

UNPACKING
GENDER
RELATED
VIOLENCE

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INTRODUCTION

This training resource aims to explore the significance of language and culture in reinforcing or challenging gender inequalities, violence and Gender Related Violence (GRV) in work with young people. The process of 'Unpacking GRV' is explored through three key stages within this resource: Inform, Assess and Act. It is expected that the 'Inform to Act' process set out within this resource will provide youth practitioners with a framework for exploring GRV within their practice settings and identifying practical steps for action in the prevention of GRV amongst young people. Content within the resource has been described in such a way as to allow it to be used either by individual practitioners or groups of practitioners in reflecting on their practice. Pages one to six work through each of the three key stages of the 'Inform to Act' process. Pages seven to eleven provide a selection of resources and activities to support each stage of the 'Inform to Act' process.

WHY IS GRV IMPORTANT?

References¹:

¹ Maxwell, C. Chase, E., Warwick, I. and Aggleton, P. (2010) Preventing Violence, Promoting Equality: A whole-school approach, London: Institute of Education.

For many organisations within the UK and internationally 'violence against women' is a term used to refer to domestic violence, rape and sexual assault, female genital mutilation, prostitution and pornography. The term 'Gender Based Violence' is also commonly used to describe this area of violence.

Although less widely used, the term 'Gender Related Violence' is used within this resource, as it is a term which seeks to problematise sexist, sexualising or norm-driven bullying, harassment and violence whoever is targeted. This broader definition, therefore, brings together two strands of activism- efforts to challenge violence against women and efforts to tackle homophobia. It is argued that by problematizing gender norms, the values and norms underpinning both these forms of oppression might be undermined.

Whilst it is difficult to make accurate estimates of how many children and young people are impacted by different forms of GRV, research into this issue, such as that produced by Maxwell et al (2010)¹, suggests that 'experiences of inequality and sexual bullying are frequent, almost daily experiences for many young men and women' (p. 24). In setting out the imperative for practitioners to take action on preventing violence and promoting equality Maxwell et al (2010) outline the legal, business and moral cases:

LEGAL

Youth practitioners have legal responsibilities that require them to promote (gender) equality, prevent (sexual) bullying and support those affected by Gender Related Violence.

BUSINESS

There is a strong 'business case' for challenging gender inequality and violence. Young people and staff affected by violence and bullying are likely to have lower attendance rates, as well as being less able to engage within settings where GRV is not proactively challenged.

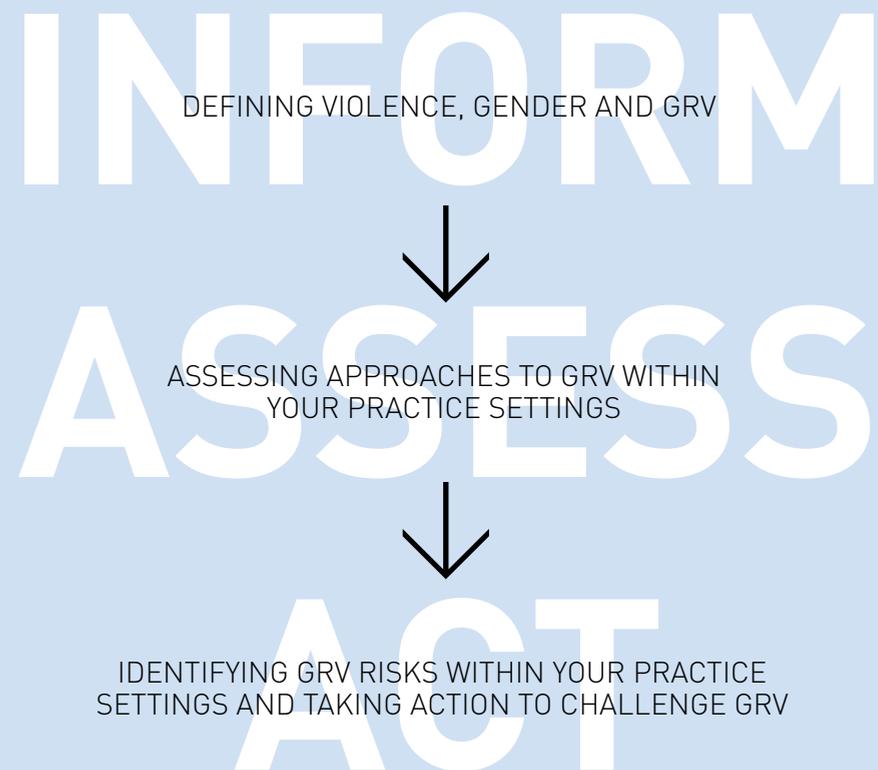
MORAL

Youth practitioners have a moral responsibility to play a role in reducing the gender pay and opportunity gap, and to influence young people's attitudes to inequality and violence.

GRV 'INFORM TO ACT' PROCESS

The three key stages of the GRV 'Inform to Act' process (Figure 1) are described within the following pages. This process is intended to be used to guide discussions about GRV amongst groups of youth practitioners. In order to make the most effective use of any such group discussion, it is recommended that a lead practitioner should first familiarise themselves with the 'Inform to Act' process, and related resources, in order to take on the role of facilitator within a wider group discussion.

FIGURE 1: 'INFORM TO ACT' PROCESS



GRV 'INFORM TO ACT' PROCESS

References:
² Giddens, A. (2009) *Sociology*, Cambridge: Polity Press, p. 601
³ WHO (2002) *World Report on Violence and Health*. Geneva: World Health Organisation, p. 5

INFORM The inform stage explores the concepts of violence and gender as they are used within this resource. The linked activities are intended to prompt discussion and to encourage practitioners to give greater consideration to their individual and organisational understandings of these concepts.

GENDER

What it means to be a man or a woman within 21st century British society is determined by a wide range of factors, including a person's age, culture, upbringing, ethnicity or social class. An important point of reflection for youth practitioners at this point in the process, therefore, is to consider their perceptions of gender. Activity 1 (page 7) is intended to prompt this reflection.

DEFINING GENDER:

'Gender concerns the psychological, social and cultural differences between males and females. Gender, therefore, is linked to socially constructed notions of masculinity and femininity; it is not necessarily a direct product of an individual's biological sex' (Giddens, 2009)²

VIOLENCE

Consider the variety of forms of violence incorporated within the World Health Organisation's (WHO) typology of violence in Figure 2 and the related definition below. An important consideration within the 'Inform to Act'

process is recognising the variety of ways in which young people can experience violence, both as victims and as perpetrators. The WHO's definition of violence emphasises the abusive use of not just physical force but also power. Victims of violence, therefore, might experience psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation as well as physical injury or death.

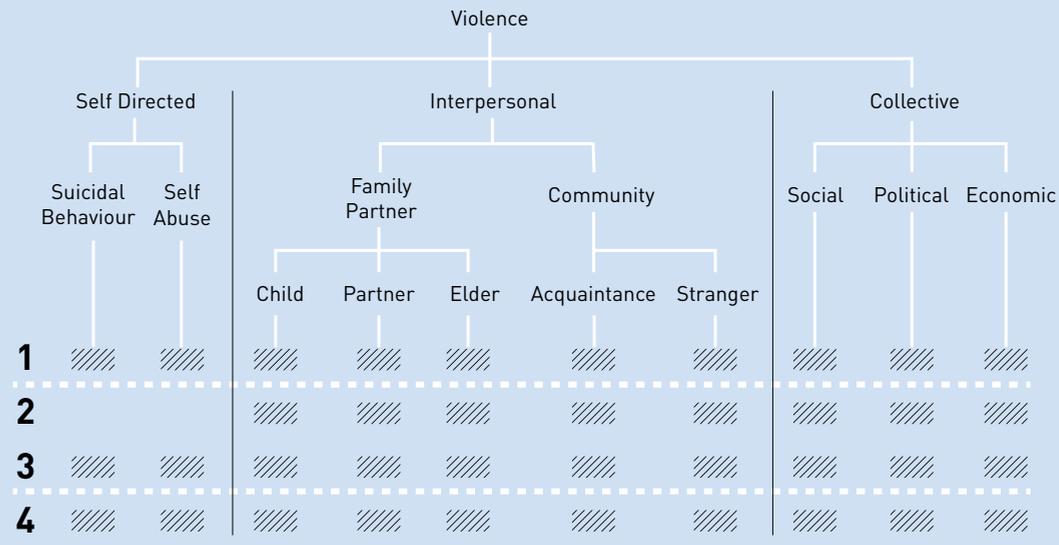
The case studies in Activity 2 (Page 8) are intended to encourage participants to become more confident in identifying the different forms of violence and the inequalities that might underpin these forms of violence.

DEFINING VIOLENCE:

'The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation' (WHO, 2002)³

GRV 'INFORM TO ACT' PROCESS

Figure 2:
WHO TYPOLOGY
OF VIOLENCE



1. PHYSICAL 2. SEXUAL 3. PSYCHOLOGICAL 4. DEPRIVATION OR NEGLECT

ASSESS

The assess stage of the 'Inform to Act' process encourages participants to reflect on the language used within their own practice settings in talking about violence and gender inequality. Of particular interest are forms of violence and gender inequality which might be tolerated or even actively encouraged by the way in which they are talked about, or not talked about. Activities 3 and 4 (page 9) encourage participants to name those forms of violence and gender inequality which are challenged and those which are tolerated within their practice settings. This can be a challenging exercise for practitioners, but critical engagement in this assessment process is an essential step in being able to identify areas for action.

ACT

The Act stage aims to bring into focus aspects of practitioners' individual or organisational practice where action to tackle GRV is a priority. Practitioners are encouraged to consider actions in relation to good practice, as well as areas for improvement.

There are two parts to the Act stage. Firstly, participants should use the points previously listed in the hatched section of their 'Violence and Gender Inequality Assessment Resource' to identify examples of GRV within their practice settings. These examples should be noted under the relevant heading in the table on page 11. Using the traffic light assessment, participants should then consider whether the examples they have listed from their own practice are Green, Amber or Red. Drawing on this traffic light assessment participants should identify action points for their own practice in the final box.

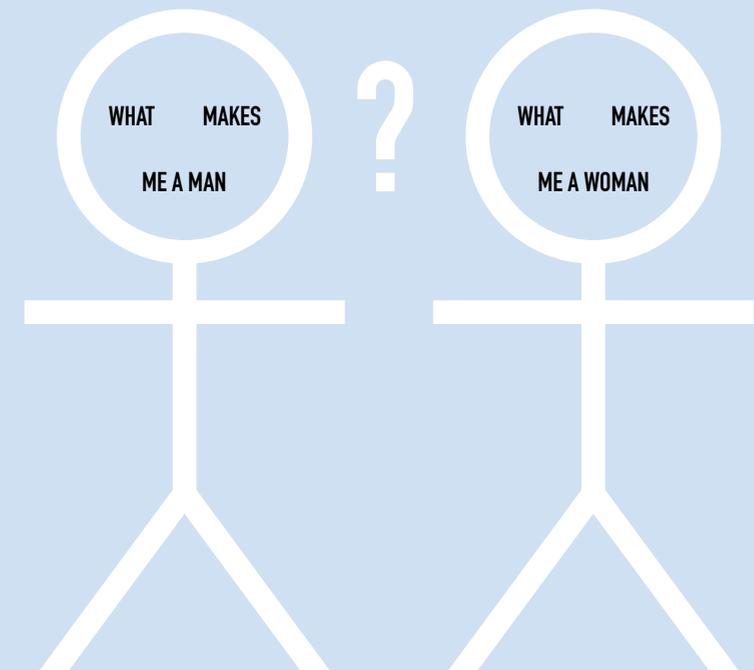
'INFORM TO ACT' ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES

ACTIVITY 1: WHAT MAKES ME A MAN OR A WOMAN?

This activity works well as an ice-breaker, and encourages participants to begin exploring their preconceptions in relation to gender identity. Each participant should be given a blank piece of paper and asked to draw two stick people on it (as indicated below), one titled woman and the other man. Participants should then be asked to circulate within the group until they find a man or a woman they should ask them what makes them a man or a woman. They should note the answers they receive on the relevant stick person figure on their sheets. Participants should be prompted to talk to a number of people and, if possible, to get feedback from both a man and a woman. Once participants have had the opportunity to circulate

for a period of time the facilitator should take feedback to two stick people figures drawn on a flip chart, one for man and the other for woman.

A key question to explore in taking feedback would be the extent to which features listed by participants are 'socially constructed notions of masculinity and femininity'. A useful way of prompting this discussion is to cross off the flip chart any features listed under man or a woman which do not relate to all men or all women, or to only men or women. This can be a challenging discussion which prompts participants to consider those features of what makes a man or a woman which they consider to be essential.



'INFORM TO ACT' ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES

ACTIVITY 2: IDENTIFYING FORMS OF VIOLENCE

In small groups take some time to read each of the case studies and then answer the case study questions. This activity encourages participants to identify different forms of violence and the issues of power and inequality that underpin them. The WHO Typology of Violence (page 6) will be a useful resource to participants within this activity.

Case Study 1- Mary's Story

Mary is a 45 year old married woman with three children; 8 years, 5 years and 8 weeks old. There is a history of verbal abuse and physical violence between Mary and her husband Alan. On the way back from a shopping trip one afternoon Alan began to abuse Mary for having overspent on the food shopping. He then accused Mary of 'flirting' with one of the neighbours that they had met in the shopping centre. Alan suggested that no one would be interested in Mary anyway because she was so fat after having their third child.

When Mary attempted to defend herself from this abuse Alan became extremely angry. He initially began hitting Mary with a metal steering lock. The children in the back of the car looked on, frightened for their safety and the safety of their mother. As the car approached a set of lights Alan made a lunge for the passenger side door, which he managed to open and began trying to push Mary out of the moving car. The children became hysterical, crying and screaming at their father. The eldest child tried to stop her father but received a blow to the face in the process. Although Mary had experienced violence and abuse from Alan for years, it was only in the course of this extreme outburst that she came to the conclusion that if she did not take action to leave Alan it was likely that she would end up being killed by him.

CASE STUDY QUESTIONS:

- What forms of violence are being perpetrated in this example?
- What issues of inequality do you observe?
- What relationship, if any, would you identify between inequality and violence in this case study?

Case Study 2- David's Story

When David was 17 he 'came out' to his family and friends about being gay. It had been very difficult for him to talk more openly about this to his parents and close friends as he feared a negative reaction. Much to David's relief, his parents and close friends were very supportive of him. However, amongst other young people at David's college and around his local estate, the reaction was very different.

David began to find abusive graffiti on his locker in college. As word spread the abuse both within and outside the college intensified. Some students took advantage of unsupervised spaces, such as the corridors between class periods, to direct homophobic abuse at David, or to spit on him. On more than one occasion stones were thrown through David's bedroom window from the adjacent playing fields. The wall at the back of David's house, facing on to these playing fields, had the word 'faggot' sprayed across it. Such was the persistence and intensity of the abuse that David became withdrawn and depressed, and he began to self-harm.

'INFORM TO ACT' ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES

CASE STUDY 3- ALICE'S STORY

17 year old Alice was at a friend's house party, where she had been drinking steadily for a couple of hours. She was feeling the effects of the alcohol but was enjoying herself. Alice went to one of the bedrooms upstairs to find her phone. Jake, a boy she knew from college and whom she had been talking to and dancing with since she arrived at the party, said he would come up with her. Once upstairs Jake put his arms around Alice and kissed her. Alice took a step back from him, but laughed at the same time, eager not to offend him. Alice

picked up her phone and began to text her friend but Jake put his arms around her again, this time with more force. Jake pushed Alice in the direction of the bed and they both fell on to it with Jake on top. More clearly this time Alice told Jake that she wanted to go down stairs but he had already begun to take her trousers off, telling her to stop 'acting weird'. Jake raped Alice and returned to join the party. Alice left immediately without talking to anyone. It was a year later before Alice told anyone about the incident at the party.

Resources needed:
flip chart and pens,
copies of the 'Violence
and Gender Inequality
Assessment Resource'
(Assessment
Resource) for all
participants

ACTIVITY 3: ASSESSING APPROACH TO VIOLENCE

Start by asking participants in small groups to list as many examples of violence as they can think of, under the headings: socially acceptable and socially unacceptable forms of violence. Allow time for discussion/feedback in the main group. The purpose of this activity is to establish that although violence is often thought of as unacceptable, there are many socially acceptable forms of violence. Establishing this point is an important lead-in to the second part of this activity.

Individually or in groups, participants should now be asked to consider the left hand side of

the 'Assessment Resource' (Page 10). Under the heading 'The Use of Violence' there are some examples on one side of ways in which violence might be challenged and, on the other, examples of ways in which violence might be tolerated or even reinforced. Participants should be asked to list additional examples from their own practice settings. The role of facilitator will be to encourage participants to think critically about their setting/practice, and to give full consideration to the different types of violence contained within the WHO typology.

Resources needed:
The 'Assessment
Resource' sheets used
in Activity 3.

ACTIVITY 4: ASSESSING APPROACH TO VIOLENCE

In small groups, participants are asked to consider how they/their organisation talk about gender inequality. Participants should list examples within the 'Assessment Resource'. On one side they should list aspects of gender inequality which they actively challenge and, on the other side, aspects which they are more tolerant of, or even actively encourage. There are some examples already listed in the resource but practitioners may find some initial discussions within their small groups helpful in thinking of additional examples.

Important: It is the intersection of cultures of violence and cultures of gender inequality which is of particular concern in relation to identifying and challenging GRV. Within the 'Assessment Resource' this is the hatched area in the middle. This hatched area indicates aspects of practice where both violence and gender inequalities may be being tolerated or reinforced. It is the points noted within the hatched section that practitioners should pay closest attention to in moving on to identify GRV examples within their practice settings.

VIOLENCE AND GENDER INEQUALITY ASSESSMENT RESOURCE

How do you/your organisation talk about violence and gender?

THE USE OF VIOLENCE		GENDER RELATED INEQUALITIES	
CHALLENGED	TOLERATED/REINFORCED	CHALLENGED	
<p>SOME EXAMPLES: Written rules indicating that young people are not allowed to fight in the project</p>		<p>SOME EXAMPLES: Members often use homophobic language. Staff do not encourage it, nor do they actively challenge it</p>	
<p>YOUR OWN EXAMPLES:</p>		<p>YOUR OWN EXAMPLES:</p>	

IDENTIFYING AND TAKING ACTION AGAINST GRV

GRV Examples Within My Practice Settings

IN MY WORKPLACE	WITHIN ORGANISATIONS OR ADULT GROUPS I WORK WITH	AMONGST YOUNG PEOPLE I WORK WITH
ACTION PLANNING/CONTROL MEASURES		<p>GREEN: provide an opportunity to positively reinforce good practice</p> <p>AMBER: signal the need to take notice and gather information to consider appropriate action.</p> <p>RED: indicate a need for a more immediate intervention or action, though it is important to consider actions carefully</p>



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