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## **F.A.O The National Lottery Community Fund The Key, Year 3 Report, 2019-20**

### **Background**

The Key project received Big Lottery funding to continue its work in 2017, aiming to work with disadvantaged girls and young women at high risk of abuse aged between 13 and 25 within the Leeds area. The project was aimed at young women and girls at risk of violent, abusive or unhealthy relationships, whether this be at home or in their personal relationships with friends and/or partners and covered a wide variety of topics including warning signs of unhealthy/abusive relationships, boundary setting, consent, grooming and sexting as well as self-esteem, confidence and emotional well-being. The Key provided young women and girls with a safe and confidential space to discuss difficulties and struggles, supported, guided and advised them, helped expand their support networks, and ultimately aimed to increase their levels of confidence, self-esteem and self-belief.

Key findings from the evaluation of The Key project found that young women and girls attending the project reported an increased knowledge in a range of areas related to healthy relationships, abuse and staying safe. The biggest increase was seen in girls and young women's ability to recognise the signs of an abusive relationship and their ability to change or end an abusive relationship.

### **Group Work**

#### ***School Groups***

By year three, The Key had established such a good reputation amongst schools across Leeds that we were able to deliver seven new school programmes over the third year, more than twice the original target, in addition to completing a course that was part way through at the end of year 2. Although doubling up on the number of courses delivered had proven difficult within year two due to staff time constraints, we were able to learn from this and better allocate time across year three, allowing us to deliver the increased number of groups. In addition, two groups were run in partnership with other organisations (namely Basis and Barca). This meant that The Key only provided one facilitator for these groups, overcoming some of the staff time constraints highlighted in year two.

As within year two, we continued to offer a choice of 6, 7, or 8-week programmes. This flexibility in the duration of the programme was valued by schools as it not only allowed schools to provide targeted support for vulnerable girls but also minimised absences from academic learning. Across year three, we were able to deliver 2 six-week programmes, 2 seven-week programmes, and 2 eight-week programmes. Our final programme of the year was scheduled for seven weeks however, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, only 3 weeks of this programme were delivered. In two of the seven courses delivered, schools originally requested six-week programmes, however, having seen the positive

impact of the course, extended these to eight weeks. (In one instance, only one additional week rather than two could be offered due to the COVID-19 pandemic).

With regard to the course content, we continued to develop from our learning in years one and two and constantly reviewed sessions covered. In addition to core sessions addressing how to recognise abusive relationships and keep ourselves safe, we continually adapted course content to address the specific needs of girls attending the groups. This meant that we also covered unhealthy friendships, emotional resilience, mental health, sexual health, drugs and alcohol, establishing boundaries and self-esteem and confidence.

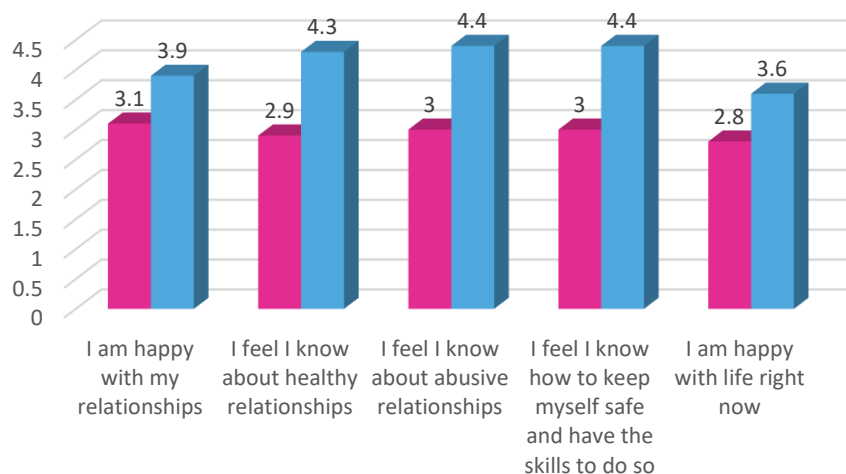
Taking into consideration our learning from year two, we increased the maximum number of referrals per group to 12. This was to address the drop-off rate. As highlighted in year two, girls missed sessions or were unable to finish the programme as a result of exclusion from school or having to spend time in isolation, affecting our ability to reach the target number of girls that would benefit from the course. Increasing the maximum number of referrals per group, as well as running two courses per term, meant that we received 56 new referrals in total across year three; 52 of these girls were able to complete the course. The 4 girls that were unable to complete the programme were unable to do so due to reduced timetables (missing the allocated time slot for sessions) or due to permanent exclusion from school.

As highlighted at the end of year two, we discussed the purpose of the group with schools and group's potential impact on the girls, as a way of trying to reduce the number of sessions missed by girls. For the most part, these extended, more in-depth conversations with schools were beneficial and 77% of sessions facilitated throughout the year were attended. Due to complex issues faced within one school, 4 of the girls dropped out (due to exclusion or reduced timetabling) after only completing one session. When this is taken into consideration, and the attendance at sessions are looked at excluding the girls who were only able to attend one session, 83% of sessions facilitated were attended over the duration of year three.

In addition to the 52 new referrals who completed the school group in year three, six girls, who were part way through a course at the time of completing the year two report, also completed their course. This means, in total, 58 girls completed The Key Schools Programme during year three.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, final sessions could not be completed with two groups, meaning that we were unable to collect impact scores for 16 girls. Of the remaining 42 girls, 6 were not present during their final session and therefore did not record impact scores. Efforts were made to follow these up with schools, however these attempts were unsuccessful in obtaining final feedback.

Graph 1: Year 3- Average Impact Scores for School Groups



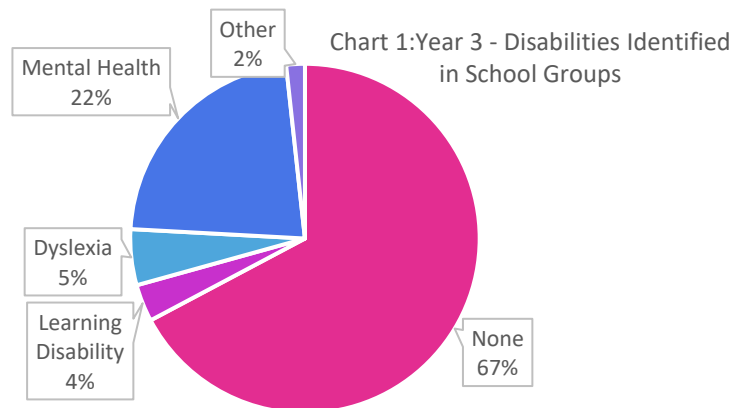
Of the 36 girls who were able to complete the final evaluation and feedback of the programme, 33 (92%) reported having a significant increase in knowledge of abusive relationships (a 24% increase on year two) and 31 (86%) reported having increased skills to keep themselves safe from abuse (a 40% increase on year two). Only 3 (8%) of the girls reported that they did not feel that they had improved knowledge of abusive

relationships and only 5 (13%) reported that they did not feel that they had improved skills to keep themselves safe. When this is compared with impact scores from year two, the number of girls reporting no change in their knowledge base or skill set has dropped by over 70%, suggesting that the continued review, amendments and development of the course content has been effective.

In addition to measuring the targeted outcomes, we also looked at the impact that the changes we made to the course content had on the girls' confidence levels. 23 (64%) of the girls who completed the impact scoring sheets reported an increase in their levels of confidence. Unfortunately, one young person reported a small decrease in her levels of confidence by the end of the course. When this was investigated further, it transpired that there had been ongoing traumatic events in her life throughout the duration of the course which had left her feeling low at the time of completing the programme. Although The Key had capacity at this time to offer one-to-one support, consideration was given to the young person's needs and it was considered much more appropriate to support with a referral to a specialist support service – BASIS Yorkshire.

Throughout year three, the main feedback received about the school groups by the girls was that "[the environment] was a safe place to open up", "I felt like I could come out of my comfort zone" and that "I enjoyed having someone to talk to that I know won't take it anywhere else" (referring to levels of confidentiality maintained in group). These comments were echoed across all groups delivered this year. As with previous years, the girls were also very positive regarding the structure of the group, commenting that they "enjoyed the activities and the games", and "enjoyed the conversations and being able to speak about things openly". Several comments were received during year three in relation to the workers facilitating the sessions within schools. Girls frequently commented that they "always made us smile no matter what", "made me feel as though we could speak about anything and the information [would be listened to]", and that workers "sharing personal stories" made the course much more relatable to the girls attending. When thinking about what they had learnt from the course and what they would take forward, several of the girls commented that they felt more confident, had realised that they were not alone in difficult situations and that they had a greater awareness of the warning signs of an abusive relationship. Several of the girls also commented that this extended to their friendship groups and that they would spend time evaluating their friendship circles as a result of increased knowledge on toxic and difficult friendships.

As with years one and two, schools have continued throughout year three to refer girls with high levels of need. Several were already in abusive relationships with family members or partners, had already experience or were at high risk of experiencing sexual exploitation and/or were struggling with severe mental health issues. 13 of the girls identified themselves as having difficulties with their mental health (depression, anxiety, low mood etc.), 4 openly discussed their ongoing self-harming behaviour, and one young person openly discussed her suicidal ideation.



and one young person openly discussed her suicidal ideation. Given these high level of needs, one-to-one support was offered to a number of girls throughout school groups and an invitation to attend The Key longer-term group (external to school) was extended. 4 girls took up on this offer to access the longer-term support.

During year three, we noticed an increase in feedback from groups suggesting that programmes such as The Key should be delivered much earlier within schools and should be offered to those in year 7, and where possible to primary schools. As The Key draws to an end, this feedback has been taken into consideration, along with the positive impact scores obtained, and Women’s Health Matters are offering The Key (in a revised form where content is suitable for girls of all ages) out to both primary and secondary schools. At present, as there is no funding available for this continued work, this is being done on a social enterprise basis, with a small cost being applied to schools.

### ***Bite-Size Sessions***

As noted within the year two report, we developed the one-off bite-size sessions as a means of extending our reach to more girls and as a way of providing early intervention preventative work which we acknowledge as being of great importance. Due to the high level of demand for longer term school groups this year, we were only able to deliver two bitesize sessions. Both of these were delivered within the same school to the same group of girls following a lengthy discussion with the referrer who felt that the girls would benefit from two sessions addressing specific topics (namely recognising signs of an abusive relationships, consent, CSE and Online safety).

16 girls attended these both these sessions. Of these 16, 14 (88%) reported an increased knowledge of abusive relationships and 15 (94%) reported increased skills to keep themselves safe. Girls attending these sessions commented throughout the session that they were unaware of some of the legalities around abuse and found these sessions helpful in developing an understanding, and in turn that these discussions had increased their ability to keep themselves safe in both current and future relationships.

The number of girls from school groups and bitesize sessions reporting an increase in knowledge base and skill set over the last three years are highlighted in Table 1. As can be seen in the table, The Key schools programme was not able to reach the target number of girls set out prior to the start of the project (target one – 126 girls over three years will have increased knowledge of abusive relationships – we reached a total of 108 girls, falling short of this target by 18 girls; target two – 117 girls over three

years will have the increased skills to keep themselves safe from abuse – we reached a total of 108 girls, falling short of this target by 9 girls). The short fall in these numbers can be accounted for by difficulties in establishing the group within schools during year one (where it can be seen that we were only able to reach half the target number), and by the number of girls that were not able to complete the programme. However, when we take into consideration the percentage of girls that we have worked with and supported that have recorded improved knowledge and skills in relation to abusive relationships, this far exceeds the target initially set out (target one – 70% of girls worked with will have increased knowledge of abusive relationships – 74% of the girls supported recorded an increase in knowledge; target two – 65% of girls will have increased skills to keep themselves safe – 74% of the girls who attended the groups recorded an increase in their skill set). This suggests to us, that although we were unable to reach the target number of girls initially set out, the work and groups we have facilitated have been effective in affecting change.

Tables 1: Numbers reporting increased knowledge in school groups and bite-size sessions

Change indicators	Target	Year 1			Year 2			Year 3			Overall
		School	Bite-size	Year 1 Total	School	Bite-size	Year 2 Total	School	Bite-size	Year 3 Total	
Girls at high risk of abuse have increased knowledge of abusive relationships	<b>Target One:</b> 42 (70%) per year	14 (74%)	10 (38%)	24 (53%)	12 (71%)	31 (84%)	43 (80%)	27 (90%)	14 (88%)	41 (89%)	108 74%
Girls at high risk of abuse have increased skills to keep themselves safe from abuse	<b>Target Two:</b> 117 (65%) by the end of the project	15 (79%)	12 (46%)	27 (60%)	9 (53%)	32 (86%)	41 (76%)	25 (83%)	15 (94%)	40 (87%)	108 74%

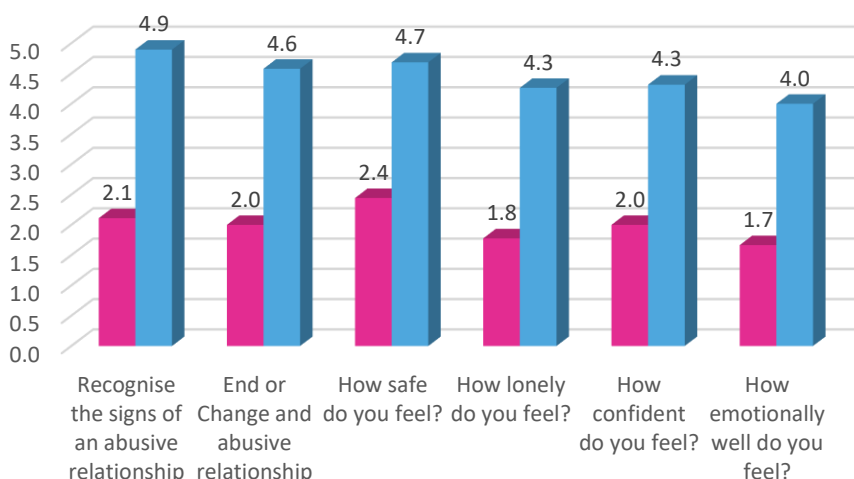
### Longer Term Groups

Having reviewed the programme during year two, we continued to work to the 18/26-week programme in year three, regularly reviewing the course content. Although the intention of the revised group structure was to ensure a greater “turn-over” in the number of young women and girls referred to and accessing the programme, both longer-term groups faced challenges in receiving referrals for lengthy periods of time throughout year three. As a team, we worked closely to explore why this was and to address this issue, however were unable to conclude why there was a sudden drop off in referral rates to these groups. Other organisations within the city also reported a decrease in the number of referrals for women under 25 and so we worked closely with these organisations (SARSVL, WTCS, WLL, Basis, Barca) to raise awareness of various services available to young women across the city. Although a lengthy process, this resulted in an increase in the number of referrals and resulted in both groups ending in year three at almost full capacity.

Throughout year three, 44 girls and young women attended the longer-term group (24 in the older 16-25 age group and 19 in the younger 13-18 age group). Of these 44, 12 continued on from year two, 20 new members joined the older 16-25 group and 12 joined the younger 13-18 group (it should be noted that 4 of these girls first completed the school groups and as such their impact scores have been recorded in the above figures).

Of these 44, 19 completed impact scoring sheets. 4 girls first completed the school groups so their scaling is recorded in the above figures, 3 moved on to the Moving on Group so their scores are recorded below. We were unable to obtain impact scores for 18 young women and girls- 2 only attended 1 session and did not return, 2 were unable to continue attending due to childcare issues, 1 was unable to continue to attend as she moved out of area, 1 was unable to attend due to a complex pregnancy. The remaining girls either dropped out during the duration of the course or did not attend the final session in order to complete their impact scores. Attempts were made to collect these either by telephone contact or by link to an online version of the form, however we were unsuccessful in obtaining these scores.

Graph 2: Year 3- Average Impact Scores for Longer Term Groups



Of the 19 girls and young women who completed the final evaluation and feedback, 100% reported an increase in their ability to recognise the signs of abuse, 18 (95%) stated that they felt that they could end or change an abusive relationship as a result of attending the group, and 17 (89%) stated that they felt safer having attended the group.

Our original targets stated that we would reach a total of 144 girls and young women through our longer-term groups over the three-year period. Table 2 shows how many girls and young women were reached, how many completed the impact and evaluation sheets and how many reported a change each year over the duration of the three years of The Key.

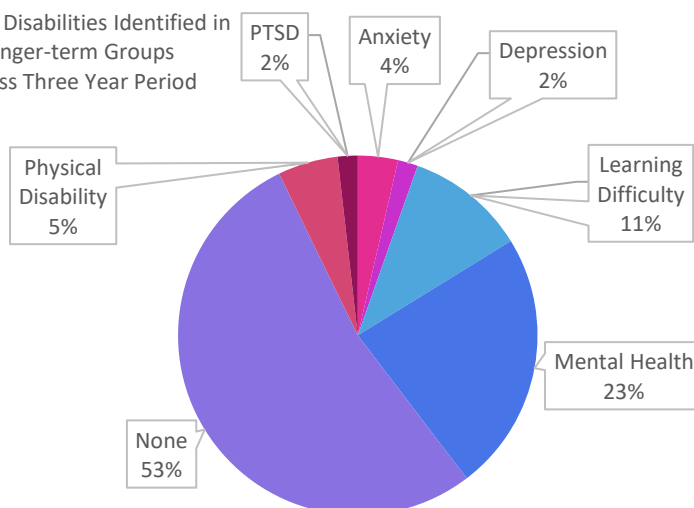
As is evidenced in the table, we were able to reach a total of 128 girls and young women over the duration of the three years – 16 short of the target we originally set ourselves. Unfortunately, due to a number of variants, only 51% of the girls and young women who attended the programme completed their impact scores and evaluation feedback. As a team, we have given this much consideration and have acknowledged that we did not set a tight enough schedule in terms of evaluation completion in order to obtain as much feedback as possible over the lifespan of the project. We acknowledge that this will have an impact on our overall outcomes and as such, have noted this for future projects to ensure that more accurate impact results are obtained in the future.

Despite the shortfall in the numbers of girls and young women who completed the evaluation and impact scoring sheets, those obtained show that a high percentage of girls and young women attending the group over the three-year period recorded a change in both their knowledge base and their skill set. 94% were better able to recognise signs of abuse, 91% reported that they felt able to end or change an abusive relationship, and 88% stated that they felt safer having attending The Key. This again suggests to us that, despite not reaching the target number of girls and young women, we have been able to increase knowledge relating to abusive relationships in a significant number of girls and young women we have worked with over the past three years.

Our longer-term groups also looked at the impact attending a group such as The Key had on emotional and mental wellbeing, namely levels of loneliness/isolation, levels of confidence and overall levels of mental wellness. During year three, of the 19 girls and young women who completed their impact scores, 18 (95%) reported feeling less lonely, 18 (95%) reported feeling more confident and 17 (89%) reported feeling more mentally well in comparison to when they started the course. As can be noted in Table 3, young women and girls attending The Key have reported a decrease in their feelings of loneliness, increase in their confidence and an increase in their mental wellbeing each year, with a total of 91% of young women and girls feeling less lonely over the three year period, 92% feeling more confident and 94% reporting improved mental wellbeing.

When we consider that 23% of all women who have attended The Key’s longer term groups over the past three years reported when they first joined that they suffered from mental health issues,

Chart 2: Disabilities Identified in Longer-term Groups Across Three Year Period



suffer from anxiety, 2% depression and 2% PTSD, the increases in levels of confidence and mental wellbeing, and the decrease in levels of loneliness as a result of attending the group should be considered significant in terms of the impact that The Key has had on individual women and girls.



Table 2: Number of girls reporting change in longer – term groups

Change indicator	Target	Year1		Year 2		Year 3		Overall	
Young women and girls experiencing abuse recognise that their relationship is abusive	<b>Target One:</b> 43 (90%) per year	No. completing the course	38	No. completing the course	46	No. completing the course	44	No. completing the course	128
		No. completing scaling	20	No. completing scaling	26	No. completing scaling	19	No. completing scaling	65
		No. reporting change	19 (95%)	No. reporting change	23 (88%)	No. reporting change	19 (100%)	No. reporting change	61 (94%)
Young women and girls experiencing abuse end or change an abusive relationship	<b>Target Two:</b> 29 (60%) per year	No. completing the course	38	No. completing the course	46	No. completing the course	44	No. completing the course	128
		No. completing scaling	20	No. completing scaling	26	No. completing scaling	19	No. completing scaling	65
		No. reporting change	19 (95%)	No. reporting change	22 (85%)	No. reporting change	18 (95%)	No. reporting change	59 (91%)
Young women and girls experiencing abuse report feeling safer	<b>Target Three:</b> 100 (70%) by the end of the project	No. completing the course	38	No. completing the course	46	No. completing the course	44	No. completing the course	128
		No. completing scaling	20	No. completing scaling	26	No. completing scaling	19	No. completing scaling	65
		No. reporting change	16 (80%)	No. reporting change	24 (92%)	No. reporting change	17 (89%)	No. reporting change	57 (88%)

Table 3: Number of girls reporting change in longer – term groups

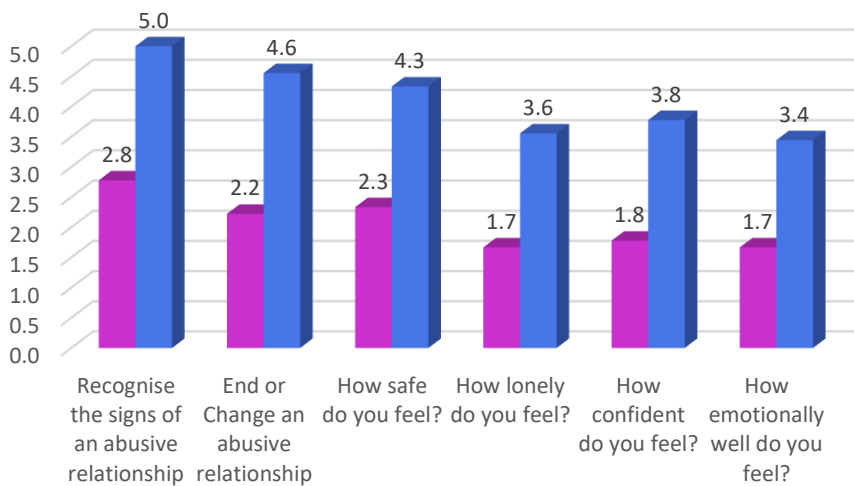
Change indicator	Target	Year1		Year 2		Year 3		Overall	
Young women and girls experiencing abuse report feeling less lonely	<b>Target One:</b> 40 (85%) per year	No. completing the course	38	No. completing the course	46	No. completing the course	44	No. completing the course	128
		No. completing scaling	20	No. completing scaling	26	No. completing scaling	19	No. completing scaling	65
		No. reporting change	17 (85%)	No. reporting change	24 (92%)	No. reporting change	17 (89%)	No. reporting change	59 (91%)
Young women and girls experiencing abuse report feeling more confident	<b>Target Two:</b> 43 (90%) per year	No. completing the course	38	No. completing the course	46	No. completing the course	44	No. completing the course	128
		No. completing scaling	20	No. completing scaling	26	No. completing scaling	19	No. completing scaling	65
		No. reporting change	18 (90%)	No. reporting change	24 (92%)	No. reporting change	18 (95%)	No. reporting change	60 (92%)
Young women and girls experiencing abuse report improved mental wellbeing	<b>Target Three:</b> 130 (90%) by the end of the project	No. completing the course	38	No. completing the course	46	No. completing the course	44	No. completing the course	128
		No. completing scaling	20	No. completing scaling	26	No. completing scaling	19	No. completing scaling	65
		No. reporting change	19 (95%)	No. reporting change	25 (96%)	No. reporting change	17 (89%)	No. reporting change	61 (94%)

### ***Moving on Group***

Following a review of the Moving on Group (MOG) structure at the end of year two, the time and location of MOG was revised during year three, taking place on an evening to accommodate for those aged 13-18 who had completed the longer-term groups. The young women and girls attending MOG discussed the best time and location for the group to run and amendments were made in line with their suggestions to accommodate for as many as possible to attend. In addition to this, a consultation session was facilitated in September (following the summer break) to look at what topics the young women and girls attending would find beneficial to cover. Although the original purpose of MOG was to provide young women and girls with the opportunity to complete courses and develop life skills, in addition to facilitating sessions with guest speakers, feedback from the consultation session saw that young women and girls had a preference for sessions addressing mental health issues, looking at recognising healthy relationships, developing trust, understanding complex emotions and improving self-esteem and confidence. They also fed back that they would like sessions to have a slightly different structure to the longer-term groups previously attended. Although the girls spoke highly of the structure of the longer-term group, they felt that the MOG should be an opportunity for attendees to “touch-base” with each other, particularly as they would now only be meeting fortnightly as opposed to weekly. Several fed back that this was their only opportunity to “vent” and to discuss difficulties that they were currently experiencing and to obtain others viewpoints on the options available to them. They also fed back that they would like sessions to be less focused on worksheets, more discussion based around particular topics, and would like additional art and craft activities to be included within the structure of MOG.

Taking this feedback into account, workers were able to develop a new 18-week programme covering topics such as moving on from abusive relationships, setting healthy boundaries in new relationships, mental health (with a particular focus on anxiety and depression), sexual health (including cervical screenings and breast checks), pregnancy (including addressing questions on terminations and miscarriages) and self-care, promoting self-esteem amongst young women. Workers also ensured that there was a balance of discussion and art-based activities throughout the duration of the programme. Following these changes, engagement from those attending MOG was seen to improve and attendance became very regular. Despite this improvement in attendance during year three, we acknowledge that we did not see a high proportion of young women and girls move on from the longer-term groups to MOG, as in previous years. For some young women and girls that we supported, we received feedback that they felt that the longer-term groups had been enough for them and that they did not feel that MOG was something that they needed to attend. Other young women and girls fed back that they felt uncertain about MOG and felt that moving on would feel “too much like starting again” and as such declined the invitation to attend. Others felt uncomfortable moving on to a “new” group on their own, having settled and established friendships within the longer-term groups. In order to address this, we ensured that all women and girls were invited to move on to MOG at the same time as others within their group as a means to reduce anxiety. Suggestions were also made by the young women and girls during year three that a visible register was kept during the longer-term groups that would allow them to be more visually aware of how many sessions they had completed and how many they had left to go before they moved on to MOG. However, due to staff difficulties, this was not implemented. Upon reflection, it is felt that a system of this sort that would provide young women and girls with a visual representation of how long they had been attending would have supported with their transition to MOG. We as workers feel that this is a piece of learning that we will take on with us to future pieces of work of this nature.

Graph 3: Year 3 - Average Impact Scores for MOG



Despite the changes and adjustments made to MOG during year three, we acknowledge that the total number of young women and girls attending MOG has remained low. A total of 11 young women and girls attended the Moving on Group in year three. Of these 11, 9 completed the impact scoring sheet during the final session (one young woman was unable to

attend the final session, and another left having found full time employment and could not be contacted to complete the final evaluation). When asked to consider their time both at the long-term group and at MOG, 100% of the young women and girls felt that they were better able to recognise the signs of abuse, 100% felt that they could end or change an abusive relationship and 89% reported feeling safer having attended the group.

89% of the young women and girls reported feeling less lonely, 78% reported feeling more confident, and 89% reported improved mental wellbeing as a result of continued support from MOG. Again, it should be noted that 32% of MOG identified as having mental health difficulties, 16% a learning difficulty, 6% anxiety, 5% depression and 5% PTSD, again suggesting that the impact The Key and MOG have had on their wellbeing is significant when considering the number of young women and girls that are reporting improvements within this area.

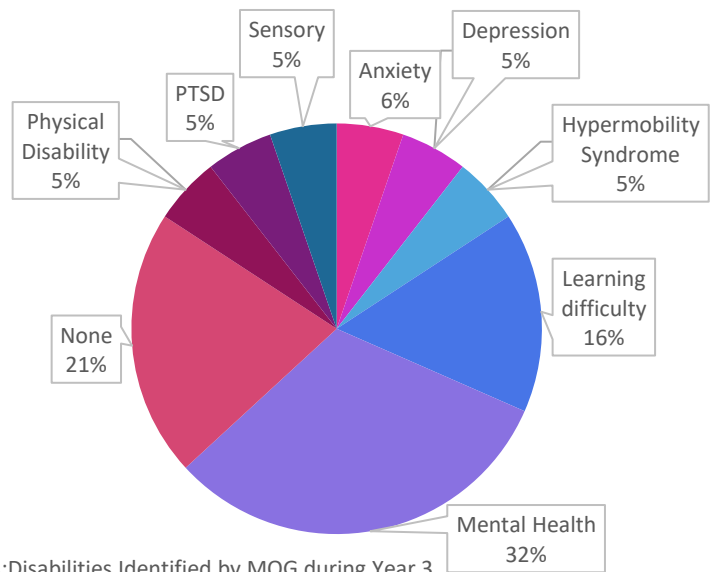


Chart 3:Disabilities Identified by MOG during Year 3

Furthermore, MOG participants also contributed to the organisation’s annual celebration events. They dedicated a group session to preparing all the necessary materials required at the event, helped set up on the morning of the event (preparing tables, display boards etc.) were supported to sign guests in to the event, and facilitated an arts and crafts stall in the afternoon which was very well received by our attendees. Again, taking into account the recorded difficulties with mental health and wider social challenges, we view this as a significant achievement for all the young women and girls involved.

### ***Steering Group***

During year two, The Key was approached by the Training and Development Team for Leeds Children and Families Workforce and were asked whether young women and girls attending The Key would be willing to engage in a number of workshops to produce videos exploring what it is like being a girl growing up in Leeds, addressing topics such as bullying, difficult family relationships, periods, stigma, abortions and relationship abuse. During year two the steering group meet twice to discuss ideas for the project, and were able to meet a further two times during year three to film and produce these videos. It was agreed that the videos would be animated to safeguard participants and that the girls would be allowed to each design their character. We had hoped to be able to meet a final time in year three to review and celebrate these videos with the young women and girls who took part in these steering groups, however, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting had to be cancelled. Fortunately, the videos were produced in time for the celebration event, held a week prior to the “lockdown” and the videos were viewed by the attendees at the event. The videos can also be seen at [https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLusdfc2JqI6IO0sehxiE2\\_nZTxXjQzzl](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLusdfc2JqI6IO0sehxiE2_nZTxXjQzzl). The Children and Families Workforce plan to use these videos in their training of foster carers, social workers, youth workers and so forth, whilst Women’s Health Matters plan to use the videos to raise awareness of issues at future events and to support discussions in future group work sessions.

### **One-to-One Support**

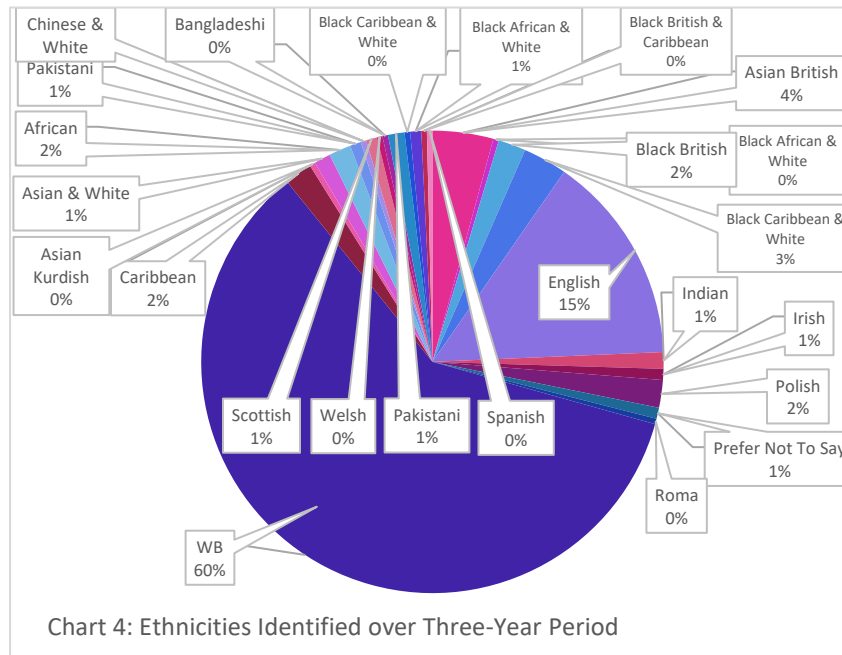
As in both years one and two, one-to-one support has been prioritised for young women and girls already attending groups. As previously noted, high levels of needs have presented within the group settings and as such it felt unethical to not follow up on issues raised within group with one-to-one support. Taking into consideration the number of young women at group in need of additional one to one support, and time allocated to other project activities, we have been unable to accept external referrals for young women seeking only one-to-one support during year three. Referrals made for one-to-one support that could not be accepted were signposted to other services, such as Women’s Lives Leeds Complex Needs Workers, IAPT, Basis, Barca, The Beck and the local cluster for support.

As a team, we were very aware that year three would see the end of The Key project and so we worked together to ensure that every young woman and girl attending either long-term group or the moving on group received a minimum of 2 one-to-one sessions over the course of the year to ensure that their ongoing needs could be met upon completion of the project. These meetings ensured that we as workers were aware of the young women’s needs and were able to signpost appropriately at the end of the project. Although time-consuming and difficult due to staff time constraints, this enabled us to complete the project confident that the young women we have supported over the last year will continue to receive the support that they need. Referrals have been made to services such as Women’s Lives Leeds, Community Mental Health Team, Barca, Basis, TeenAdopt, local clusters, The Marketplace, WTCS, Health4All, Gipsil, and Children’s Social Care Services etc.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, we are aware that a number of young women and girls that we previously supported through group will not yet have met their new worker from any referral made on their behalf, will not be able to access local group support and many do not have family nearby to support them. Taking into consideration the mental health needs reported by many of the girls and young women, we agreed to continue to offer one-to-one support via phone, email and post. As a team we are contacting the girls weekly to “check-in” and reduce isolation during this period as well as emailing and posting out relevant worksheets and materials that the young women and girls may

find helpful during this period. We also discussed whether it was possible to conduct online groups on a regular basis during this period, taking into account safeguarding concerns, timings and availability of equipment. We are now holding regular online groups for MOG in addition to regular one to one telephone support.

### **Additional Demographics**

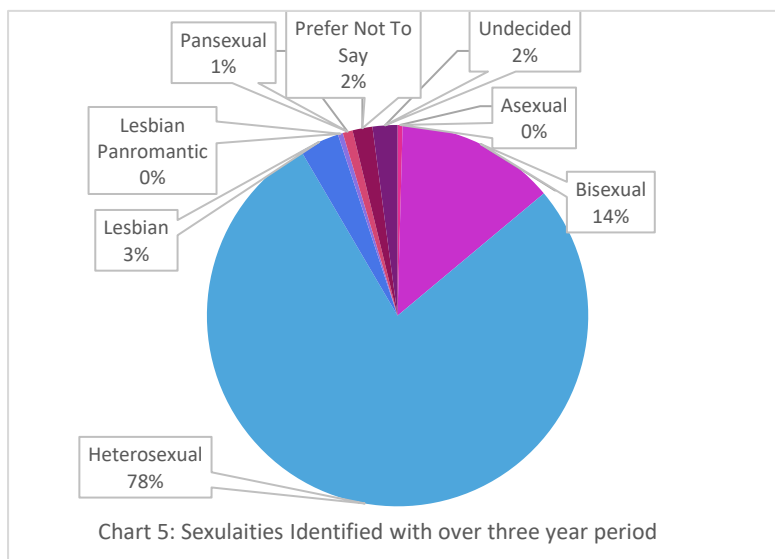


As highlighted in both year one and year two reports, the focus of The Key has been on strengthening relationships with BAME communities and services. During year three we continued to work on strengthening our links with services that support a variety of BAME communities (such as Asha and The Hamara Centre). Staff time constraints meant that we were unable to attend specific BAME events to extend our reach within

these communities. BAME referrals from school continued to increase throughout year three – it is thought that this is due to the continual change in locality of these groups. Chart 4 shows the wide range of ethnicities young women and girls attending The Key identified as over the past three years, however, it can also be noted that the vast majority (60%) identified as white British, with an additional 15% identifying as English.

Given the large proportion of young women and girls who identify as white British, when analysing the demographics of women and girls reached by The Key project over a three year period, we were not surprised to see that the vast majority (71.8%) of young women and girls did not identify as having any religion, whilst 16.8% identified as Christian. The difficulties in reaching BAME communities, discussed above, would explain the low percentages of young women and girls identifying with other religions such as Muslim, Hindu and Sikhism.

Religion	%
Christian	16.8%
Confused	0.4%
Hindu	0.8%
Jewish	0.4%
Muslim	6.3%
None	71.8%
Other - Spiritual	0.4%
Prefer Not To Say	1.3%
Satanism	0.8%
Sikh	0.4%
Wicca	0.4%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

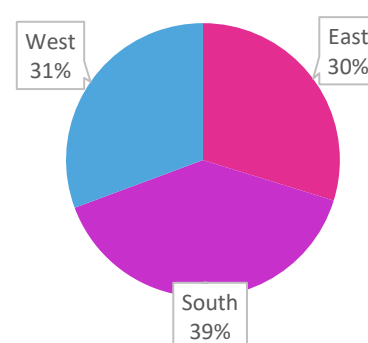


For the duration of The Key, we have aimed to develop links with the LGBTQ+ community. This has included establishing a relationship with Barnardo’s Positive Identity Service, who have attended several sessions as guest speakers over the years and have trained the Women’s Health Matters team on issues around LGBTQ+ issues and policies. The Key team attended numerous LGBTQ+ events over the last three years. We also ensure that the environment that we create

within both our school groups and longer-term groups are inclusive of all and allow the free discussion of sexuality within the group setting. Ensuring that we work in this way over the years has enabled us to expand our reach into the LGBTQ+ community. Chart 5 shows that, although the majority of young women and girls that have attended The Key over the last three years identify as heterosexual, 14% have identified as bisexual, 3% as lesbian, and 1% as panromantic, pansexual and asexual.

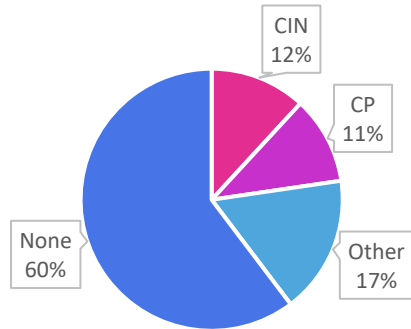
As a city-wide project, The Key aimed to deliver groups to young women and girls from all areas of the city. Analysis of demographics show that over a three-year period we were able to deliver to almost equal amounts of women and girls from each of the following areas (39% in the South, 30% in the East and 31% in the West). The Leeds Index of Multiple Deprivation (2019) highlights the most deprived areas of Leeds as being mainly concentrated within the Inner East (LS8, LS9 and LS14 postcodes) and South of the city (LS10 and LS11 postcodes). The index showed that these areas of the city were considered “disadvantaged” when looking at child poverty, educational attainment, health and wellbeing, housing and debt. As The Key is a project for vulnerable young women and girls, whose risk of vulnerability is increased when these factors are present, the higher percentage of women from the South of the city supported over the last three years would demonstrate that The Key has been able to reach some of the most vulnerable young women and girls within the city. In total, The Key has worked with 50 women from the south of the city (LS10 and LS11 postcodes) and 75 women from the inner east of the city (LS8, LS9 and LS14 postcodes).

Chart 6: % of women and girls from Leeds areas



Throughout year three, the majority of referrals received have been from social care and from housing workers at a local organisation, GIPSIL. Early on in the life of the project it came to our attention that upon referral, cases would often be closed to social care workers as The Key would be considered enough intervention to prevent the escalation of the case through social work services. Despite a large number of cases being closed upon referral, a significant number remained open, or were referred

% of women and girls involved with CSWS over three-year period



into social care during their time at The Key. Over the three-year period of the project, 40% of women and girls attending the project were involved with social care at the time they started the project [11% on Child Protection plans (either for themselves or their children), 12% on Child In Need plans (again, for themselves or their children) and 17% had another form of social care involvement (such as Early Help Plans, Court Proceedings etc.) This demonstrated the high level of vulnerability of some of the young women and girls we have supported throughout The Key.

In addition, we were able to ascertain that 25% of parents attending The Key had had a child removed due to domestic violence prior to attending the group, again highlighting the levels of vulnerability amongst the young women and girls that we support.

### **Relationship Building and Profile During Year Three**

By year three, the reputation of The Key school groups had grown exponentially, as demonstrated by the high demand for groups to be delivered across the city. We believe that this is as a result of hard work over the past three years, developing and promoting the groups within schools, colleges and youth settings across the city, along with the positive impact and outcome of the group leading to greater awareness of the project, and “word of mouth” sharing of its impact amongst the educational community. As The Key draws to a close, several schools are still voicing an interest in the project and we are discussing whether this can be delivered at a small cost to schools and looking at other funding sources to deliver this work. Our reputation has also reached primary schools across the city and as a result we are also exploring the possibility of delivering a revised, age-appropriate version of The Key schools’ programme to primary schools across the city, again at a small cost to schools. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and restrictions currently put in place by the government, all work of this nature is currently on hold, however we are looking forward to resuming this as soon as possible.

Throughout year three, Women’s Health Matters, and The Key workers have maintained their presence at a wide breadth of forum meetings across the city (such as the Young Lives Leeds Network, Leeds Safeguarding, Third-Sector Safeguarding, Domestic Violence Forum and Women’s Lives Leeds) and have continued to work hard at ensuring that our attendance is on a regular basis. Our presence at these meeting has constantly raised the profile of The Key (and Women’s Health Matters) and has allowed us to establish deeper working relationships with external services such as Women’s Therapy and Counselling Services and Basis Yorkshire.

In the final quarter of year three, Women’s Health Matters were approached by colleagues from the Local Authority who wanted our support to help reach their targets around violence reduction amongst young people. WHM were given a £3500 grant which helped The Key team to support girls



and young women consistently through the challenges at the beginning of the pandemic. With our funding officer's agreement this led to a slight extension of the project and mitigated the shock of the lockdown restrictions which stopped group work in its tracks ahead of the project's scheduled ending. Boundaries and predictability are crucial for The Key's participants' positive development so this extra funding was timely.

Women's Health Matters pooled resources and worked flexibly across projects to ensure as much support as possible could be extended to our beneficiaries through the pandemic. Management time was focused on funding applications and we were successful in our application for the Coronavirus Community Support Fund so have been able to continue the support to particularly vulnerable individuals who would otherwise have struggled with the increased risks to wellbeing and safety presented through lockdown.

### **Achievements**

During year three, The Key was shortlisted for three Children & Young People Now Awards – The Early Intervention Award, The PSHE Education Award, and The Safeguarding Award (<http://www.cypnowawards.com/shortlist>). Team members were able to attend a formal awards ceremony in London, providing an opportunity to raise the profile and awareness of The Key and celebrate the achievements of the project with other professionals in the same field.

### **Evaluation**

We have continued to work closely with our external evaluators at Leeds Beckett University. Leeds Beckett used original approaches to The Key evaluation, developing the "photovoice activity" that allowed the young women and girls at The Key to express what the project meant to them in a creative manner (See appendix for example). Additionally, Leeds Beckett have been able to conduct interviews with group members to obtain qualitative feedback to be compiled into the end of project report. This qualitative data will allow us to capture the journeys women take throughout the duration of the programme and will allow us to capture the value of the groups that would otherwise be missed should we focus solely on quantitative data. A copy of this will be forwarded onto the National Lottery Community Fund.

To summarise, the impact of the groups (both school-based and longer-term) has been significant to young women and girls attending, allowing them to improve their knowledge base in relation to domestic violence, improve their skills set and ensuring that they are able to keep themselves safe and make positive changes within their relationship. Additionally, we have seen a significant increase in young women and girls' level of confidence and mental wellbeing and have greatly reduced isolation amongst a vulnerable cohort. We acknowledge that we have reached fewer numbers over the duration of The Key than was originally stated. However, the young women and girls who engaged with us speak highly of the programme and of the positive impact that it has had on their lives. During the last group sessions, tears were shed as all involved in the project were saddened that the project had been foreshortened by Covid 19 but positive contacts have been maintained, as young women and girls appreciate the anchoring and support from workers, emphasising the impact that the project has had. We as workers feel privileged to have worked on such an amazing project and to have been given the opportunity to meet and support so many wonderful women and girls. We would like to thank the National Lottery for this incredible opportunity and valued resource.

**Disclaimer:**

An external evaluation of The Key has been completed by Leeds Beckett University. We acknowledge that there are marginal differences in the outcomes of data analysis completed by ourselves and by Leeds Beckett University. Having reviewed reasoning as to why this occurred, we have established that the data was analysed at different points in time. We at Women's Health Matters obtained additional feedback after the completion of the Leeds Beckett University report and included this within our data analysis, which accounts for some data and outcome discrepancies. We have also been able to establish with Leeds Beckett that the data, particularly demographic data, has been categorised slightly differently by both organisations and as such this accounts for some discrepancies in data analysis and outcomes.

It is important to note that although there are some marginal differences in the data analysis outcomes, the trends of these data analysis from both reports show that The Key has supported young women and girls in improving their knowledge in relation to abusive relationships and ability to keep themselves safe.

**Year Three: Budget**

<b>The Key 2019/20</b>			
<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<b>Revenue</b>			
Salaries NI and Pensions	55,955	54,849	1,106
Recruitment	0	0	0
General running expenses	25,534	25,132	402
Sessional workers	375	0	375
Training	936	752	184
Travel	853	1,522	-669
Evaluation	10,000	10,000	0
Vol exp & train	156	154	2
Office Equip	0	0	0
	<b>93,809</b>	<b>92,410</b>	<b>1,399</b>
<b>Overheads</b>			
Staff	7,608	7,608	0
Accommodation	4,194	4,407	-213
Office costs	2,051	3,168	-1,117
Company administration	749	819	-70
	<b>14,602</b>	<b>16,002</b>	<b>-1,400</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>108,411</b>	<b>108,411</b>	
<b>Total for 3 years</b>			<b>285,037</b>