, an amazing team with an exemplary Senior officer. A pleasure to work with...*

”



# Section II:

## YARM Sessions

The YARM team have also offered training, information, and discussions within 4 key areas that are common with the young people we are working with. This has been delivered to 120 key professionals across the borough to assist them in working with young people in schools. They have covered the following topics.

- Prison awareness and the importance of staying in education.
- Peer pressure and issues with friendships, being exploited and exposed to criminal activities.
- Street slang, what some of the language means and knowing what to look out for with regards to safeguarding, also drill music, what it means to young people, the different types, negative and positive elements. Also safeguarding young people within this arena.
- Knife crime Awareness. This is run with the MET Police and the Ben Kinsella trust, this explores why young people may carry knives, what the effects and facts are and how to educate people with knife crime.

## YARM Sessions

### Feedback from parent/carer(s) and professionals

“

*Each sessions gave me either an update on my knowledge or clarified the knowledge that I had. I have been able to use my learning. for example following the Slang and Drill we had a year 6 pupil upset about an anniversary of a death after discussing with mum she explained it was an anniversary of a murder via stabbing and a song had been put out about it, I was able to talk to her about knife crime keeping her son safe and we talked about Drill*

”

## What participants would like to see more of

- “more of the same throughout the year”
- “managing violent behaviour/youth violence from those not known to the police including violence from teens to their parents”
- “Further work on County Lines.”
- “To cover more about county lines within the Gangs remit?”
- “Drugs and alcohol?”
- “Inappropriate use of social media, sexting for example.”
- “Girls in gangs”
- “all other situations the children, young people/adults are involved in, it's important if we can help in any way possible. we need to be able to help the next two generations for society sake and these children sake”



## Gang and exploitation trauma awareness sessions

We have also delivered training to Council staff around gang and exploitation trauma awareness with the Police Gangs unit which was well received and is creating a more informed work force in spotting the signs and symptoms.

### Feedback

*"I would highly recommend this training, I was kept engaged throughout, learnt some new information and techniques to use with families"*

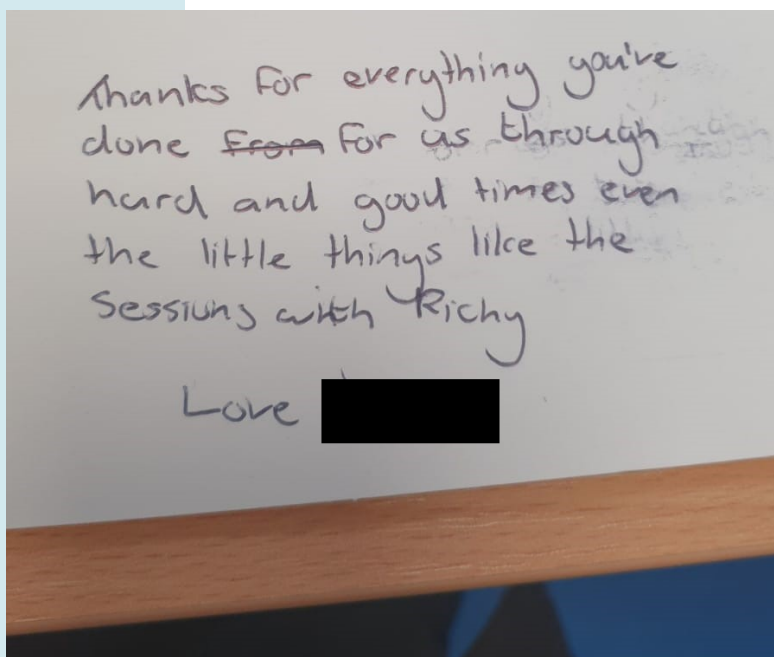
*"The trainers explained the content with video examples that explained most things about gang and exploitation culture"*

## Section III: Working with children and young people

The YARM is also flexible enough in its work to be able to respond to service needs. The workers have more recently delivered group work to a wider cohort of children and engaged another 50 children from four schools in specific activities to address concerns after witnessing violent incidents.

The YARM team were asked to respond to this within the schools and have put in place group support, this is for young people who have witnessed a stabbing outside of a school. The group gave them a safe space to talk about their thoughts with regards to the incident, how safe they feel and what professionals can implement to make them feel safer.

The schools have fed back that this is having a positive impact on the young people involved.



## One-to-one and group sessions

### Feedback from a young person

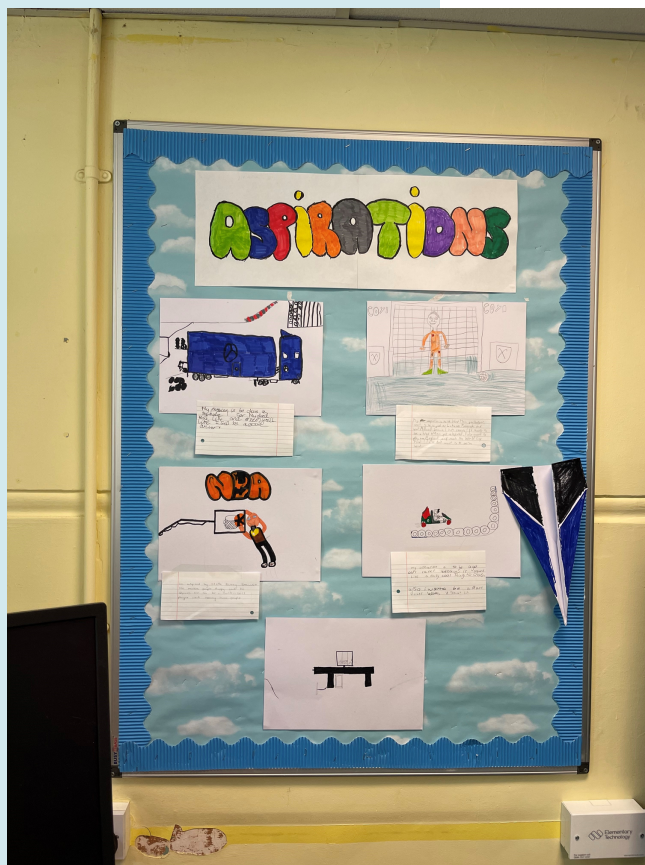
“I really enjoy working with YARM, as I feel like I have someone I can talk to and share what I am feeling and they are actually listening. It is nice to have someone I can relate to give their advice and I enjoy looking at topics that us young people are going through today”

## Referrals into the YARM

This was a message that described how a young person's friend was having some issues, and drawing on their experience with the YARM, wanted to know if they could access support.



# Example of Year 5/6 groupwork Aspirations



We have been working with Primary school's year 5 and 6 to engage children who are vulnerable within their community to criminality, this is with one to one and group sessions. Through the training schools have been able to recognise the early signs and this has assisted in identifying the children we need to reach at an early stage looking at preventative approach.

# Working with children and young people

## Participation



To visit via pdf follow: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dPsYxdYehWg>

We have continued the work around participation for our young people (above) and have involved them in a young person's panel for recruiting new member of staff who work with young people, the young people have interviewed over 20 potential staff members. We have had some wonderful feedback from the school the young people attend.

### Testimonial, Interim Head of Children's Commissioning

"We got such a good outcome from the video in terms of securing the right candidates to apply for the role and this video had a real impact, the two young people that the YARM assisted in the video were part of the interview and selection panel for the independent scrutineer. Their views were instrumental in the appointment of the right candidate. As a result, the Independent Scrutineer, who has been was appointed, understands the lived experiences of our young people and can best represent their safeguarding needs on the Safeguarding Children's Partnership"

# **Working with children and young people**

## **Professionals feedback**

Many of the teachers and staff in schools report that the YARM work has impacted the lives of many young people in the borough and achieved positive outcomes for many who were struggling to maintain places in mainstream schools.

## **Feedback in response to a serious incident**

"Working in partnership with school and YARM has had positive effects towards the behaviour, attitudes, and lives of the young people he is working with"

"A prime example is the most recent stabbing. After finding out that the victim was the brother of the young person works with YARM, I called YARM to inform him of the incident. They were extremely proactive in contacting the family of the young person (who have instantly warmed to them), where they were able to disclose some key information regarding the attack. Such information included the school the alleged perpetrators went to, exactly how the attack happened and what had been circulating on social media."

"To my understanding, the YARM were able to use the key information that was disclosed by the family, to communicate with the relevant agencies. After YARM spoke with me a few moments later to report back on what the family had disclosed, I called our School Safety Police officer, who was already at the alleged perpetrators' school with 5 other police officers making an imminent arrest. This was all based on recent information they had been given."

## Section IV: Working with professionals

We hold YARM termly meetings with over 60 professionals attending which was a great success, this offers us a forum to update the schools on the projects we are able to offer the young people, allows all to network, exchange local information such as negative trends within school that schools maybe experiencing and how can we work together to implement positive changes. We have found through these meetings that schools are communicating more clearly with one another and building better working relationships.

This year we have introduced Primary as well as Secondary schools to our meetings, also other partner agencies and voluntary sector organisations.

### **Feedback, Designated Safeguarding Lead**

“I have left the YARM meeting this week better informed about the wider safeguarding picture in our local area. The presenters were well prepared and engaging. Part of the meeting being after school time was helpful for me, overall it was time usefully used”



# Joint working and skill sharing

## Targeted early help

The Targeted Youth workers have completed personal development by completing an induction into the YARM team, this has allowed resources to be pooled as required to alleviate service delay.

The Targeted Youth workers and the Targeted Early Help team attended the Gangs Awareness training, to broaden their skills and raise awareness, better understand risks and support.

### **Current developments**

Both of our teams are completing a programme of support for Year 6 pupils transitioning to secondary schools. Opportunities for our teams to shadow each other have been arranged, a joint evaluation is scheduled to take place July – August 2021

The plan for September 2021 is to provide a combined service for Year 6 pupils on a universal and targeted basis, to prepare them for their safe and successful transition into secondary school.

It is great that we continue to work closely together to enable a comprehensive and responsive offer to our young people.

# Section V: Future Plans

## **Apprenticeship**

We are planning to take on a young person apprenticeship role, this will be to work across the SIS (Specialist Intervention Service) and the YARM with the YARM overseeing the supervision of the young person. The role will involve them understanding both teams, aims goals and processes, to actively take part in group discussions with young people, training professionals and mentoring young people.

## **YARM sessions, training sessions.**

Further roll out of the YARM sessions on a termly basis with a view to increasing the topics. We also intend to have young people attend the sessions and take the lead on aspects of the training for professionals and parents that attend.

## **Podcasts**

We are going to be working with young people on a project that uses podcasts to gain an insight into what is going on for them, this will be around issues in their everyday living and communities, also positive events that they are and would like to be involved in.

# With special thanks to...

London Violence Reduction Unit (VRU)

Primary and Secondary schools and Alternative Provisions across  
Barking and Dagenham

Barking and Dagenham Education Inclusion team

Barking and Dagenham Adolescents Exploitation team

East Area Gangs Unit and Safer Schools Police

Partners across the Step Up, Stay Safe programme

Barking and Dagenham Youth Offending Service

The Ben Kinsella Trust

Future Youth Zone

Lifeline Community Projects

Targeted Early Help Service, Community Solutions

Barking and Dagenham Children's and Adults Commissioning