

Lancashire Violence Reduction Network News

July 2020

Introduction

A warm welcome to our July newsletter where we metaphorically open our doors and show you some of the wonderful work that our team is involved in to help people feel and be safer from violence, wherever they are in our county.

We are pleased to share that team members who were previously redeployed to support pandemic efforts have now returned to Lancashire VRN and we're delighted to have them back to drive and support our work.

In this edition we'd like to highlight information on Lancashire's multi-agency domestic abuse campaign that launched this month, COVID-19 advice for schools, a case study from the DIVERT intervention programme, and work being done to support young people during lockdown restrictions.

We hope you find this latest update interesting and useful. If any of the pieces resonate with you and you would like to have a further discussion, please do get in touch.

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Pan-Lancashire domestic abuse campaign now live

#noexcuseforabuse



Lancashire's county-wide domestic abuse campaign is now live.

It has been developed by Lancashire VRN, local councils, Lancashire Police, support agencies, the

NHS, and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, as part of the Lancashire Resilience Forum's response to COVID-19.

Pandemic restrictions increased the likelihood of victims and their abusers being together for longer periods of time. With this in mind, the campaign has been designed to raise awareness and understanding of domestic abuse, the help and support available to victims and perpetrators, and how and where people can report their concerns.

The campaign spans digital and traditional media and is accompanied with the hashtag #noexcuseforabuse.

If your organisation would like to support the campaign there are a number of resources available on the [Lancashire VRN website](#) including:

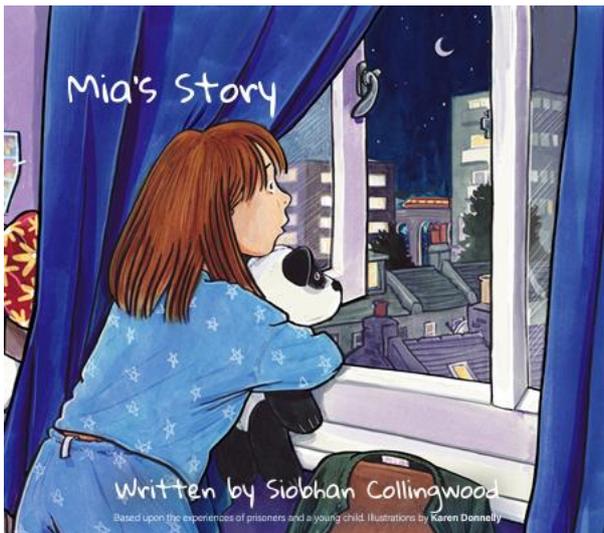
- Fact sheets for employers, employees, and members of the public
- Campaign poster
- Social media campaign materials
- Advice for survivors of domestic abuse.

The [campaign website](#) signposts those experiencing domestic abuse and those concerned about their own behaviour to support organisations.

Mia's Story

Children whose parents are in prison can feel confusion, loss, abandonment and carry a sense of shame.

According to the figures currently held by Barnardo's, there are 310,000 children in the UK who are separated from a parent who is in prison. The needs of these children are all too often overlooked, and they can be left trying to make sense of their emotions without the support that they deserve.



In response to this issue, Lancashire VRN educational lead, Siobhan Collingwood, has written the book – Mia's Story – the story of a little girl and her dad struggling to cope with being separated during his prison sentence.

The book uses communications between Mia and her dad to give information about what it is like to be a prisoner and to be a family member, with guidance notes at the back that give suggestions about how best to support children in this situation.

The book also includes links to a selection of further resources for both professionals and family members.



The text has been drawn from the testimony of a group of prisoners at Haverigg prison and a young girl whose dad was in prison. The illustrations have been provided by a talented illustrator from Brighton. Its simple and heartfelt narrative is brought to life perfectly by its vibrant and sensitive illustrations, making it suitable to read alongside a child or as the basis for support work by a family member or professional.

2,000 copies of the book have been ordered for distribution to schools, probation officers, prisons, and social workers across Lancashire and beyond, with free multi-agency training to accompany the roll out in October and November 2020.

COVID-19 advice for schools

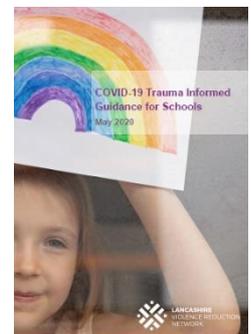
In response to the coronavirus pandemic and national lockdown, our VRN has prepared and shared two documents to support schools as they assist children in returning to school.

COVID-19 - Trauma informed guidance for schools.

This toolkit resource gives concise information on what trauma in this context means and how to spot it in children and staff.

It gives advice on how to support children, staff and the wider community appropriately and to ensure that the potential collective and individual trauma response within our schools and broader communities is understood and sensitively addressed.

Finally, the document gives links to carefully selected resources that with a single click will take readers to resources to be used directly alongside, children, staff and parents.



Responding appropriately to COVID-19 - A recovery curriculum for schools

Produced in partnership by Lancashire VRN and Lancashire Schools' Advisory Service, this resource gives guidance on what the essential components of a curriculum designed for recovery should be in order to:

- Create a safe and supportive environment
- Build trust and help children and young people to regulate their emotions
- Raise awareness of school staff
- Modify teaching strategies

- Inform others, make referrals and coordinate services
- Support families.

Both documents have been shared with Lancashire schools via the [LCC School's Portal](#) and the [Lancashire VRN website](#).

Knife crime campaign launching soon



As part of the work to tackle knife crime, Lancashire VRN is developing a social media campaign to encourage young people to make positive choices to steer them away from knife crime.

The youth campaign will run for eight weeks on social media, is aimed mainly at young males aged 13-22, and will signpost to support organisations where young people can gain help accessing education, work and exploring their interests.

A parent campaign is also planned, which encourages parents to talk to their children about knives and points to the national [#knifefree website](#) where they can access information and advice.

The campaign is based on research completed by a specialist research agency (Planning Express) last year and aims to divert young males away from knife and violent crime by giving real examples of how others have made positive change in their lives.



The campaign will be followed by the creation of an education package for use in schools.

DIVERT case study: Supporting an army veteran to achieve goal to live independently



Leaving the army can be tough and when Alex met with a DIVERT coach for the first time he felt lost and lacked a sense of purpose. Alex felt unhappy living with his mother and had tried different jobs which hadn't been quite right for him.

Alex's DIVERT coach knew of a support group for people who are ex forces and put him in touch with the football community trust that organises it. The sessions offer employment, training, counselling and wellbeing support.

The DIVERT coach went along with Alex to the first meeting to help him to feel more comfortable. Since then, Alex has continued attending the sessions and feels he's able to talk to the other people who have been in his position. This has helped him to cope better with his anger and has helped his confidence to grow.



Cycling across the coastline using a bike that was given him to has given Alex a way to exercise and enjoy the fresh air. Football training with the veterans group has given Alex aspirations of playing in matches in the future.

Alex's main goal is to get back into employment. He's looking into getting a CSCS card so that he can work on a building site. His DIVERT coach is helping him with this, with looking at his benefits, and hopes to link Alex in with an organisation in Blackpool to help him to access construction work. This will enable him to move out from his mother's home and become more independent.

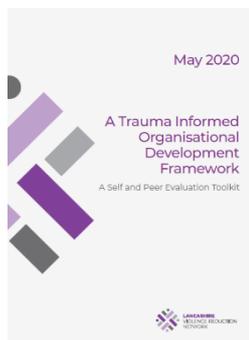
Alex has come a long way since that first meeting. DIVERT will support him as he reaches his goals.

(Name changed for confidentiality.)

Trauma Informed Practice: pilot training

A key part of the prevention approach in Lancashire is a goal to develop a trauma informed workforce.

Lancashire VRN has developed, '[A Trauma Informed Organisational Framework](#)' to enable partners to evaluate how trauma informed their organisations are and will be supported by training provided by the VRN.



Training is already taking place with a cohort of new police officers and a place-based pilot is also being trialled by the constabulary in Fleetwood with neighbourhood policing teams.

Lancashire VRN has been asked to lead on trauma informed practice for England and Wales – more to follow in the next edition.

Finding new ways to support young people during lockdown



Preston United Youth Development Programme received funding through the Home Office knife crime grant to provide young people with opportunities that are engaging, empowering and enriching to help reduce inequalities in health, physical, emotional and mental wellbeing.

Programme mentors wanted to provide young people with a positive focus and diversion while the pandemic restrictions were in place. Across

four weeks they asked a number of young people from different backgrounds to share their emotions and reactions surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic while also learning and discovering by completing challenges and answering questions linked to the '5 ways to wellbeing' themes.

Here's a video diary created through virtual 1-1 support with Casey, age 12:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bw42OK_Oko4

Operation Encompass

Operation Encompass has continued to be used during the pandemic with domestic abuse alerts being shared with schools, enabling them to provide support for pupils where needed.

Just under 2,100 notifications have been made to schools in May and June. Initial work has continued to look at the possibility of other agencies, such as NPS, sharing information with schools and Encompass being extended into the higher education sector and early years provision.

A "reverse Encompass" model is being investigated, meaning that schools could share information with relevant agencies about children at risk of exploitation, including county lines, leading to the provision of appropriate interventions and support.

Lancashire VRN partner resources



We have a growing resource base on our website covering topics like domestic abuse, ACEs and the strategic needs assessment for serious violence in Lancashire. Visit [LancsVRN.co.uk/resources](https://www.lancsVRN.co.uk/resources).

+44 (0) 1772 537026

@LancsVRN

LancsVRN.co.uk

LancsVRN@lancashire.pnn.police.uk

Lancashire Violence Reduction Network
County Hall, Fishergate
Preston PR1 8XB