

## Virtual Decisions – Annual Report

### Introduction

Virtual Decisions is Round Midnight's innovative virtual reality (VR) in education programme aimed at supporting children and young people who are at risk of criminal exploitation. Virtual Decision films enable participants to experience multiple dilemmas that illustrate the impacts of different choices. The 'choose your own path' format provides over 3,000 different paths for a user. Participants can experience the consequences of their decisions using virtual reality headsets which incorporate social interactions. The virtual reality experience promotes awareness, empathy, and critical thinking. The programme aims to empower young people to make informed decisions and take positive action, contributing to a safer, more inclusive community.

Following the virtual reality film, facilitators, trained by Round Midnight, run creative arts workshops that explore the issues raised in more depth. The workshops allow users to reflect on their personal journey within the virtual reality and discuss it with others to share and learn from each other's experiences. Facilitators are provided with follow on materials to continue learning and ensure the longevity of the project. The workshops can be tailored to a primary audience (years 5 & 6), a secondary audience (years 7 to 11), young people in the criminal justice system, parents & families, and for training purposes for professionals.

West Yorkshire Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP) and West Yorkshire Police commissioned headsets to deliver Virtual Decisions' gangs and knife crime films.

### Objectives of the programme

- Educate children aged 10-14 on social issues, such as gang culture and knife crime
- Reduce youth crime, youth violence, and child criminal exploitation
- Empower young people to make informed decisions and take positive actions, contributing to a safer, more inclusive community

The VRP have provided free of charge external training for facilitators, from several organisations, enabling the programme to be delivered in different settings throughout West Yorkshire. The management of the VR headsets is completed by single points of contact in each district, who all register bookings in a central system allowing for usage to be monitored and evaluated appropriately.

In total, there are 40 VR headsets in use across West Yorkshire. 30 were funded by the VRP and are split across Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees and Leeds. Wakefield District Policing funded 10 headsets for use through the Wakefield district, where the VRP managed the installation of the software enabling the Virtual Decisions programme to be delivered.

## Key Findings

- The Virtual Decisions programme in its first year of delivery in West Yorkshire has reached at least 2,173 children but this is likely an underestimate.
- There was a 125% increase in children saying they knew a lot about gangs after watching the film compared to before.
- There was a 157% increase in children saying they knew a lot about knife crime after watching the film compared to before.
- Children most strongly agreed with *'I think virtual reality is a good way of teaching people about these topics'* (56%) and *'The knives film taught me that carrying a knife is more dangerous than not carrying a knife'* (51%).
- Children need further support to be able to take proactive action if they encounter situations like in the film as they were less confident in reporting knowledge of someone carrying a knife to a trusted adult or reporting a physical assault they had witnessed.
- Facilitators felt the Virtual Decisions programme was having a high impact on children in a number different areas, especially in improving awareness of the topics and increasing their knowledge.
- A recent Ofsted inspection of Greenhead College fed back that *'students shared their appreciation for the opportunity to engage in the VR headset workshops and the positive impact it had on their understanding of the risks around knife crime'*. The report stated, *'the use of immersive technology to understand well the risks associated with carrying knives.'*

## Key Quotes

### From children

- "Gaining an understanding of how my decision could have lifelong implications for myself and others."
- "To understand what leads to people making wrong choices"
- "It shows you the impacts and consequences of carrying something that could potentially harm you or someone you may or may not know."
- "A lot of innocent people carry knives to protect themselves, but it can be used in the wrong way."
- "The people you choose to hang out with can dramatically impact your life. Avoid negative influences."
- "Carrying a knife is more dangerous for people who are carrying it."
- "Don't get involved. Peer pressure is a big influence."

### Facilitators

- "The discussions and the workshop after are some of the most valuable open conversations I've had with these young people, it opens up conversations in a really disarming way."
- "They are quiet at the start of the session and then really get into it and engage well, this generates a lot of questions and 'lived experience' discussions."

- “The VR headset is a vital part of engagement; it gives us something real that’s been experienced which we can then discuss and pick apart – that’s some real learning.”
- “The follow up materials are excellent and hit home.”

### **Recommendations & Next Steps**

- Round Midnight should consider updating the language used in the films as the slang and lingo being used by children is ever-changing and the current language could easily become outdated.
- Facilitators would value the production of new films on additional topics impacting children including, drugs, social media, peer pressure, healthy relationships, bullying/cyber bullying, internet safety, and mental health amongst others.
- Facilitators are encouraged to explore with the children the impact the films have had on their empathy as this was highlighted as an area of perceived low impact.
- A commitment is needed from facilitators to ensure monitoring data is collected and shared with the Violence Reduction Partnership so we can fully understand the reach of the programme.
- The Violence Reduction Partnership is considering a refresh of the trained practitioners to ensure new colleagues across the partnership are able to support delivery of the Virtual Decisions programme.
- The Violence Reduction Partnership will be commissioning a single delivery provider to increase reach across the region and ensure delivery is sustained outside of limitations such as school holidays.

## 2024-25 Delivery Overview

The Virtual Decisions programme was officially launched within districts in April 2024 and this report covers the first year of delivery.

Across the year, the programme was delivered in several settings including within schools, by West Yorkshire Police and the Youth Justice Service, as well as by Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise organisations in the region.

The Violence Reduction Partnership managed bookings of the headsets with a single point of contact identified in each region. For 2024-25, **3180 bookings** were made<sup>1</sup>.

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total
<b>Bradford</b>	8	64	95	62	66	62	98	69	79	68	7	11	<b>689</b>
<b>Calderdale</b>	0	3	8	1	2	1	3	4	1	0	0	0	<b>23</b>
<b>Kirklees</b>	10	51	8	7	2	8	22	36	34	65	54	52	<b>349</b>
<b>Leeds</b>	180	162	175	132	28	139	70	150	120	52	136	112	<b>1456</b>
<b>Wakefield</b>	50	151	50	35	0	20	70	43	20	140	73	11	<b>663</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>3180</b>

Table 1 - Number of headset bookings

May 2024 had the highest number of headset bookings and August 2024 had the lowest number. This is unsurprising as the delivery mainly took place in schools and this was during the summer holidays.

Leeds district had the highest number of bookings during the year at nearly half (45.8%). This is likely to be an inaccurate reflection as over the year different approaches emerged within districts, meaning the booking system was neglected<sup>2</sup>.

The number of surveys completed by children across the year was notably less than the number of bookings made. As shown in the table below, **1,116 children** completed the pre-survey, and **1,057 children** completed the post-survey.

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total
<b>Pre survey</b>	23	180	132	14	10	1	30	31	167	79	166	283	<b>1116</b>
<b>Post survey</b>	19	168	113	7	8	1	28	64	166	76	152	255	<b>1057</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>333</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>538</b>	<b>2173</b>

Table 2 - Number of surveys completed by children

<sup>1</sup> The VRP faced challenges in ensuring the facilitators completed all the required documentation including monitoring information for the children reach. As a result, there are differing numbers regarding number of bookings made, number of surveys received, and numbers of children recorded by facilitators. In addition, the number of bookings does not reflect the number of sessions as it is likely that some of these (not a large proportion) will have been cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances.

<sup>2</sup> This is mainly in relation to Kirklees where the number of booked sessions is notably less than the number of children reported as reached and the number of children completing the survey. This is because Kirklees received additional funding to support delivery within the District and therefore did not have to access the headsets via the booking system.

Across the districts, Kirklees had the highest number of survey responses from children (54%) likely due to the focused delivery by one organisation in the district. Calderdale had the lowest number of responses from children at only 1% of responses from children.

	Pre survey responses	Post survey responses	Total
<b>Bradford</b>	77 (7%)	68 (6%)	145
<b>Calderdale</b>	11 (1%)	14 (1%)	25
<b>Kirklees</b>	599 (54%)	564 (53%)	1163
<b>Leeds</b>	211 (19%)	221 (21%)	432
<b>Wakefield</b>	113 (10%)	96 (9%)	209
<b>Unknown</b>	105 (9%)	94 (9%)	199
<b>Total</b>	<b>1116</b>	<b>1057</b>	<b>2173</b>

Table 3 - Survey responses by district

## Demographic information of children

As well as monitoring the number of children reached through the number of pre and post survey responses, facilitators were asked to report the numbers of children in each session.

Facilitators reported that for the 2024-25 year, **885 children** took part in the Virtual Decisions programme<sup>3</sup>. Leeds and Kirklees were the districts reporting reaching the most children, which is reflective of the numbers of surveys received from these districts.

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total
<b>Bradford</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	0	9	10	6	21	<b>61</b>
<b>Calderdale</b>	0	0	4	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>6</b>
<b>Kirklees</b>	0	0	28	0	0	0	80	0	26	97	46	59	<b>336</b>
<b>Leeds</b>	63	22	152	0	38	0	0	53	20	0	5	0	<b>353</b>
<b>Wakefield</b>	0	82	0	0	3	0	10	11	5	0	5	13	<b>129</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>885</b>

Table 4 - Children reached by month

The Virtual Decisions programme is aimed at 10–14-year-olds but young adults up to the age of 20 had been reached through the delivery this year. 25% of children reached were aged 14, followed by 22% aged 15. Very few children were younger (aged 10) or older (aged 19 or 20).

	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	Total
<b>Bradford</b>	0	0	0	31	11	16	3	0	0	0	0	<b>61</b>
<b>Calderdale</b>	0	0	1	4	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	<b>6</b>
<b>Kirklees</b>	0	3	14	21	32	20	9	21	9	2	1	<b>132</b>
<b>Leeds</b>	2	68	32	41	38	32	31	9	2	0	0	<b>255</b>
<b>Wakefield</b>	1	1	1	46	46	4	15	2	0	0	0	<b>116</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>570</b>

Table 5 - Ages of the children reached

<sup>3</sup> As noted earlier, this is likely a large underestimate, both due to the much higher number of bookings made throughout the year and that more surveys were received from children who had attended the sessions.

The majority of children reached by the programme were boys (70%) and this was seen across all the districts.

	<b>Girl</b>	<b>Boy</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Bradford</b>	0	61	<b>61</b>
<b>Calderdale</b>	1	5	<b>6</b>
<b>Kirklees</b>	112	224	<b>336</b>
<b>Leeds</b>	70	243	<b>353</b>
<b>Wakefield</b>	48	81	<b>129</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>614</b>	<b>885</b>

*Table 6 - Gender of the children reached*

## Feedback from children

### Pre survey

**1,116** children completed the pre-survey prior to watching the Virtual Decisions films in the 2024-25 year.

Children were asked *how much do you think you know about gangs?* **24%** said **a lot**, **63%** said **a little**, and **13%** said **nothing**.

How much do you think you know about gangs?

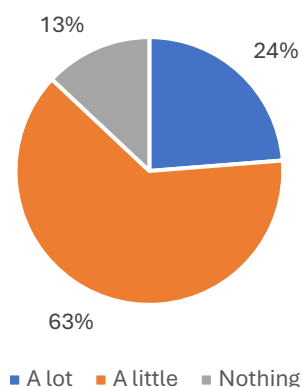


Figure 1 - How much do you think you know about gangs? (Pre survey)

Children in Calderdale reported the highest levels of knowledge about gangs (**63.7%** said they knew a lot). However, this was based on a small number of children. Children in Leeds reported the lowest levels of knowledge about gangs with **18%** saying they knew nothing.

Children were asked *how much do you think you know about knife crime?* **26%** said **a lot**, **62%** said **a little**, and **12%** said **nothing**. This shows a slightly higher level of prior knowledge about knife crime compared to gangs.

How much do you think you know about knife crime?

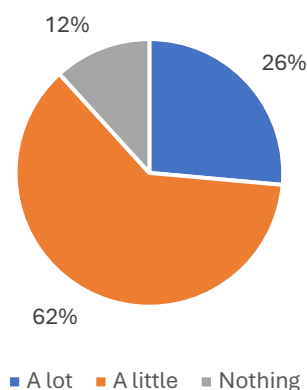


Figure 2 - How much do you think you know about knife crime? (Pre survey)

Children in Calderdale reported the highest levels of knowledge about gangs (**54.6%** said they knew a lot), followed by children in Leeds (**29.9%**). Leeds district however also had the highest percentage of children who said they knew nothing about knife crime (**15.2%**).

***"Learning how to make better decisions"***

Children were asked to share what they were most looking forward to about the films. Some children were unsure about what to expect from the films. Mainly, children were looking forward to using the VR technology and seeing how realistic it was. For many this was their first time using VR and so they were looking forward to the novelty of being out of class and being able to learn whilst having fun. This different way of learning was exciting to the children, and they were looking forward to having the autonomy to make their own decisions and see consequences. Finally, many said they were looking forward to learning about the topics and gathering knowledge that would inform their actions in the future.

***"I'm really excited to settle into the VR world and  
educate myself about knife crime"***



## Post survey

1,057 children completed the post-survey after watching the Virtual Decisions films.

**89.5%** of children watched the knife crime film this year, **8.5%** watched the gangs filmed and **2%** watched both.

Children were asked *what did you like about the gangs' film?* Overall, children reported enjoying the realism of the film especially the graphics and the immersive feeling. Children also found the film to be informative providing useful information about the consequences of becoming involved with gangs. Some children were able to identify how they could use this decision making in future to take more positive actions if faced with situations like in the film.

***“It felt realistic, and I think that will actually happen in a gang”***

***“Shows that if you do the right decision, you won’t be involved with the police,***

***if you do the wrong choice,***

***you will be involved in a lot of crimes”***

All districts other than Wakefield had used the gangs’ film. After watching the film, **54%** of children said they knew a lot about gangs, **40%** knew a little, and only **5%** said they knew nothing. This is an increase of **125%** for those who knew a lot about gangs.

Aside from Calderdale whose results are disproportionate due to the small number reached in the district. Children in Bradford reported the highest knowledge of gangs after watching the film with **65.1%** saying they now knew a lot.

After watching the film, how much do you think you know about gangs?

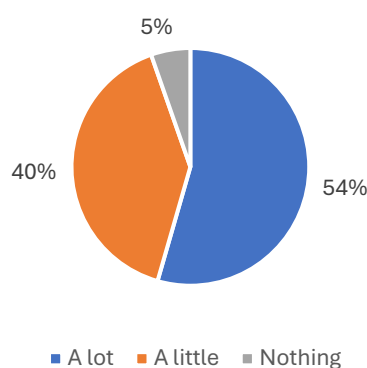


Figure 3 - How much do you think you know about gangs? (Post survey)

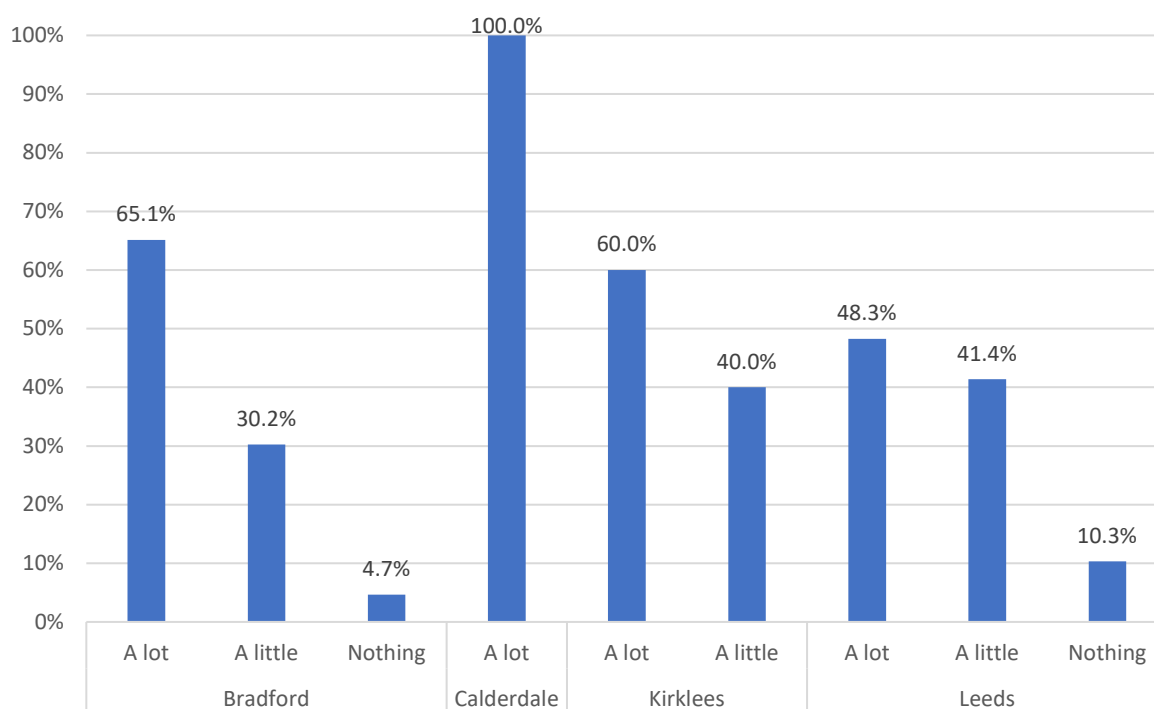


Figure 4 - Knowledge about gangs by district

Bradford also showed the largest increase in knowledge about gangs with an increase of **178.4%** for those saying they now know a lot.

Children were asked what they learnt from the gangs' film. The main takeaway for the children was an understanding of gangs and how individuals can be peer pressured through grooming or force. Children also said they learnt about the wider impact of gangs on themselves and those involved but also the wider community.

***“The reel you in and groom you to get you to do the bad things for them”***

***“They treat others horribly and they peer pressure other people”***

Children were asked *what did you like about the knife crime film?* Children especially liked the realism of the film and felt they were part of the scenario. Being given the power to make their own decisions and choices was appreciated by the children as this helped them understand the impact of actions and the consequences that result. The interactive nature of the VR children said helped them to understand the dangers of knife crime.

***“It was a better way of explaining the consequences and what happens rather than someone telling you”***

***“How realistic the peer pressure was. The friend egging him on.  
Making it worse”***

All districts had delivered the knife crime film. After watching the film, **67%** said they knew a lot about knife crime, **30%** said they knew a little, and only **3%** said they knew nothing. This is an increase of 157% for those who knew a lot about knife crime.

Children in Kirklees reported the highest knowledge of knife crime after watching the film with **71.7%** of children saying they now knew a lot.

After watching the film, how much do you think you know about knife crime?

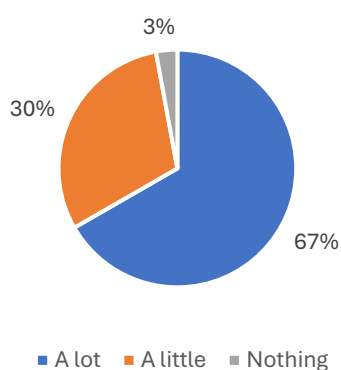


Figure 5 - How much do you think you know about knife crime? (Post survey)

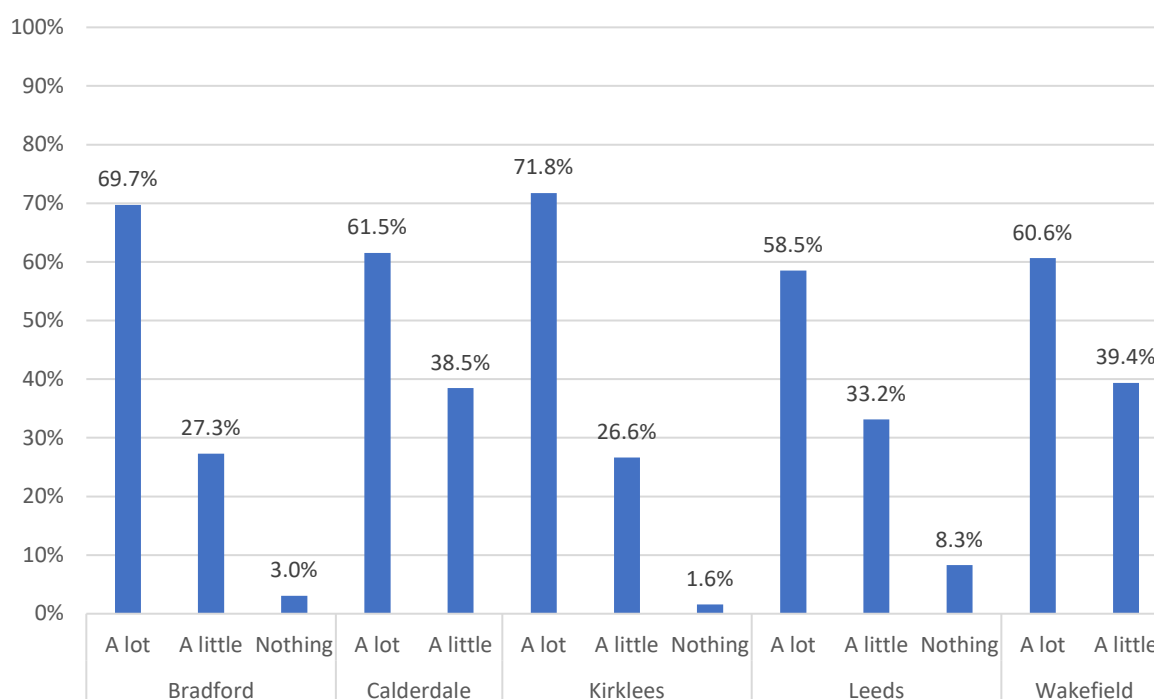


Figure 6 - Knowledge about gangs by district

Wakefield showed the largest increase in knowledge about knife crime with an increase of **189.3%** for those saying they now know a lot.

***“Peer pressure can make you carry a knife even if you don’t want to”***

Children were asked what they learnt from the knife crime film. Children mainly learnt about the consequences of carrying a knife and particularly focused on the prison sentences that can be given for carrying a knife. Awareness and knowledge about carrying a knife was increased with children commenting that they can now recognise how a situation can escalate. Overwhelmingly, children commented that they learnt you should not carry a knife.

***“Situations can escalate so quickly. You can go from being in the wrong  
place  
at the wrong time and face life-changing consequences”***

***“One wrong decision can change your life”***

Children were asked to tell us how much they agreed with the following statements.

Strongly Agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree



	The discussion was interesting	I learnt something new from the workshop	I feel more informed to make decisions if faced with choices like in the VR film	If you witnessed a physical assault like the one in the film, would you report it	The knives film taught me that carrying a knife is more dangerous than not carrying a knife	If you knew that someone had a knife in their possession, would you tell a trusted adult	The films showed me how to recognise the early signs of being groomed into a gang	The films made me think about the consequences of knife crime	The films made me think about the consequences of my actions	I think virtual reality is a good way of teaching people about these topics
Strongly Agree	45%	42%	47%	34%	51%	36%	33%	46%	34%	56%
Agree	45%	46%	41%	39%	36%	39%	51%	44%	49%	40%
Neither agree nor disagree	8%	7%	9%	19%	9%	16%	12%	6%	13%	3%
Disagree	2%	3%	2%	6%	2%	5%	2%	1%	2%	1%
Strongly Disagree	1%	2%	1%	3%	1%	4%	2%	2%	2%	1%

Figure 7 - Opinions on Virtual Decisions

As can be seen in the chart above, children most strongly agreed with *'I think virtual reality is a good way of teaching people about these topics'* (**56%**) and *'The knives film taught me that carrying a knife is more dangerous than not carrying a knife'* (**51%**).

The highest levels of disagreement were with the statements *'If you witnessed a physical assault, like the one in the film, would you report it'* and *'if you knew someone had a knife in their possession would you tell a trusted adult'* (9% disagreed/strongly disagreed).

Agreement levels tended to be similar across the districts, but the differing levels of agreement are highlighted below:

- I think virtual reality is a good way of teaching people about these topics
  - The highest level of agreement was in Bradford (**62.7%** strongly agreed)
  - Across the districts less than **3%** disagreed/strongly disagreed
- The films made me think about the consequences of my actions
  - The highest level of agreement was in Leeds (**42.7%** strongly agreed)
  - Calderdale had the highest level of disagreement (**7.1%** disagreed)
- The films made me think about the consequences of knife crime
  - The highest level of agreement was in Leeds (**50.9%** strongly agreed) followed by Kirklees (**47.2%** strongly agreed)
  - Calderdale had the highest level of disagreement (**7.7%** disagreed)
- The film shows me how to recognise the early signs of being groomed into a gang
  - Leeds had the highest level of agreement (**41.7%** strongly agreed) but also the most children saying the disagreed/strongly disagreed
- If you knew someone was carrying a knife, would you tell a trusted adult
  - Wakefield had the highest level of agreement (**44.4%** strongly agreed)
  - Leeds had the highest level of disagreement (**15%** disagreed/strongly disagreed)
- The knives film taught me that carrying a knife is more dangerous than not
  - Leeds had the highest level of agreement (**55.9%** strongly agreed)
  - Calderdale had the highest level of disagreement (**7.7%** disagreed)
- If you saw a physical assault in the film, would you report it
  - **50%** of Leeds and Wakefield respondents strongly agreed
  - Across all the districts, there was more disagreement to this question than the others
- I know more about how to make decisions
  - Kirklees had the highest level of agreement (**50.4%** strongly agreed)
  - Across the districts less than **5%** disagreed/strongly disagreed
- I learnt something new from the workshops
  - Kirklees had the highest level of agreement (**44.4%** strongly agreed)
  - Calderdale had the highest level of disagreement (**7.7%** disagreed)

- The discussion was interesting
  - Wakefield had the highest level of agreement (47.8% strongly agreed)
  - Leeds had the highest level of disagreement (6% disagreed/strongly disagreed)

Children were asked what they felt would make the films better. The key feedback was around the length of the film with children wanting the film to be longer with more exploration of the characters and a continuation of the story to further explore consequences including engagement with the police. Children also wanted more choices and the ability to go back and explore different pathways. Some children commented that the quality of the film could be improved with some reporting the film was blurry.

***“More dialogue to explore the relationships and motivations behind the actions”***

***“Let us see the full outcome of our decisions, like getting arrested or seeing what happens to the characters”***

Children were asked to share the most important thing they learnt from the Virtual Decisions programme. Overwhelmingly, children learnt the consequences of carrying a knife including the legalities, the risk of injury, and joint enterprise. Children also commented on the impact both knife crime and gang involvement can have on those involved and wider communities. There were many comments about not carrying a knife, resisting peer pressure, and walking away from situations that may occur.

***“It’s not worth it to carry a knife because there can be serious consequences”***

***“It’s easy to get drawn in, but one stupid decision can change your life”***

## Feedback from facilitators

Facilitators were trained by Round Midnight in January and April 2024, and to date 96 individuals have been trained to deliver the Virtual Decisions programme.

The facilitators were asked to complete a feedback survey following the delivery of a Virtual Decisions session, to inform the Violence Reduction Partnership of any problems within delivery and share key feedback from children.

In the year, 71 facilitators completed the survey. Quarter 4 had the highest completion rate (36.6% of all completions). The district breakdown of facilitator completions is included in the table below.

District	Survey completions
Bradford	10
Calderdale	2
Kirklees	23
Leeds	15
Wakefield	7
Unknown	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>71</b>

Table 7 - Facilitator survey completion by district

The facilitator surveys explored how confident facilitators felt in the delivery of the different aspects of the Virtual Decisions programme.



Figure 8 - How confident are you in delivering the programme?

- Positively, three-quarters (**76%**) of facilitators reported feeling '**extremely or very confident**' in delivering the Virtual Decisions programme.
- Facilitators who reported feeling '**not so confident**' in delivering the programme were 'Unknown' in terms of the district they reported from.



- Facilitators in Leeds showed the highest level of confidence with **46.7%** reporting they felt '**extremely confident**' in delivering the programme.
- Facilitators in Wakefield showed the lowest level of confidence with **57.1%** reporting they felt '**somewhat confident**' in delivering the programme.

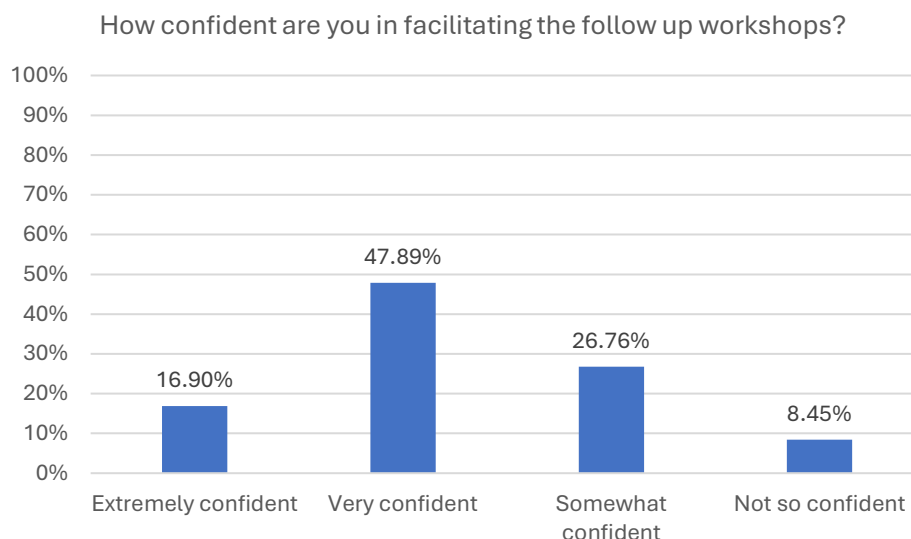


Figure 9 - How confident are you in facilitating the follow up workshops?

- **65%** of facilitators reported feeling '**extremely or very confident**' in facilitating the follow up workshops. This is lower than the confidence level for delivering the programme, suggesting there may be a need for additional support around how to facilitate the workshops.
- The district was mainly unknown for those who felt '**not so confident**' in facilitating the follow up workshops, with only one facilitator from Kirklees reporting feeling this way.
- Facilitators in Leeds and Calderdale were most confident in facilitating the follow up workshops whilst those in Wakefield were the least confident.

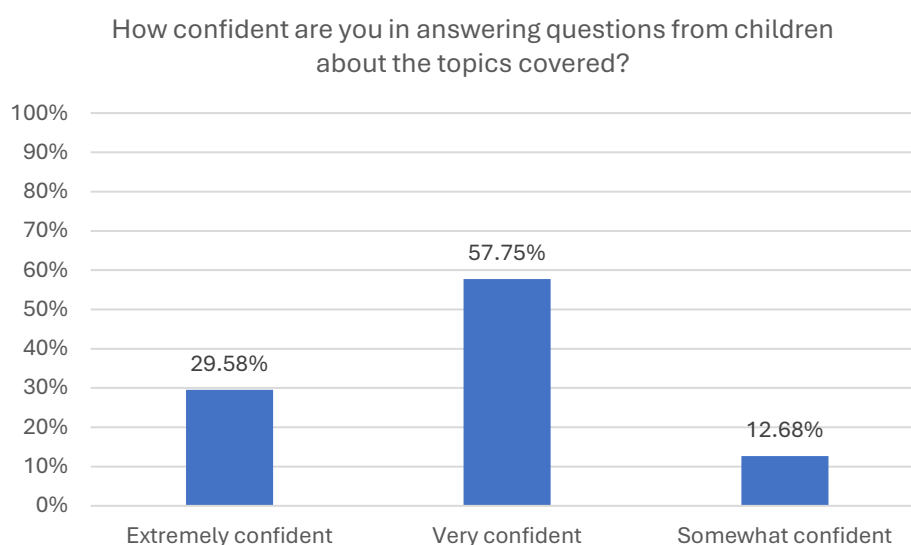


Figure 10 - How confident are you in answering questions from children about the topics covered?

- Nearly 90% of facilitators reported feeling **‘extremely or very confident’** in answering questions from children about the topics in the Virtual Decisions film.
- Facilitators in Leeds were most confident in answering questions from children about the topics covered with **60%** feeling **‘extremely confident’**.
- Wakefield facilitators were least confident in answering questions from children about the topics covered with **28.6%** feeling **‘somewhat confident’**.

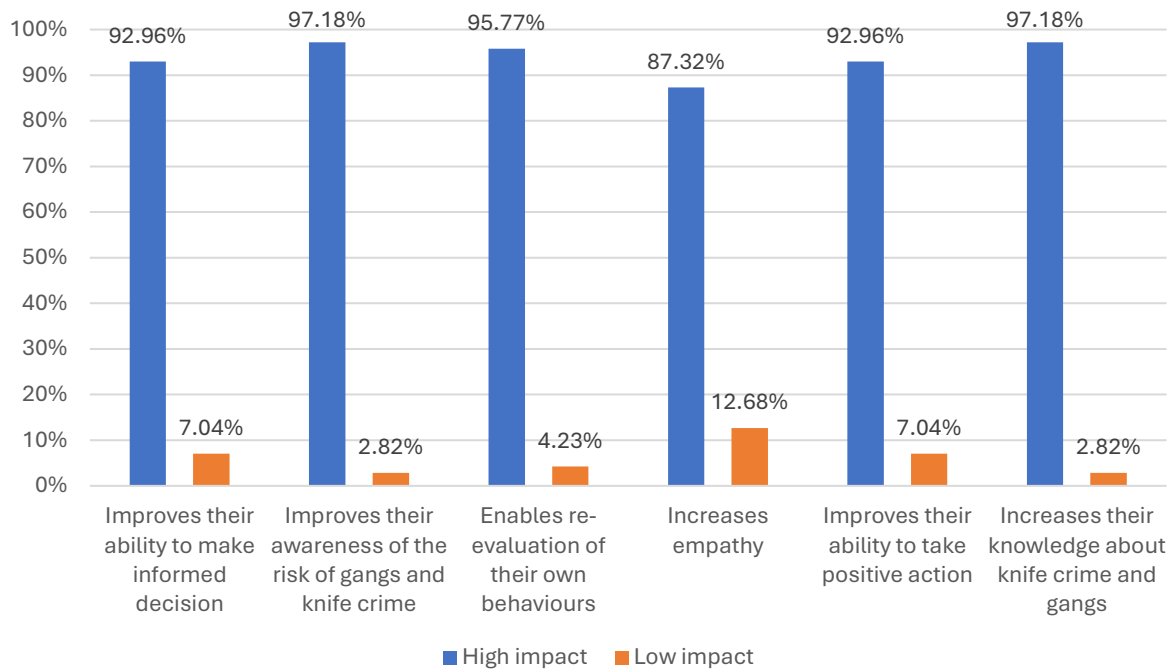


Figure 11 - Perceived impact of Virtual Decisions on children

- Generally, facilitators felt the Virtual Decisions programme was having a high impact on children in a number different areas, especially in improving awareness of the topics and increasing their knowledge.
- A lower impact was perceived for **‘increasing empathy’** and it would be useful to understand the conversations facilitators have had with children around what empathy means and how to show this to others.
- Nearly **30%** of facilitators from Wakefield felt that the programme had a low impact in improving children’s ability to make informed decisions and their ability to take positive actions
- All districts other than Bradford had some facilitators who reported the programme as having a low impact on increasing empathy

Facilitators were asked to reflect on the impact and effectiveness of the Virtual Decisions films and feedback from children, which is summarised in the below table.

Impact of sessions	
Since using the reality education programme with children, what do you feel works well?	<p><b>Effective</b> Facilitators felt the Virtual Decisions programme was effective in opening conversations with children in a way that made them feel comfortable.</p> <p><b>The technology</b></p>

	<p>The actual headsets were viewed positively and were interesting for the children which helped to keep them engagement.</p> <p><b>Programme format</b> The format of the Virtual Decisions programme worked well. The characters brought a sense of reality to the story and allowing children to make their own decisions was empowering.</p>
<p><b>Do you think the Virtual Decisions film is a good tool to use with pupils when discussing challenging topics?</b></p>	<p><b>Engaging</b> Facilitators found the films engaging as they make learning different and new for the children. Utilising technology as a teaching method was felt to break down boundaries between educators and students.</p> <p><b>Realistic</b> The films were considered to be realistic, both in terms of the content but also how it reflects decision-making in real life.</p> <p><b>Informative</b> As well as being enjoyable, facilitators felt the films were informative, successfully highlighting the key themes to children.</p>
<p><b>Do you think Virtual Decisions highlights the difficulties young people face?</b></p>	<p><b>Realistic</b> The representation of peer pressure and social media felt particularly realistic.</p> <p><b>Relevant</b> The tool is relevant for the situations that young people can face and the difficulty they find in making the correct decision.</p> <p><b>Improvements</b> It was felt by some facilitators that the films could be considered too 'tame' for some children who have already had more severe experiences. In addition, it was suggested that the language could be updated to be more relevant to children today.</p>
<p><b>What were the reactions of young people playing the game and engaging with the follow up workshop?</b></p>	<p><b>Engaged</b> Children were surprisingly and actively engaged with the film and the workshop. The realism of the film made them feel part of which, in turn, allowed them to talk about it as if they were there.</p> <p><b>Honesty</b> Facilitators reported that the children were incredibly honest in the follow up workshops and this allowed them</p>

	to identify any safeguarding concerns or areas for further explanation.
<b>Using the virtual reality equipment</b>	
<b>What part of the virtual reality experience was best received by children?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comparing the different results at the end of the game</li> <li>• Using the headsets</li> <li>• Being able to make decisions</li> <li>• How relatable the story was</li> </ul>
<b>Did you encounter any challenges or technical difficulties using the equipment?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language barriers</li> <li>• Headsets not being charged</li> <li>• Controllers requiring new batteries</li> <li>• Barriers for neurodiverse children</li> </ul>
<b>Would you like to see VR films like this covering other issues that children face? If so, what topics would be helpful to cover?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anti-social behaviour</li> <li>• Bullying</li> <li>• County lines</li> <li>• Court Process</li> <li>• Criminal Damage</li> <li>• Custody</li> <li>• Domestic abuse/teen to parent</li> <li>• Domestic violence</li> <li>• Drug use</li> <li>• Exploitation</li> <li>• Grooming</li> <li>• Hate crime</li> <li>• Healthy relationships</li> <li>• Indecent Images</li> <li>• Internet safety</li> <li>• Mental health</li> <li>• Peer pressure</li> <li>• Prevent agenda</li> <li>• Racism</li> <li>• Road safety</li> <li>• Sex education and consent.</li> <li>• Sexual assault</li> <li>• Social media</li> <li>• Specific CCE/CSE grooming</li> <li>• Theft</li> <li>• Vaping</li> </ul>

## Learnings and Reflections

- The Violence Reduction Partnership established a booking system for trained facilitators to use to schedule sessions, monitor who was delivering, and ensure there were enough headsets available for each session. Over the year, a number of problems have emerged with this process. Facilitators are not updating the sheet if sessions are cancelled or do not take place. They are also not informing the Violence Reduction Partnership when they have been unable to collect the headsets from the single point of contact. In addition, whilst the Violence Reduction Partnership has contact details for the facilitators, we had not been collecting through the booking system the details of the locations where sessions were taking place.
- In January and April, 96 facilitators across the region were trained to deliver the Virtual Decisions programme, however over the last year there have been a number of changes within this group, for example people leaving their organisation. Furthermore, we have found that only a small minority of this group of trained facilitators have been delivering the programme. There is a suggestion that the current facilitators should be reviewed with further training provided for new colleagues across the partnership.
- The Virtual Decisions films are supported by follow up workshops to start and aid conversations with the children about these topics, however it has been learnt that in some cases the follow up workshops are not being conducted. This means children are watching the films but have no support to learn more or discuss any issues the films may have raised for them. It is imperative that when scheduling sessions, facilitators ensure enough time is left to comprehensively cover the workshops.
- Facilitators in the most part have neglected to submit monitoring data to the Violence Reduction Partnership in order to understand the reach of the programme. As well as skewing the data, it makes it difficult to ascertain the true impact of the programme across the region and so we have endeavoured to make monitoring easier for facilitators in the coming year.