



Teachable Moments Evaluation Summary

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Introduction

In November 2021, West Yorkshire Combined Authority commissioned Wavehill to carry out an evaluation of the Teachable Moments Focused Deterrent Car (FDC) intervention. The intervention involves a police officer and youth worker being deployed in an unmarked police car in order to identify vulnerable people in the community at risk of committing or becoming victims of crime. The FDC programme was funded by the Home Office and implemented by the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) in each of the five West Yorkshire Police districts.¹

The overall aim of the FDC is to impact on the three key Home Office measures around reducing serious violence:

Home Office Measures

1. A reduction in hospital admissions for assaults with a knife or sharp object and especially among those victims aged under 25.
2. A reduction in knife-enabled serious violence and especially among those victims aged under 25.
3. A reduction in all non-domestic homicides and especially among those victims aged under 25 involving knives.

Evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation was to provide the VRU with learning around the effectiveness of the implementation of the FDC intervention and to understand the direct and indirect impacts of the model. The evaluation included a desk-based review of programme data and available literature, semi-structured interviews with a range of stakeholders² and several site visits.

Evaluation Aims

- Examine the implementation of the FDC project to identify areas of good practice as well as opportunities for improvement.
- Identify whether the early programme impacts are positive or negative, whether the programme is having the intended impacts or whether there are also unintended impacts arising from its implementation, as well as casting light on direct or indirect impacts.
- Establish the value for money of the FDC project.

¹ Note: The five districts are: Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds, and Wakefield.

² Note: Stakeholders including VRU stakeholders, police officers, youth workers, youth work managers and lead police officers in each district.

Concept

The FDC model is based around early intervention and aims to provide the opportunity to identify and engage with young people who are vulnerable to becoming a victim or perpetrator of crime or violence. It seeks to provide an opportunity to identify and intervene 'upstream' to prevent young people on the cusp of criminality progressing further and offer a positive pathway towards healthier outcomes. It is based on Reachable/Teachable Moment theory which suggests there is a period of time where individuals are most receptive to making changes in their life after an incident has taken place.

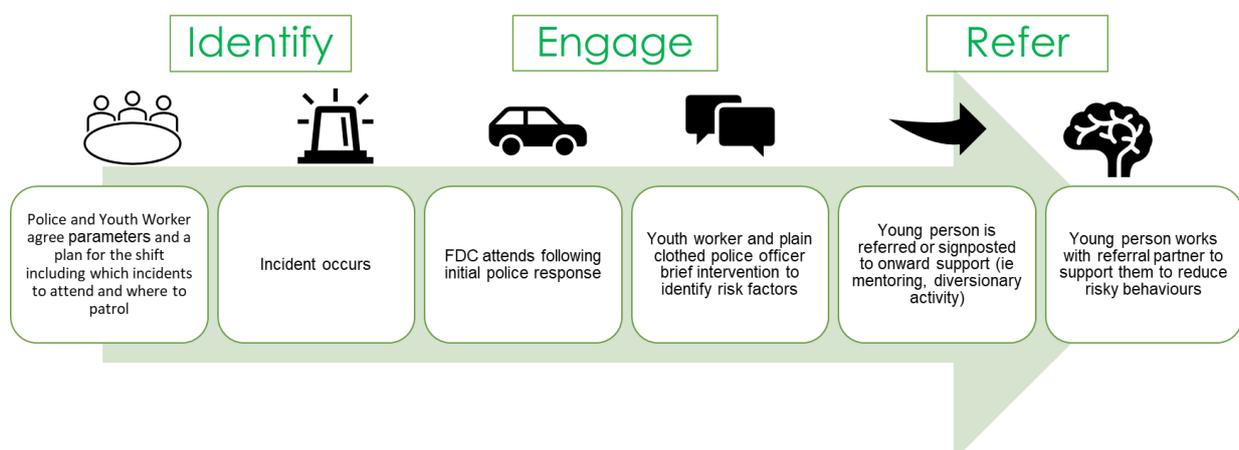
A '**reachable moment**' is the opportunity to interact with someone who is otherwise hard to reach.

A '**teachable moment**' can be described as the opportunity for instruction and learning with a view to cognitive or behavioural change.

This theory has been applied to interventions that take place in A&E or police custody settings, however, the FDC model (see Figure 1 below) is a novel application of this theory. A review of the available literature suggests the benefits of these approaches lie in:

- **The timing** - the opportunity to interact with young people at the right time.
- **Early identification** - the ability to intervene with young people before they become more involved with criminality/are known to the police.
- **Multi-agency** - the approaches provide opportunity for inter-agency collaboration and sharing of information, services, skills and expertise.
- **Voluntary involvement** - engaging with support is not compulsory and young people voluntarily opt-in to addressing their risk factors.
- **Referral pathways** - having links to a range of agencies enables the most appropriate form of support to be identified and accessed.
- **Relationship building** - where referrals are made, it provides the opportunity for longer term support which enables young people to form trusting relationships with their youth worker or support worker.

Figure 1: Overview of the Focused Deterrent Car model



Context

An important consideration for the evaluation of the FDC model was the context in which the intervention is being delivered. The model is based around referring young people to onward support and therefore the availability of suitable community support to refer to is an important aspect of the overall model. The existing Community Links programme, funded by the VRU and delivered by district-based youth work providers, serves as an important feature of the overall model given their existing footprint, knowledge of the communities and work with young people. The evaluation has highlighted key contextual enablers and barriers to the FDC model, and these are shown below in Table 1.

Table 1: Contextual enablers and barriers to the FDC model

Enablers	Barriers
<p>Availability of provision for those at risk of becoming involved in or victims of crime to be referred to in each district.</p> <p>An existing Community Links programme in each district delivered by the same youth service as the FDC to aid referral process.</p> <p>A strong offer of early help provision that is well integrated with the police service.</p> <p>Availability of a good range of diversionary activities local to the areas that the FDC operates.</p> <p>FDC workers can draw on existing relationships that young people have with youth services including through detached youth work or neighbourhood teams.</p> <p>Youth work provision has strong existing relationships with police and other agencies and established partnership working.</p> <p>Youth services have a physical presence (i.e., youth club offer or mobile vans) to signpost young people proactively engaged by the FDC to.</p>	<p>In some districts, there appears to be less police involvement with early help provision.</p> <p>There is a lack of educational and diversionary activities to refer to across some districts.</p> <p>Whilst there is available provision for those involved in youth violence/criminality, there is a lack of 'lower level' interventions for those that would benefit but who do not meet criteria for some services.</p> <p>Awareness of the local available opportunities for those involved with the delivery of the FDC.</p>

Implementation

Working Hours

Across the five districts, the operational hours the FDC was deployed differed and ranged from finishing at 10pm to 2am. Those consulted suggested the FDC shifts were quieter after 9pm and this is consistent with the VRU returns data which showed that 90% of the 1,711 recorded engagements occurred between the hours of 4pm and 9pm. The rationale for districts' decisions on when to deploy the FDC was unclear however, it is suspected that this may have been based around what was operationally convenient as opposed to the times that are most effective to engage with young people. Consultees suggested there are fewer young people on the streets during the winter periods and this suggests the model may need to build in seasonal flex to increase operations over the summer months and scale back over winter.

Tasking and Identification

The evaluation found inconsistencies in how the FDC was deployed across the five districts and how young people were identified. The biggest difference was the emphasis placed on responsive and proactive engagements.

- **Responsive** engagements are those focused on responding to an incident and involved listening to the police radio and police live logs. Individual officers' awareness of recent incidents that were suitable for the FDC to follow was also used.
- **Proactive** engagements typically involved patrolling hotspot anti-social behaviour areas or areas where young people often congregate based on local intelligence from police officers and youth workers.

This was due, in part, to the number of appropriate incidents for the FDC to attend being lower than initially thought when the model was conceived.

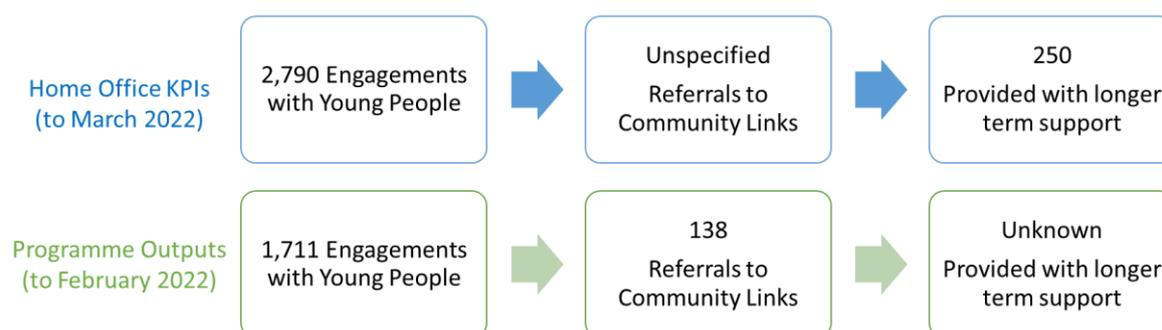
Amongst the officers and youth workers consulted, there was consensus that responsive engagements with young people were more effective and led to greater numbers of referrals due to their targeted nature. However, the effective identification of young people to engage with in a responsive manner was dependent on the effective flow of information to the FDC.

The evaluation found that where there was good communication between the Neighbourhood Policing Team and the FDC, this led to the effective identification of appropriate young people to engage with. Attempting to proactively engage with young people in ASB areas was less effective in identifying those vulnerable to becoming a victim or perpetrator of crime.

Impacts

The programme collected information on the number of referrals made to the Community Links programme however, from the programme data it was not possible to discern who had been referred by the FDC. Therefore, it was not possible to identify the take-up rate of those referred to Community Links support by the FDC. Figure 2 below provides an overview of how the programme performed against their Home Office Key Performance Indicators.

Figure 2: Programme performance against Home Office KPIs



Given the high-cost implications associated with a young person becoming either a victim or perpetrator of violence, if the FDC deterred even a small proportion of individuals from later becoming involved with serious violence, this would represent good value for money. The table below outlines some of the potential cost savings if those that accessed the Community Links programme, via the FDC, avoided becoming involved with serious violence.

Table 2: Potential cost avoidance of serious violence^{3 4 5}

	Unit cost avoidance	5% of those referred (7 young people)	10% of those referred (14 young people)	20% of those referred (28 young people)
Stabbing victim	£7,196	£49,652	£99,305	£198,610
Depression	£9,840	£67,896	£135,792	£271,584
Violence with injury	£14,050	£96,945	£193,890	£387,780

³ Source: Public Health Institute, Liverpool John Moores University (2020)- 'Costs of violence to the healthcare system in Wales'.

⁴ Source: The Trauma Audit and Research Network (TARN)

⁵ Source: Home Office (2018)- 'The economic and social costs of crime'. Second edition. Research Report 99

Another important impact of the FDC model is the value in the collaborative working between the police and youth services. Those consulted suggested that the FDC led to better information sharing, timelier interventions, generated new intelligence and more positive relations between police officers and communities.

Learning

Implementing the FDC intervention was an ambitious undertaking that involved engaging with multiple partners and services in five districts in a short period of time. The evaluation highlighted learning that could be valuable when informing future FDC operations as well as the implementation of similar interventions. Key learning points include:

- Critical to the model is the availability of wider support services to refer young people into. In this regard, aligning the FDC with the existing Community Links provision is a positive aspect and ensures the FDC is not delivering in a silo.
- The model has provided the opportunity for collaborative working between the police and youth services. This has been seen as beneficial by both due to the sharing of information, approaches to working and of expertise.
- In future and where funding streams allow, it would be helpful to have further lead time to fully scope the intervention to establish the likely demand for the intervention, to raise awareness of the intervention amongst wider stakeholders and potential partners and to develop and refine delivery processes.
- There is currently an irregular flow of information that informs FDC tasking. This should be addressed through better awareness of the FDC across each district's police service and better coordination within each district to pull-on multiple sources of information to inform the FDC's deployment including Neighbourhood policing, early intervention, safeguarding and child criminal exploitation teams.
- The location of the engagement is an important consideration and an indicator of whether the young person would agree to be referred into Community Links. For example, engagements that took place within the young person's home accounted for a greater proportion of referrals than engagements that took place on the street.
- The length of time left between the initial incident and the FDC engagement is also an important consideration. This ought to be long enough after the initial incident to allow for the immediate emotional response to have passed but are able to reflect properly and are potentially receptive to accessing support.
- In order to understand more about the impact of the FDC, further data is needed on the take-up of the intervention, the young person's engagement and the progress against reducing their risk factors.

Recommendations

The evaluation provides the following recommendations for the delivery of the FDC intervention:

- Define what is meant by engagement, how to understand when this has been effective.
- Focus on active referral of young people over signposting and determine take-up and retention rates.
- Identify gaps in the early help infrastructure across districts, in particular where this limits the effectiveness of the FDC.
- Ensure shift patterns are directed towards maximum engagement periods rather than being influenced by overtime shifts or availability of the unmarked car.
- Consider resourcing the programme on a seasonal basis.
- Ensure consistency of police officers deployed within the FDC by linking to professional development and career progression plans.
- Focus on responsive as opposed to proactive deployment to increase prospects of reaching target young people.
- Targeting should prioritise quality over quantity.
- Convene opportunities for police officers and youth workers across the five districts to share practice.
- Standardise data collection across the five districts.

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