



KNIFE ANGEL
LANCASHIRE

NATIONAL MONUMENT AGAINST VIOLENCE AND AGGRESSION

THE KNIFE ANGEL

The Knife Angel is the National Monument Against Violence and Aggression, an 8-metre tall sculpture made by the British Ironwork Centre from over 100 000 knives which have been seized by the police and taken out of circulation.

It was created specifically as a focus for education and events highlighting both the negative effects of violent behaviour and our critical need for social change. The Knife Angel has already toured a number of UK towns and cities, making a significant impact at grass roots level. It has not previously been to Lancashire. It is much more than just a sculpture, and its presence provides an opportunity for youth and community groups to consider issues such as resolving conflict, forgiveness and restoration, the impact of trauma and harm, building resilience as well as why use knives?



The Knife Angel in Birmingham

For more information about the Knife Angel and details of how it was created go to:
<https://www.britishironworkcentre.co.uk/show-areas/the-knife-angel-official>

YOUTH AND COMMUNITY WORKSHOP GUIDES

These Guides have been developed by the Lancashire Violence Reduction Network to help Youth and Community Groups make the most of a visit to see the Knife Angel Sculpture. They are only intended as initial discussion starters and it is anticipated that Groups will continue to consider these topics in future sessions after the Knife Angel has left Lancashire.

We recognise that the issues and topics covered in the sessions are important and believe they play a key part in developing resilient communities where everyone can feel safe and secure.

Each Guide is designed to be for a 1-hour session. Depending on the size of the Group you may wish to work as a single group or in tables or smaller groups.

The Guide suggests equipment/resources that may be useful in making the workshop more interactive and engaging. Session leaders can use other or additional resources that they feel may be more applicable to their group.

At the end of the session it may be helpful to take photographs of the work that the group have completed, as well as taking the sheets, post-it-notes etc with you. You can use this as a reminder of the session, as a starting point for further follow up sessions and to share back with other members of the group who may not have been able to attend.

When leading these sessions please be aware that some of the people in the group may be impacted or have been affected in the past by the issues that will be raised and discussed. We recommend that there should always be an option for people to take a break and/or leave the session and if possible support to be available during the session for anyone who may need help and assistance.



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YOUTH AND COMMUNITY WORKSHOP GUIDE

BUILDING RESILIENCE

PURPOSE OF SESSION:

- Understand what is meant by 'resilience'
- Explore how individuals can build and maintain resilience
- Explore how communities can help build and maintain resilience

RESOURCES & PREPARATION:

The following resources may be helpful to have available for this session:

- Flip Chart stand
- Flip Chart paper and pens
- Post-it-notes
- Cards (e.g. blank post cards)
- Pens/Pencils
- Blu Tack or similar

INTRODUCTIONS:

5 mins

If the Group is new or recently formed you may wish to use a well-tried introduction such as share one unusual fact about yourself or describe who would be your favourite fruit – otherwise if the Group know each other well move straight to Part 1.

PART 1

10 mins

Fortunately, for most people visiting the Knife Angel Sculpture they will not have experienced the level of trauma caused by a knife attack or similar serious violence incidents. But having the resilience to deal with all the various negative experiences in life is something that is important to everyone.

What do we mean by resilience?

Invite the group to share their ideas so that a picture is built up of how the group understand resilience. Write these up on flip chart so that everyone can see them. At this stage in the session don't dismiss any suggestions as we will revisit this at the end of the session.

PART 2

15 mins

What kind of events, or set of circumstances in an individual's life do you think may help to build resilience, especially in children and young people?

Invite the group to suggest events or sets of circumstances writing each one on a separate card. Then invite the group to discuss the order of priority of the events or circumstances and lay the cards out on a table with the most important at the top. The aim is to have an agreed understanding within the group of what might help to build resilience.

You may wish to either read the following description out to the group or print out copies for the group to read as a picture of what resilience means and some of the key events or circumstances that support the development of resilience.

RESILIENCE – A PICTURE

Building resilience is a bit like opening a bank account; a wellbeing bank account at the point of conception. Following conception, every time a pregnant mother experiences her needs being met, care from her partner, family or friends, access to appropriate medical care, and positivity and inclusion from the community



around her, a penny is put in that child's wellbeing bank account. Over time, throughout pregnancy, these pennies add up. Following birth and during the crucial first 1000 days of a child's life, every time they experience connection with their care-giver through having their needs met, more pennies are deposited in the wellbeing bank account which accrues positive interest on their social and emotional health.

Occasionally, there might be times when withdrawals are made, perhaps when a parent is experiencing stress and is less available to their child, but there are enough funds already in the bank to cover this withdrawal without making too much of a dent in the total balance. The child has already built up a resilient bank balance in their wellbeing savings account. This translates to the child having a good credit rating which is shown through how they are able to interact with the world and this increases their chances of good physical health.

However, for some children who have grown in the womb experiencing toxic stress through adverse childhood experiences, they may be born without that many pennies in the bank. Perhaps they might even already be overdrawn. These children will encounter some positive experiences and subsequent deposits being made into that bank account, but it's not quite enough to recover the deficit. If there are further adverse experiences, there will be further withdrawals. The deficit will impact on their wellbeing credit rating, meaning they might find it difficult to see the world as a safe place and increase their chances of risky behaviours and chronic health conditions. It's stressful being overdrawn and having a negative bank balance. This can affect the way children behave and as a result of this the world around them often perceives these children with huge deficits in their wellbeing bank account as 'difficult' and 'challenging' and 'hard to engage'. These children often experience harsh sanctions and as adults they are more likely to enter the criminal justice system. These attitudes and actions act as red letters, reminding people of the negative balance in their wellbeing account.

PART 3**20 mins**

This Part of the session will build on the Part 2 that has just been completed and start to explore the value of a 'Resilient Community' and what one might look like.

If an individual has good resilience, as defined in Part 2, why is it important for there to be 'Resilient Communities'? What roles does our community play in building and maintaining resilience?

Note – you may need to agree on what is meant by "community" before exploring this Part. This could be a geographical area where the group live or it could be a shared interest – e.g. a faith group, school/college, particular activity/hobby, etc.

Ask the group to write their responses on post-it-notes. Print out the final page of these notes and then invite the group to place the post-it-notes on the most relevant section of the diagram. Discuss with the group of there are any areas they didn't include or any roles they have identified for the community that are not on the diagram. (If you have access to an A3 printer it may be helpful to print the diagram at the larger size.)

PART 4 – SUMMING UP**10 mins**

Allow sufficient time at the end of the session to "sum up" what the Group have discussed. The session started by looking at what is resilience and it may be helpful to re-visit that now and see if there are any changes that the group would want to make.

NOTES:

- *This session may be useful as a follow up session to the one on Trauma and Harm, although it can also be used as a stand-alone session.*
- *Further information on becoming trauma aware, responding to trauma and being resilient can be found on the Lancashire Violence Reduction Network website at: <https://www.lancsvrn.co.uk/resources/>*

