



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.



YOUTH AND COMMUNITY WORKSHOP GUIDE TRAUMA & HARM

PURPOSE OF SESSION:

- Understand what is trauma?
- Recognise how trauma can impact us?
- What to look for in other people.

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
- Pens/Pencils
- Blu Tack or similar

INTRODUCTIONS:

5 mins

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

PART 1

15 mins

You may have seen that some of the knives on the Knife Angel are inscribed with messages from the families and friends of those who have been killed in a knife attack. Knife attacks are traumatic experiences for the victim, if they survive, and their immediate family and often impacts the wider family such as siblings, step-siblings, grandparents, nephews and nieces who also suffer trauma.

What do we mean by trauma?

Invite the group to share their ideas so that a picture is built up of how the group understand trauma. Write these up on flip chart so that everyone can see them.

Trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being.

[Lancashire Violence Reduction Network - Trauma Informed Toolkit. May 2020]

What kind of events, or set of circumstances (apart from knife or serious violence attacks) do you think may cause trauma?

Invite the group to suggest events or sets of circumstances, but before writing them up on a flip chart ensure that the whole group agree with the suggestion. The aim to have an agreed understanding within the group of what might cause trauma.

PART 2

15 mins

You may want to divide the group into smaller groups for this activity.

Ask the group to draw the outline of a person on a piece of flip chart paper. It doesn't need to be detailed, as long as it is recognisable as a 'person'!

Many people don't understand how trauma can affect you as a person. As a group discuss how you think trauma impacts on a person and then mark on the drawing of the person the areas/parts of the body that you think may be affected. For example if you think the brain is affected write the word 'trauma' where the brain is located or note down other illnesses that you think may be caused by trauma.

There is no definitive answer, but there is evidence that trauma not only impacts the brain, but can also lead to severe obesity, diabetes, depression, suicide attempts, STIs, heart disease, cancer, stroke, lung diseases and broken bones.

Invite the groups to compare their results on the drawing with the list above. If you have a number of groups carrying out this activity check if between them they have understood the full extent to which trauma can impact a person.

PART 3

15 mins

This Part of the session will build on the Part 2 that has just been completed and start to explore what the impact of trauma may be on the way people behave. All of us tend to judge people on the way they behave. If we don't know some ones back story we may not be aware of some trauma that they have experienced which may impact on the way they behave and why they do certain things.

Use post-it-notes to write down what behaviours you think a person who has experienced trauma may be more likely to demonstrate. For example, research suggests that they are 2 – 3 times more likely to be a smoker than the general population.

Place the post-it-notes on the drawing of the person you used in the last Part of the session to build up a full picture of the impact of trauma on a person.

Allow time for the group(s) to see what has been contributed. You may want to use the following details to either confirm what the group(s) have said or to add to the suggestions from the group(s).

Research evidence is that adults who have experienced trauma, especially in their childhood and have not had the resilience to counter this are:

14-15 x more likely to attempt suicide

4 x more likely to become an alcoholic

2 x the average level of liver disease

3-4 x more likely to experience depression

3 x more likely to be absent from work

4 x more likely to have begun intercourse by age 15

People with severe level of trauma can die up to 20 years earlier than the average

This does not mean that everyone who absent from work, for example, has some serious trauma – but these are some of the indicators that we may be seeing in adults who have experienced trauma when they were younger.

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 trauma and then explored how trauma impacts on the physical, emotional and behavioural aspects of a person.

The group may want to start thinking about how they can better support people who have experienced trauma and if it is appropriate ask the group to individually write down an action or actions they will take to help anyone they know who they think, or know, has suffered some form of trauma.

NOTES:

- *There is a further Youth & Community Workshop Session on Building Resilience which may be helpful to use as a follow up to this session.*
- *Further information on becoming trauma aware and responding to trauma can be found on the Lancashire Violence Reduction Network website at:
<https://www.lancsvrn.co.uk/resources/>*