The effects of exposure to domestic abuse on adolescents' relationship attitudes and reasoning of abusive behaviour, and an evaluation of an intervention programme for those who are displaying perpetrator behaviours

Submitted by Bryony Curtis, to the University of Exeter

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I declare that the contents are the sole and original work of the author. References to existing research are cited where appropriate.

Signature: …………………………………………

Overview

Domestic abuse is a large and widespread problem, with many children and young people being exposed to such abuse. Due to the hidden nature of domestic abuse, agencies may be unaware of the abusive home environments that some young people are exposed to. Exposure to domestic abuse can impact on every aspect of a young person's life, from their social development to their academic achievement. The processes by which exposure to domestic abuse affects children and young people remain unclear. Due to a multitude of complex and interlinking factors, many young people who are exposed to domestic abuse may never have the opportunity to make sense of these adverse experiences.

My interest in this area of study stems from a culmination of professional experiences, when working as a Trainee Educational Psychologist, teaching in schools, and working in the care system. Some of these young people displayed a range of challenging behaviour, some of whom were being educated in specialist educational settings for children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. I discovered that a considerable number of young people had been exposed to domestic abuse, but due to the gap in provision, they had not been given the opportunity to make sense of these experiences. This is one important aspect in overcoming difficulties associated with exposure to domestic abuse, which is explored in this thesis.

The purpose of this investigation is to fill a gap in the research literature, and to bring this issue into the public domain. The broad aim is for the impact of exposure to domestic abuse on young people to become more widely acknowledged. Through an improved understanding of the processes by which exposure to domestic abuse affects young people, better informed therapeutic approaches and provision can be developed. Ultimately, the aim of this is to improve outcomes for this group of children and young people.

There are two elements to the research presented in this document. The first paper is an illuminative study into the effects of domestic abuse on the attitudes and reasoning of adolescents who have been exposed to domestic abuse. It endeavours to make sense of the psychological processes through

which these views have developed and been maintained. By adopting a person-centred approach, I have sought to give a true voice to young people, which will ultimately allow for their views to be represented in the wider public domain. The results indicate a complex interaction between experiences and skill deficits at a crucial time of identity formation, which contributes to the acquisition of destructive attitudes and reasoning about abusive behaviour. This research illustrates the degree to which such attitudes and reasoning permeate the lives of these young people. The implications of this research on the development of future therapeutic approaches are discussed, along with the role of Educational Psychologists working in this domain.

The second paper evaluates an intervention programme for young people who have been exposed to domestic abuse. A before and after design is used to evaluate an intervention programme based on cognitive-behavioural principles. The young people who were enrolled on this programme had been exposed to domestic abuse, and were identified as displaying, or being at risk of developing, abusive patterns of behaviour. This paper takes a less theoretical stance than the first, rather attempting to illuminate learning outcomes which may inform the development and revision of other intervention programmes. The results suggest that although some of the skills targeted by the programme appeared unchanged, a number of positive effects were indicated. The participants offer a number of suggestions as to how the programme could be further developed and improved. The implications of these findings in the broader context of the development of provision for young people exposed to domestic abuse are explored.

The opportunity to work with this group of young people has been an engaging and privileged experience. It is hoped that this research will further raise the profile of this group of young people, particularly within the field of educational psychology.

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Abstract

Exposure to domestic abuse in childhood can go on to negatively affect every aspect of that individual's life. During adolescence, the impact of exposure to domestic abuse may go beyond the borders of the family and the individual, and affect the development of intimate relationships. This study explores the attitudes and reasoning of eleven young people who have been exposed to domestic abuse and are displaying perpetrator behaviours. Results reveal a complex interaction between experiences and skill deficits at a crucial time of identity formation, resulting in the formation and maintenance of destructive attitudes and contradictory reasoning about abusive behaviour. The direct implications of this study, suggestions for further research, and for Educational Psychology Services are discussed.

Introduction

Effects of exposure to domestic abuse

Domestic violence and abuse can be defined as systematic patterned behaviour, designed consciously or subconsciously, to control and dominate a partner or former partner (Against Domestic Violence and Abuse (ADVA), 2001). It can range from constant criticism, intimidation, belittling, excessive jealousy and possessiveness, to physical violence and sexual abuse (ADVA, 2001). Physical violence does not have to be present for a relationship to be abusive. For the purpose of brevity, and to acknowledge the range of abuse in relationships referred to as 'domestically violent', 'domestic violence and abuse' shall be referred to as 'domestic abuse'.

Domestic abuse is a large and widespread problem (Lavis, Horrocks, Kelly, & Barker, 2005). It is estimated that one in four women experience domestic abuse at some stage during their lives (British Medical Association, 1998). Where domestic abuse occurs, children and young people are likely to have been exposed to such abuse. In 90% of cases children or young people are in the same or next room (Hughes, 1992), with many (73%) directly witnessing violent assaults (Abrahams, 1994).

Although children's responses vary enormously, exposure to domestic abuse is likely to have a detrimental impact on children and young people, equivalent to that of emotional abuse or psychological maltreatment (Abrahams, 1994; Carroll, 1994; Christensen, 1990; Jaffe, Wolfe, & Wilson, 1990; Saunders, Epstein, Keep, & Debbonaire, 1995). Effects can include behavioural, physical and psychological problems, which may be short term and/or long term (Hester, Pearson, & Harwin, 2000). Short term effects may include aggression and anger, low self-esteem, introversion and withdrawal, poor social skills, feelings of guilt, self-blame and bitterness (Hester et al., 2000). Regarding long term effects, an association with the development of domestically abusive behaviour in later life has been suggested (Barter, McCarry, Berridge, & Evans, 2009; Fergusson & Horwood, 1998).

The research available provides conflicting findings on whether exposure to domestic abuse as a child, later results in the development of abusive relationships (Coohey, 2004; Cunninghan & Baker, 2004; Fergusson & Horwood, 1998; Whitefield, Anda, Dube, & Felitti, 2003). This notion has been termed 'the cycle of violence' or the 'Intergenerational Transmission of Violence' (Straus, 1991). There is a wealth of literature which makes reference to the cycle of violence in some way (Fergusson & Horwood, 1998; Markowitz, 2001), however most of what is written has no empirical basis (Mullender & Morley, 1994), and even fewer empirically based studies have used non-clinical samples to test this theoretical debate (Cantrell, MacIntyre, Sharkey, & Thompson, 1995). It may be concluded that exposure to domestic abuse in childhood may potentially increase the risk of becoming an abusive adult, however the process is neither direct nor certain (Kaufman & Zigler, 1987).

Policy

The development of policy initiatives reflects the increasing acknowledgment of domestic abuse in our society. In 2009, a cross-governmental strategy was proposed, which set out a coordinated approach to end violence against women and girls (HM Government, 2009). Under the proposed plans, from 2011 children will be taught in schools about how to prevent violent relationships, with the compulsory coverage of gender equality and preventing violence in relationships. This strategy identifies changing attitudes as being a key prevention factor for ending violence against women and girls. This strategy proposes to raise awareness of violence against women and girls, and challenge the perceptions of both men and women. However, there is little detail on how this strategy will promote attitude change.

Rationale

A better understanding of adolescent's attitudes and reasoning of abusive behaviour through a qualitative approach, may lead to a better understanding of the origins of domestic abuse in adult relationships, as well as a greater understanding of the process through which this happens. There is a need for qualitative research into domestic abuse, which includes verbal and emotional abuse, to specifically focus on the attitudes and reasoning of

adolescents. A greater understanding of the how adolescents who have been exposed to domestic abuse reason and make sense of their experiences in addition to the attitudes they hold, should help influence the development of prevention strategies and intervention programmes, which seek to target this vulnerable group.

This research paper is one part of two papers. This paper seeks to illuminate the effects of exposure to domestic abuse on adolescents. More specifically, it aims to shed light on their attitudes and reasoning of abusive behaviour.

The second paper looks beyond this to evaluate the effectiveness of an intervention programme which has been developed to support young people who have been exposed to domestic abuse and are displaying perpetrator behaviours.

Selected Literature

A literature search was conducted to identify previous research into the effects of exposure to domestic abuse in childhood, and its resulting impact in adolescence. The aim of this literature review was to identify areas where further research was needed, and following this, to plan a research study which was both original and relevant. Through this process I gained a critical understanding of the epistemological stances taken, methodological assumptions made, and the data collection techniques used. I also developed a better understanding of how other researchers sought to address ethical issues. As a result, I felt better informed when making decisions about planning and conducting my research.

Detailed information about how this literature search was conducted, along with the full literature review, can be found in appendix 1.1 and 9. The rest of this section provides an overview of key studies cited in the research literature into the effects of domestic abuse on children and adolescents.

Effect of domestic abuse on children

Much of the research into domestic abuse was conducted in the 1980s, when family violence emerged as one of the major social problems of the time (Jaffe, Wilson, & Wolfe, 1986). It is important to note that at this time domestic abuse was conceptualised as physical violence, rather than also encompassing verbal, emotional, sexual and economic abuse. Much of the research carried out at this time therefore would reflect this conceptualisation and would not have explored domestic abuse in the broader sense. The findings from this era may now have reduced validity due to this change in conceptualisation. Research focused on exploring the prevalence, causes and consequences of domestic abuse (Gelles & Cornell, 1990; Hotaling, Finkelhor, Kirkpatrick, & Straus, 1988; Mullender, & Morley, 1994; Straus, Gelles, & Steinmetz, 1980). Studies indicated that exposure to domestic abuse negatively impacted on children's cognitive, emotional, behavioural and social functioning (Kitzmann, Gaylord, Holt, & Kenny, 2003; Kolbo, Blakely, & Engleman, 1996; Peled, 2000; Stipek, 1988).

In a review of related literature, Martin (2002) highlights the difficulties experienced by children who had witnessed domestic abuse. In terms of cognitive functioning she found reduced verbal skills, approval of violence as a means of conflict resolution, immaturity, and delays in self-help skills, speech, and social skills development. With regard to emotional functioning, children exposed to domestic abuse were found to exhibit feelings of anxiety and fear; low self-esteem; increased risk of depression; heightened feelings of shame, guilt, helplessness and powerlessness; hypervigilence, insecurity; and distrust. Behaviour and social functioning difficulties found included greater externalising (aggression, self-harm) or internalising (withdrawal, isolation) behaviours, increased risk of substance abuse, social isolation, and increased risk of truancy (Martin, 2002). These findings highlight the wide ranging negative impact of exposure to domestic abuse on children and young people.

Effect of domestic abuse on adolescents
Up until the late 1980s/1990s, adolescents had been virtually ignored in the research literature, with a few studies examining the impact of family violence on adolescent dating relationships (e.g. Emery & O'Leary, 1982). This lack of research is surprising, as adolescence is the first time when peer relationships become as important, if not more important, than family relationships, as reported by adolescents themselves (Lempers & Clark-Lempers, 1992). It is therefore possible, that the impact of exposure to earlier domestic abuse could manifest in delayed reactions during adolescence (Christopoulos, Cohn, Shaw, Joyce, Sullivan-Hanson, Kraft, et al., 1987; Smith & Williams, 1992; Wolfe, Jaffe, Wilson, & Zak, 1988).

In September 2009, the NSPCC published the first study in Great Britain which explored partner exploitation and violence in teenage intimate relationships. Findings revealed that one in four teenage girls in a relationship had suffered physical violence, (such as being slapped or punched by their boyfriends), while one in six had been pressured into sex (Barter et al., 2009). This study offers a greater understanding of the nature, frequency and dynamics of different forms of partner violence, which groups if any are particularly vulnerable to becoming victims or assailants, and the wider social processes and structures which underpin such violence.

What it does not do however, is provide a greater understanding of the underlying attitudes held by young people at risk of engaging in abusive behaviour, to inform the development of interventions which seek to change these attitudes and therefore the behaviour displayed by these young people.

Attitudes

Young peoples' attitudes towards violence and domestic abuse are complex. Only a few research studies have explored the effects of exposure to domestic abuse on children's' attitudes (Barter & Renold, 2003; Fantuzzo & Lindquist, 1989; Mullender, Hague, Imam, Malos, & Regan, 2002), even fewer have explored this in adolescents (Barter et al., 2009; Burman & Cartmel, 2005). Research available has found that exposure to domestic abuse is associated with a greater acceptance of violence (Burton, Kitzinger, Kelly, & Regan; 1998; Fantuzzo & Lindquist, 1989; Markowitz, 2001; Zero Tolerance Charitable Trust, 2006). Markowitz (2001) found that children who are subject to violence come to engage in violence in their later martial relationships because they acquire certain attitudes which facilitate violence.

Burman and Cartmel (2005) explored young people's attitudes about violence, through questionnaires and focus groups. They found that attitudes towards abuse were sometimes contradictory and were rarely clear cut, with some young people considering violence and abuse to be acceptable and justifiable. No research to date, using a purely qualitative approach, has explored the effects of exposure to domestic abuse on attitudes and reasoning of abusive behaviour in adolescents. The usefulness of the findings in relation to young people who have witnessed domestic abuse is questionable as the participant group was a representative sample of young people in the UK. The findings cannot, therefore, be said to reflect the attitudes of young people who have witnessed domestic abuse. It does however indicate that qualitative methods (focus group) are useful for studying attitudes. The researchers highlight in their discussion that in order to develop strategies and interventions which challenge the normalisation of abuse, we need to understand the views and attitudes of young people.

Identity formation gains prominence during adolescence, where adolescents must integrate their prior experiences into a stable identity (Erikson, 1968).

This process involves the exploration and testing of alternative ideas, beliefs, and behaviors, marking this period one of both dramatic change and uncertainty, and a time of heightened vulnerability to risky and reckless behaviour (Steinberg, 2008). As this is a time where adolescents are experimenting with different identities and are influenced by a range of social and cultural factors, there will be multiple influences competing with that of any intervention delivered at this time. This may, therefore, impact on the effectiveness of interventions which are delivered at this crucial time of identity formation.

Epistemological stance

Many researchers have adopted a positivist epistemological stance when investigating attitude change, using restrictive standardised measurement tools or survey questionnaires (i.e. Avery-Leaf, Cascardi, O'Leary, & Cano, 1997; Jaffe, Suderman, Reitzel & Killip, 1992; Jones, 1987; Lavoie, Vezina, Piche, & Boivin, 1995; Levendosky, Huth-Bocks, & Semel, 2002; Levy, 1984; Wolfe, Jaffe, Wilson, & Zak, 1985). Some of these researchers acknowledge the limitations of taking this stance, and suggest that more sensitive measures may be needed (Avery-Leaf et al., 1997; Levendosky et al., 2002).

Some researchers have attempted to explore children's views using qualitative data collection techniques, through focus groups (Buckley, Holt, & Whelan, 2007) and interviews (Carlson; 1990; Jaffe et al., 1986), although they are a minority. Carlson (1990) chose to focus her research on adolescent perceptions rather than follow the trend of measuring more objective, observable behaviour, such as what actually occurs between partners. This demonstrates a shift in thinking. Carlson (1990) identified the self-report measures used as having good face validity, but felt it to be a limitation that these measures lacked 'strong psychometric properties'. She also highlighted that the respondents came from a 'non-representative, clinical sample' and therefore the results could not be 'generalised beyond similar clinical samples'. This suggests to me that the researcher was not yet convinced by the advantages of using a more interpretivist stance to investigate adolescent perceptions, and was evaluating an interpretivist methodology using scientific criteria.

Using a qualitative approach when studying this group of young people, may lead to a better understanding of the origins of domestic abuse in adult relationships, as well as a greater understanding of the process through which this occurs.

Synthesis of literature and rationale for current study

By reviewing the existing literature relating to domestic abuse, there appear to be significant gaps in the knowledge base. Much of the research undertaken in the 1980s focused primarily on the prevalence, causes and consequences of domestic abuse, and does not address the effects on children who have witnessed it. Although many studies have since focused their attention on children, their positivist epistemological orientation means that the findings are focused on causal links between witnessing domestic abuse and effects on the child. Those studies that have employed a qualitative approach have largely overlooked adolescent groups and the need to explore the attitudes and reasoning of young people. There appears therefore to be a need for research that addresses these elements more closely. As scientific research paradigms have not been offered an insight into these areas, it appears that an interpretive model of inquiry is most appropriate. It is documented in the research literature that further interpretive study will be able to illuminate the processes by which witnessing domestic abuse effects adolescents. This is the basis of the aim and design of the current study which will be explored in more detail later in the paper.

Theoretical Aspects

The majority of domestic abuse research has not been guided by any underlying theoretical framework, resulting in what Sugarman and Hotaling (1989) have referred to as "a phenomenon that is searching for a theory" (p.28). The research which is available provides conflicting findings on whether exposure to domestic abuse as a child results in the development of abusive relationships in later life.

Levendosky, Huth-Bocks and Semel (2002) examined the impact of domestic abuse on both adolescent mental health and functioning within intimate relationships, and found that adolescents who had experienced either domestic abuse or child abuse were no more likely to be involved in abusive dating relationships, suggesting that there is limited direct impact of witnessing domestic abuse on adolescent dating relationships. In contrast to these findings, Wekerle and Wolfe (1998) conducted a study of several hundred adolescents and found that witnessing or experiencing family violence was the best predictor of adolescent male abusive behaviour in a close relationship with a girl. Cantrell, MacIntyre, Sharkey, and Thompson (1995) also found that exposure to domestic abuse in childhood was a significant predictor of involvement in an abusive dating relationship in late adolescence.

It is possible that these conflicting findings have arisen as a result of the participant sample and the data collection methods used. All of these researcher studies gathered data using a variety of different questionnaires and standardised measurement tools. There is also variance in the samples studied, with some participants being selected from domestic abuse shelters for women and their children, and at-risk teen programmes (Leveodosky et al., 2002), and other researchers selecting their participants from general high school (Wekerle & Wolfe, 1998) or college populations (Cantrell et al., 1995).

Currently no single hypothesis can fully explain the mechanism by which exposure to domestic abuse as a child may transpire to future behaviour, and potential relationship difficulties. There are six key theories which seek to

explain how exposure to domestic abuse in childhood may increase the risk of becoming an abusive adult. A detailed discussion of these theories with links to research findings can be found in appendix 9. Two of these theories will be explored in greater detail and used to make sense of the data obtained in this study.

Following analysis of the data, the results appear to be most suitably interpreted through the theoretical frameworks of Social Learning Theory and Cultural Spillover Theory. I have offered an explanation of these for purposes of continuity when reading the discussion section.

Social Learning Theory

One explanation for the increased level of externalising behaviours found in children who have witnessed domestic abuse may lie in Social Learning Theory. This theory proposes that aggressive behaviour is likely to result when children are exposed to aggressive models (Bandura, 1973). This theory suggests that as parents are powerful models for behaviour, a child who witnesses abuse between his or her parents will be likely to imitate such behaviours within current and future relationships (Carlson, 1984; Jacobson & Martin, 1976; Cantrell et al., 1995). Therefore according to this theory, witnessing domestic abuse as opposed to separation from a parent would be expected to be related more strongly to child behaviour difficulties. Adolescents from families with domestic abuse would have difficulty forming healthy intimate relationships with peers due to the models they experience in their families.

However, Carlson (1990) conducted research which produced results challenging this explanation. She also found only a modest effect of witnessing domestic abuse with respect to the approval and use of violence toward dating partners in adolescence, suggesting that modelling is not the only explanation. In addition to this, modelling does not explain the existence of the greater frequency of *internalising* child behaviour difficulties, linked to witnessing domestic abuse as a child (Amato, 1986; Davis & Carlson, 1987; Goodman & Rosenburg, 1987; Wolfe et al., 1985).

Cultural Spillover Theory

The Cultural Spillover Theory (Straus, 1991) was developed from the Social Learning Theory. It proposes that abuse that is legitimised in one area of life will engender violence in other contexts. Therefore, if a child witnesses domestic abuse, they will learn that these behaviours are a legitimate way to resolve conflicts in general. A child will learn these behaviours through the process of modelling, will then integrate them into his or her own repertoire of behaviours, and then apply them in other contexts or relationships. This hypothesis has been empirically supported by Baron, Straus & Jaffe (1989) and Cantrell, MacIntyre, Sharkey & Thompson (1995).

Research Aims

The purpose of this research is to fill a gap in the research literature, by illuminating the attitudes and reasoning of abusive behaviour in adolescents who have been exposed to domestic abuse. For brevity, the young people taking part in this study may be referred to as the 'subject group'.

A further aim is for this research to impact on policy and practice, by raising awareness of the issues and by contributing new knowledge to the research literature. I intend to produce a public domain document, and to publish this research.

Research questions

1. What attitudes towards abusive behaviour are held by young people who have been exposed to domestic abuse?

2. How do young people who have been exposed to domestic abuse reason and make sense of abusive behaviour?

3. How do young people who have been exposed to domestic abuse prevent or avoid conflict situations?

Design and Methods

Epistemological stance and methodological approach

A pragmatic epistemological stance is taken in this research study. Such a stance enables the choice of approach to be directly linked to the purpose and nature of the research questions posed (Creswell, 2003). This decision was made following consideration of my personal epistemological stance (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; Reybold, 2002), my ontological perspective, and the nature of the research questions.

When taking a pragmatic epistemological stance, data collection and analysis methods are chosen according to how appropriate they are at providing insight into the research questions. There is no inherent philosophical loyalty to any paradigm. The methodological approach taken in this study also includes interpretive elements, which are closely aligned to social constructionism. I therefore recognise that truth is constructed by the individual and is formed through their experiences and the meaning given to them. The participants' views have been interpreted through this lens, and the results obtained will reflect their subjective reality.

Qualitative Method

Smaling's (1994) eight dimension guide for 'furnishing the pragmatic room' was used as a framework when making decisions about the research method (details of which can be found in appendix 2.1). This included considering the objects of study, the situation where the research would take place, the research questions being asked, the purpose of the research or the research goal, the intended audiences, and the conditions or constraints which had to be met. I also considered the research methods used by other researchers in this field, the limitations and merits of quantitative and qualitative methods, and ethical issues. More information can be found in appendix 2.2. After considering these factors, I concluded that using a qualitative method would be most appropriate.

Participants

The participants were selected by indirect purposeful criterion sampling. The young people who were approached to participate in this study had

been referred to an intervention programme for young people who had been exposed to domestic abuse and were displaying perpetrator behaviours. Characteristics of perpetrators of domestic abuse include control; entitlement; superiority; possessiveness; manipulative behaviour; contradictory statements and behaviours; externalisation of responsibility; and denial, minimisation and victim blaming (Bancroft, & Silverman, 2002). Details of this programme can be found in appendix 2.3. The young people were identified by schools and the youth offending service as suitable for inclusion on this particular intervention programme. As part of the referral process, all of these young people were identified as displaying externalising behaviours, in that they were displaying aggressive or violent behaviour, and were experiencing difficulties with their behaviour at school, including fighting or acting out. Further information about the referral criteria and the referral process can be found in appendix 3.1 – 3.3.

All fifteen of the young people who had gained a place on the intervention programme were invited to participate in this study. No young people explicitly declined to participate in this research, however their consent forms were not returned. A total of eleven young people from two intervention groups agreed to participate. They consisted of 6 males and 5 females aged between 14-16 years of age. All of the participants were of white ethnic origin. Details of socio-economic status and ethnic group were not gathered. The research literature states that domestic abuse is pervasive throughout virtually all cultures, occurring across all social classes, and all ethnic groups (Warrington, 2003). The aim of this study is to explore the attitudes and reasoning in a group of young people who had been exposed to domestic abuse. It did not seek to explore how this was linked to the socio-economic status or ethnic group. Therefore, it was not felt necessary to collect information of this kind, however these factors may be significant and worthy of further investigation in future studies. Further information about sampling decisions and considerations can be found in appendix 3.4.

Measures

Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were used to gather information. Details of the decision to use semi-structured interviews, including a consideration of the potential disadvantages of conducting interviews, the appropriateness of using a conversational technique, and alternative data collection techniques can be found in appendix 4.1.1 – 4.1.4.

The interview questions were devised by firstly drawing up a concept map (see appendix 4.2) (Ausubel, 1968). This enabled me to identify the main areas of investigation, and to decide how the interview questions could be formed to ensure that the data being gathered would provide the necessary information to address the research questions. In constructing the interview questions, I also drew upon questions provided with the intervention programme (see appendix 4.3). Questions were chosen and adapted if I felt they were relevant to my specific research questions.

When the main interview questions had been formed, prompt questions were developed in order to facilitate a deeper exploration of the young people's core constructs. The interview questions were piloted to check for ease of understanding and appropriateness of language for 14-16 year olds. Feedback was obtained from two 16 year olds, and following this, the questions were amended a final time (see appendix 4.4 for pilot questions and feedback, and 4.5 for final interview schedule).

Procedures

Ethical considerations

Ethical clearance was initially sought and obtained from Exeter University (see appendix 5.2). I considered the ethical implications of this research based on the British Psychological Society's Code of Conduct, Ethical Principles and Guidelines (2005) for conducting research with human participants. The issues addressed included consent, deception, debriefing, withdrawal from the investigation, confidentiality, and protection of participants (see appendix 5.1 – 5.1.2).

Prior to the start of the intervention programme, I obtained the contact details of all of the young people who had been identified as suitable for inclusion on the group-based intervention programme. Information outlining my research and an invitation to participate was given to all of the young people, and to their parents/carers (see appendix 5.1.3).

Informed consent was obtained from young people and their parents/carers prior to their involvement in this study. All of these young people were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time. All were given the right to expect that the information they provided would not be identifiable as theirs. These young people and their parents/carers were informed of the procedures for contacting me within a reasonable time period following the interview, should stress, actual or potential harm, related questions or concerns arise. At the end of the interview, each young person was debriefed.

The information provided by the young people was not identifiable as theirs. A number was assigned to each young person and put on their interview transcript. A list of the allocation of names to numbers was kept until the end of the study when it was destroyed. This list was kept so that if any concerns arose during the study and when analysing the data, I would be able to identify the young person concerned and inform the appropriate agencies.

Interviews

Interviews were arranged with all of the young people who had agreed to take part, and for whom consent had been obtained. Interviews were carried out on an individual basis and were recorded by Dictaphone. Alternative arrangements were made for one young person, who did not wish for the interview to be recorded on Dictaphone, and therefore her answers were recorded manually during the interview. The interviews took place during school hours in a private room at the young person's school, and lasted between 20 to 45 minutes.

Debriefing

Following the end of the interview, a leaflet was given and read out to each young person. This leaflet reminded the participants that all of the information that they had provided would not be identifiable as theirs. The participants were also reminded of their right to withdraw the information that they had provided from being used to inform this study. A deadline to inform me of this wish was given, and I provided my email address. In addition to this, the leaflet also signposted where the young people could seek further support if they had been affected by this research. This support took the form of key members of staff where the young people went to school, plus two other voluntary agencies specialising in supporting young people who have witnessed domestic abuse. The young people were also invited to contact me should that have any additional questions following this interview. The leaflet provided can be found in appendix 5.1.4.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis

The interviews were transcribed and saved as individual Microsoft Word documents. The one interview not recorded on Dictaphone was also word processed. An example transcript prior to coding can be found in appendix 6.1.1.

A thematic analysis of the data was conducted. More details about the choice of thematic analysis, the techniques used, plus alternative data analysis techniques that were considered, (which include grounded theory analysis and interpretive phenomenological analysis,) can be found in appendix 6.2.1 − 6.2.2. I also kept a reflective diary, to record my thoughts and decisions about the data analysis process (see appendix 6.3).

The data were coded inductively for emergent themes (see appendix 6.4 for a selection of coded transcripts). Taking such an approach enables the identified themes to be strongly linked to data themselves. The researcher is therefore not trying to fit the data into a pre-defined framework. Although this approach enables data-driven codes to be developed, it must be acknowledge that the researcher cannot entirely separate themselves from their own theoretical and conceptual understandings. A deductive approach would result in coding the data according to pre-defined themes. As the subject area in relation to this target group is a little explored area, it is more appropriate to adopt an inductive approach to data analysis. Coding the data by using pre-existing theoretical frameworks may have compromised the possibility of generating new understandings.

Code development involved a process of immersion in data by repeatedly reading the interview transcripts, generating tentative codes, followed by applying and developing new codes, by refining, elaborating, re-defining, rejecting, and splitting initial codes (Gibbs, 2007). The data was thematically analysed using a dual technique, firstly with the aid of a computer software programme, and then manually. Details of the data analysis process can be found in appendix 6.5.

Although thematic analysis is a useful and widely used tool for organising and analysing qualitative data (Boyatzis, 1998), the researcher must be aware of a number of possible pitfalls that may affect the quality of the analysis. Firstly, it is important to build upon the data by offering an analytic interpretation, not merely categorization of data into descriptive codes. Where data are not subjected to analytic interpretation, this limits the analytic claims that the researcher can make in relation to their research questions. Weak analysis of the data can be exacerbated by coding in accordance with the interview questions used to collect data. It is also important to insure that there is little overlap between themes and that coding of data is consistent. Finally, the researcher must be mindful not to make analytic claims that do not fit with the data. I have attempted to avoid coding in a way that might leave my analysis of the data open to criticism. Thematic analysis is a well used technique in qualitative research (Boyatzis, 1998). It is open to criticism when it is undertaken in a way that does not follow a rigorous process, suited to the form of analysis being undertaken (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Results

Details of the codes allocated to the raw data, and how these link to the research questions can be found in the table below (Table 1). More information about the codes can be found in appendix 7.2.1. The emerging analytic codes could largely be grouped under three superordinate themes. These themes reflect the nature of the interview questions which were constructed in order to elicit information to inform the research questions being asked. These themes were 'attitudes', 'reasoning', and 'behaviour'. The emergent subordinate themes will be explored in more detail in this section. All names referenced in this paper are aliases, in order to preserve anonymity.

Table 1
Themes arising from thematic analysis of interview data

Research Question	Superordinate theme	Subordinate theme
1	Attitudes	Normative attitudes Societal influences and consequences Culture clash Emotional language
2	Reasoning	Normative attribution Contrasting narratives Cultural identity Emotional literacy
3	Behaviour	Taught responses Learnt and reinforced behaviours Emotional regulation

Abusive behaviour

Before addressing each research question, an example of the extent of abusive, violent and anti-social behaviour that was disclosed is presented.

Although the young people were not directly asked about their home environment, many offered insights into their lives and experiences:

My Mum's always said that if they hit you then you hit them back. – Lucy.

Every Friday night my Dad comes home drunk and just shouts at my Mum and sometimes I threaten my Dad and say just stop shouting and get lost. – Thomas.

Some of the young people described their abusive behaviour. For example:

I go mental, swearing, screaming and shouting, pushing chairs over or anything. But I scream and swear mostly. – Emily.

We chuck stones and that, and they phone the old bill and they chase us like up the road and that. – Lucy.

The findings of the thematic analysis will now be presented, according to each research question. A selection of quotes will be used to illustrate the findings.

1. What attitudes towards abusive behaviour are held by young people who have been exposed to domestic abuse?

When analysing the transcripts for evidence of attitudes relating to abusive behaviour, it became evident that the young people were expressing a range of attitudes which were normative to them. These normative attitudes related to abusive behaviour serving a function and being accepted as a part of everyday life. It also emerged that the young people's attitudes reflected some societal influences, particularly with regards to the law and authority. A culture clash became apparent, where the young people were expressing contradictory attitudes by combining their normative attitudes with those of another culture i.e. adults seeking to change those attitudes. The majority of young people used negative emotions when talking about arguing, however some referred to positive emotions

Normative attitudes

The attitudes outlined below emerged from the data as being the normative attitudes held by this group of young people. For the young people in this study, abusive behaviour is often the favourable option, and their attitudes towards abusive behaviour reflect this.

(i) Some of the young people had positive experiences of using abusive behaviour, and felt that abusive behaviour often had the desired outcome:

It's quick and easy. It tends to work and it's worked in the past… they don't come back to you again if you batter them, they just leave you alone. – Lucy.

Sometimes I have to shout… to calm him down, because if I just like talked to him it wouldn't work. – Thomas.

(ii) Many had accepted that violence and abuse was an everyday part of life:

…it happens, and there's nothing that can be done about it… Sometimes there's no other way of sorting things out. – Josh.

…it just happens. If she gets violent, I get violent back… [Do you think it's ever right?] No, but if it happens it happens. – Sophie.

…it's just one of those situations where it just happens. – James

I don't know why it happens but it just does. People just want to feel better about themselves so they put others down. It's not right but it happens, and there's nothing that can be done about it. - Josh

It's not really nice to shout but it happens. - Thomas

Societal Influences and Consequences

The young people provided information which reflected society's influence on shaping their attitudes, and the potential consequences of their actions.

Some of the young people expressed the view that abusive behaviour resulted in negative consequences, such as getting in trouble or feeling bad:

… you know it's bad, it's not a good thing to have fights with people because you make a lot of enemies, and like, you also get in trouble… I don't want to get in trouble. – Charlie.

You can get in really really big trouble. Like my mate got beat up the other day by two girls and its all on camera and everything. [So would that be the main thing that would stop you fighting with someone because of the trouble you could get in?]Yes, yes. [Any other reasons?] I just don't want to get in trouble with the police. – Sophie.

Say I'm in school then it's completely different because unless it really does spark off then I won't start anything in school, because there's no point in me getting in trouble. Say something's happened outside of school there's no point bringing it into school, cause then you just get in trouble in and out. – Hannah.

Culture Clash

Many of the attitudes held by the young people appeared mixed, muddled and conflicting. The following examples demonstrate a culture clash between the normative attitudes of this group, with more generally accepted societal views towards abusive behaviour:

If it's fighting, sometimes I feel good cause you're like "oh yeah, the problem's solved". But often I feel bad for smacking people but good in a way as well. I don't feel good like smacking people to feel hard, I

just feel good for smacking people because then you're problem is out the window. – Lucy.

…it's not right to shout because it's just violent, but a good thing is if he's going to like hit someone and you start shouting at him, then he's not going to hit him. – Thomas.

My Mum's always said that if they hit you then you hit them back. The schools says two wrongs don't make a right – Hannah.

[Does having a fight always work?] Yes because they don't come back to you again if you batter them they just leave you alone. [So would fighting be a preference over talking to them because you know...] Yes you know it's bad, it's not a good thing to have fights with people because you make a lot of enemies, and like, you also get in trouble. – Charlie.

[You said that you walk away from some situations to prevent arguments from happening. Do you think walking away is a good strategy?] No. [Why's that?] Just stand there and punch them in the face and then walk away… [Do you feel having physical fights is the right way to deal with certain situations?] No. [Why is that?] Because it's childish games. – Katie.

…it's pointless and stupid, but when it needs to be done it has to be done. – James.

Emotional language

In relation to this research question, seven young people referred to negative emotions to describe how they felt when they were having an argument. Three used the word 'funny', and one used the word 'happy'. For example:

[When you're having an argument with someone, are you able to understand how you are making them feel?] Yes. [How do you think you are making them feel?] Sad… [And how does that make you feel?] Well, happy sometimes, when they've started it. – Lucy.

If its fighting sometimes I feel good cause you're like oh yeah the problem's solved. But often I feel bad for smacking people but good in a way as well. – Charlie.

Yes I have had arguments with my cousin but only over stupid things. It kind of makes us closer but I don't like arguing. – Emily.

For Charlie and Emily, fighting and arguing is a form of communication which enables them to resolve their problems. They would therefore choose this option as their preferred method of resolving relationship difficulties.

2. How do young people who have witnessed domestic abuse reason and make sense of abusive behaviour?

Four themes emerged from the data, which provided an insight into how the young people reasoned and made sense of abusive behaviour. These were normative attribution, contrasting narratives, cultural identity and emotional literacy.

Normative Attribution

There were a number of references which highlighted the normative attribution styles of the young people. For these individuals, abusive situations tend to result from (i) factors outside of one's control, and (ii) abusive behaviour is often justifiable:

(i) Abusive behaviour is outside of one's control:

> *Arguments happen out of the blue, you can't avoid them. – James.*

> *If someone starts on you there's nothing that you can do about it really… there's always things that you can't control. – Josh.*

However some made direct references to the part that they played in abusive situations:

> *I have a problem with authority… I usually end up being a bit rude. – Josh*

> *I do admit I can be bitchy and I will go on one. - Hannah*

(ii) Justifiability of abusive behaviour:

> *When it needs to be done it has to be done – James.*

> *It could be worse, I could end up stabbing someone. – Emily*

Contrasting Narratives

When asked their views on abusive behaviour many young people appeared to have internalised contrasting narratives which suggested reasoning about abusive behaviour that is more in line with that of the wider society, but these contradicted their normative attributions about abusive behaviour:

> *(Fighting,) it's not really acceptable. I think it's just pointless and stupid, but when it needs to be done it has to be done. – James.*

> *It's not really nice to shout, but it happens. – Thomas.*

Cultural Identity

The majority of young people indicated that they believed their behaviour was an intrinsic part of their identity and defined who they were, and the culture that they were a part of. Abusive behaviour was normative for them, within their family and their peer group:

> *I would go off and punch something, that's what I'm like. – Sophie.*

> *I've got an anger problem and I don't want to be an angry person... I don't get on very well with my brother. We fight all the time, about anything and everything. – Josh.*

> *My Mum's always said that if they hit you then you hit them back. – Hannah.*

> *...my mate, he went to the pub and went into the toilet and smashed his head in and said leave him alone. – James.*

> *My brother and my Mum have quite a lot of verbal arguments. [What sort of things do they argue about?] Pretty much anything, anything you can think of. – Charlie.*

> *With my brother it's very hard to avoid arguing. If we're not in the same room we don't argue, but doors have to be closed. We argue about anything. – Emily.*

Emotional literacy

Many of the young people found it difficult to understand how others would be feeling during or following an abusive interaction. Those who were able to provide a description used language such as 'bad', 'guilty', 'sorry' and 'sad'. Many said that they did not care how the other person was feeling.

> *If I'm in a situation, I don't really care about the other person. – James*

Some made contradictions about how they would feel.

> *When we argue, we then feel guilty about it, look at each other and then feel sorry...[How are you feeling when you have an argument?] Well we just argue about stupid stuff so I don't have feelings about it. – Emily.*

It is also worthwhile considering possible explanations as to why arguing is used as a mode of communication, such as a lack of emotional literacy. However, with regard to Emily above, it may also be the case that she

contradicted herself because she had made herself emotionally vulnerable during the interview process, and was seeking to reduce this emotional vulnerability by denying that she had feelings about arguing.

3. How do young people who have been exposed to domestic abuse prevent or avoid conflict situations?

In response to questions which provided an insight into how the young people in this study prevented or avoided conflict situations, it was apparent that many of the reposes provided echoed the narratives of adults. This suggests that certain responses obtained may not necessarily reflect the actual cognitions about how they would actually prevent or avoid a conflict situation, but instead reflects a taught dialogue. Responses of this nature were coded as 'taught responses'. Responses emerged which contrasted with these taught responses, and provided an insight into the difficulties in preventing or avoiding conflict situations. These difficulties appeared to reflect learnt and reinforced behaviours, and difficulties with emotional regulation.

Taught responses

All but one young person was able to provide at least one example of how they currently attempted to prevent or avoid conflict situations. The one young person who was not able to give an example was able to suggest how an abusive situation could be avoided, although they had not attempted to use this strategy. Removing oneself from a potential conflict situation by 'walking away', or 'talking', were the most common strategies reported. For example:

> *Unless it's really bad we'll just talk and sort it out… I normally walk away from an argument. – Charlie.*
>
> *Just agree with them. It's the easiest way just to agree. – Daniel.*
>
> *Just don't say anything, don't talk to them, stay away from them. – James.*
>
> *Just don't talk to them, stay away, just stay away from them. – Liam.*

Many of the answers given in response to questions about how to prevent abusive behaviour echoed the narratives of adults. This became more apparent throughout then interview process, when the young people began

to make statements which appeared to contradict these adult sounding narratives.

Barriers to avoiding conflict situations

In contrast to the taught responses given by the young people about how they would prevent or avoid conflict situations, the young people offered many examples of preventative strategies that they were not currently using. They gave many reasons as to why they would choose not to remove themselves from a potential conflict situation, or talk to resolve an issue. From the data it emerged that the barriers to using preventative strategies had resulted from failed past experiences of acting non-abusively, reinforced experiences of acting abusively, and difficulties with emotional regulation. Failed passed experiences of acting non-abusively, and reinforced experiences of acting abusively, were coded as 'learnt and reinforced behaviours'.

(i) Learnt and reinforced behaviours

Many young people felt that preventative strategies were less effective than abusive behaviour, and that they had experienced limited success with using other non-abusive strategies; whereas engaging in abusive behaviour had been more successful in achieving the desired outcome. For example:

Talking to people… doesn't always work as you wanted it to work… [Does having a fight always work?] Yes because they don't come back to you again if you batter them, they just leave you alone… I could try talking to people, but I'm not sure that it would work. – Lucy.

If someone starts on you there's nothing that you can do about it really. – Josh.

…not everyone wants to talk. [Can you tell me more about that?] Some people can't listen, they won't listen, they want a fight and there's nothing you can do about it. Talking won't do anything. – Hannah.

Yes I normally walk away from an argument anyway, it does my head in… [When you walk away from an argument does that prevent it from escalating?] No, because when you see them again they start arguing again, so I might as well have stayed there and argued back. – Katie.

Some young people indicated that they had had little success with using other strategies and as a result were less willing to take risks in trying

alternative approaches. Many felt they had little control over preventing an abusive situation from occurring.

> *I don't think there is a way to avoid it really. – Emily.*

> *If you say the wrong thing, you know there's going to be an argument. – James.*

> *I don't have a clue about how else to react. – Lucy.*

(ii) Emotional regulation

Some of the young people suggested that they experienced difficulties with regulating their emotions, and this contributed to the difficulty that they experienced with preventing or avoiding a conflict situation. For example:

> *When I'm angry it's like the devil's taken over my body, I'm just shouting. – Thomas*

> *I lose my temper really easily. – Lucy.*

> *I suppose sometimes I could have sat down and spoke about it but because I've been so annoyed I've had to shout at them. – Hannah.*

To conclude, the results obtained and presented here provide a wealth of information and an insight into these young people's attitudes, and how they reason and make sense of abusive behaviour. These results will now be discussed.

Discussion

Salient findings emerging from this research which offer an insight into this subject group will now be discussed with reference to existing literature. It should be noted that due to the extent of the findings, not all of the subordinate themes will be discussed.

It is important to acknowledge the limitations with this sample of young people when interpreting the results. All young people in this study were displaying externalising behaviours. Research indicates that not all young people exposed to domestic abuse display such behaviours (Amato, 1986; Davis & Carlson, 1987; Goodman & Rosenberg, 1987; Wolfe, Jaffe, Wilson, & Zak, 1985). Therefore, these results do not necessarily reflect the views and beliefs of all young people who have been exposed to domestic abuse.

Normative attitudes and attribution

The results reveal the normative attitudes and attributions of this group of young people. All of the young people in this study were identified as displaying perpetrator behaviours, and the findings revealed that they reasoned many abusive situations to be caused by factors beyond their control. This is consistent with the findings of other research, which states that in situations of domestic abuse, violence is used as a means of restoring a perceived loss of control (e.g. Dutton, 1998; Ogle & Clements, 2007).

With the statistics suggesting that women are more likely to be victims of domestic abuse than males (Walby & Allen, 2004), it is plausible that some of these young people may have had mothers who experienced learned helplessness. In line with Social Learning Theory, the participants may have modelled this behavioural response. According to Cultural Spillover Theory, this learnt response may be generalised to other contexts, resulting in these young people perceiving that they have a lack of control over many aspects of their lives. This may serve as an additional risk factor in increasing the likelihood of violence and abuse being used as a means of gaining control within a range of contexts.

Not all participants, however, indicated a lack of control over their behavioural responses. Some were able to see how they contributed to abusive situations, but were still unable to avoid such situations. They implied that abusive behaviour was part of their identity, and that they experienced difficulties with impulse control and emotional regulation. This would suggest that a far more complex set of mechanisms are interacting and contributing to the reasoning of abusive behaviour in these young people than can be explained by Social Learning Theory alone.

The majority of young people demonstrated normative attitudes towards abuse, and all were displaying abusive behaviours. Indeed, according to the theory of reasoned action (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975), attitudes and expectations predict behavioural intent. Research confirms that perpetrators of domestic abuse attempt to normalise their abusive behaviour when confronted with indisputable facts (Dutton, 1998; Scott, 2007; Simon, 1996; Sonkin, Martin, & Walker, 1985). This emphasises the importance of understanding and addressing young people's attitudes towards abuse, when seeking to change behavioural intentions.

The normative attitudes and attributions displayed by these young people have implications for interventions designed to alter their attitudes and attributions. Interventions that come from a different normative perspective are less likely to engage such young people, and are therefore less likely to result in positive change to attitudes and reasoning about abusive behaviour, and therefore behavioural intent.

Culture Clash and Contrasting Narratives

All of the young people in this study expressed, to some extent, conflicting and contradictory attitudes and reasoning. This is consistent with the findings of Burman and Cartmel (2005). This apparent contradictory reasoning may be explained by these young people being well rehearsed in the language of positive role models and interventions, but that their attitudes and reasoning remain unchanged and are incompatible with this learnt discourse. This only becomes apparent when these young people are questioned in detail about their attitudes. It may be that they actually hold consistent attitudes about abusive behaviour, however the language that they

use to express themselves gives the impression that their underlying attitudes are inconsistent.

This has implications for future studies. It is important that researchers are aware that the language used be young people in an interview situation may not represent their true views. Rather, it may represent a learnt response to such questions, reflecting the narratives of adults and wider society. It is therefore important for researchers to explore answers about attitudes and reasoning in greater depth, in order to establish the true cognitions of the young people they are studying. Further study could explore the cognitions underlying the contradictory reasoning of the young people, as these were not explicitly explored during the interviews due to the focus of the current study.

An alternative explanation may be that results obtained which suggest contradictory attitudes and reasoning, do not accurately reflect these young peoples' cognitions. It may be that although these young people made attempts to convey how they reasoned abusive behaviour, they felt too vulnerable to do so with any accuracy or consistency. In addition to this, they may not have had the language necessary to express themselves in a consistent way.

Emotional language and regulation

Many of the young people in this study experienced difficulty with using emotional language. Many found it difficult to respond to questions asking them how others would be feeling during or following an abusive interaction. Less than half used emotional language when directly asked how having friends made them feel. Research indicates that exposure to domestic abuse as a child may be directly linked to difficulties with emotional development (Dutton, Saunders, Starzomski, & Bartholomew, 1994).

It could be suggested that these young people experienced low levels of emotional literacy. Emotional literacy refers to the ability to recognise, understand and appropriately express emotions (Sharp, 2000). Research evidence suggests that male perpetrators of domestic abuse have low levels of emotional literacy, in that they are unable to communicate in the

emotional context of intimate relationships (Dutton, 1998; Sonkin & Durphy, 1982), and may not be aware of their emotions (Winters, Clift, & Dutton, 2004). Therefore, their difficulty with processing emotions may have contributed to the maintenance of destructive attitudes and reasoning about abusive behaviour. These difficulties were evident in the sample of young people in this study.

However, an alternative explanation is that the young people in this study felt too vulnerable to answer questions about their feelings, and indicated in their responses that they had no feelings about the matter in question. This could explain the apparent contradictory response provided by 'Emily' on page 31: *"When we argue, we then feel guilty about it, look at each other and then feel sorry…[How are you feeling when you have an argument?] Well we just argue about stupid stuff so I don't have feelings about it".*

The difficulties indicated with regulating emotions in this subject group could be explained by their low level of emotional literacy, since emotional literacy is linked to the ability to regulate emotions and impulse control (Goleman, 1998). An alternative explanation is offered by viewing the results through the theoretical framework of Attachment Theory and the internal working model (Bowlby, 1988). Failure to form a secure attachment in early childhood can disrupt a child's ability to regulate their emotions, which may result in underdeveloped emotional literacy. This explanation is reinforced by research which indicates that domestic abuse can severely impair a parent's ability to nurture their children (Bancroft & Silverman, 2002).

The young people in this study are likely to have experienced situations where attempts to prevent or avoid conflict situations have failed, due to a number of factors which may include a lack of problem-solving skills. People with a low self-efficacy will generally avoid tasks that they perceive they may not succeed at, and as a result are unlikely to grow and expand their skills (Margolis & McCabe, 2006). Low self-efficacy can also lead people to believe that tasks are harder than they actually are (Pajares, 2002). It is therefore, possible that following failed experiences of trying to prevent conflict situations, these young people may have developed a low self-

efficacy, which will in turn reduce their motivation to take risks and try non-abusive approaches to conflict situations.

Cultural Identity

Identity formation gains prominence during adolescence, where adolescents must integrate their prior experiences into a stable identity (Erikson, 1968). It is therefore, not surprising that when these young people reasoned about abusive behaviour, the majority indicated that they believed this to be an intrinsic part of who they were, or part of their identity. In other words, they had internalised these behaviours, which had contributed to their developing identity or self-concept.

Learnt and Reinforced Behaviours

Although the young people in this study were not directly asked about the violence or abuse that they have witnessed at home, many made reference to it. Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1973) provides a means of understanding reasoning of abusive behaviour. The young people in this study made reference to abusive home environments. According to the Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1973), aggressive behaviour is more likely to result when children or young people are exposed to aggressive role models. The results obtained could therefore be explained by this theory.

Cultural Spillover Theory (Straus, 1991) proposes that abuse which is legitimised in one area of life will engender violence in other contexts. The young people in this study made reference to both witnessing violence and abuse at home, and to engaging in abusive behaviour in other contexts. They may have learnt these behaviours through the process of modelling, integrating them into their own repertoire of behaviours and are therefore applying them in other contexts. This may result in such behavioural responses being acted out at home with family relationships, amongst peers, in intimate relationships, and with other people in the school or wider community.

When the young people were asked how they would prevent or avoid abusive situations, many made direct references which could be explained by Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1973), in order to justify why they

were unable to prevent such situations from occurring. Many young people felt that preventative strategies were less effective than abusive behaviour, and that they had experienced limited success with using other non-abusive strategies. Conversely, they perceived that engaging in abusive behaviour had been more successful in achieving the desired outcome. As the young people in this study had witnessed domestic abuse it is possible that they may have directly witnessed preventative strategies not being effective in this context, and subsequently reasoned that the abusive adult is successful in abuser-abused interactions. Therefore the young people in this study may have been modelling the behaviour that they had witnessed. According to the Social Learning Theory, for these young people to incorporate preventative behaviours into their behaviour repertoire, they need to experience success in using preventative approaches to managing conflict situations, and for these experiences to occur within a range of contexts, e.g. home, school, and community.

This has implications for the development of intervention programmes, as any new skill will need to be practised and positively reinforced in a range of contexts in order to promote positive behaviour change. It may also be hypothesised that these young people are motivated to form friendships with others who hold similar attitudes towards abuse (Byrne, 1971), which may also serve to reinforce abusive behaviour. Therefore peer groups will play a significant role in whether pro-abuse attitudes and the resulting behaviours are reinforced.

Moral reasoning of abusive behaviour
The development of moral reasoning in adolescence is complex, with many influencing factors (biological, family, peers, media) and a variety of contexts (home, school, neighbourhood) (Hart & Carlo, 2005). Although this will not be discussed here, it should be acknowledged that families and peers contribute to an adolescent's developing norms and beliefs which in turn impact on their moral functioning and behaviour (Hart & Carlo, 2005).

Some of the young people in this study made references to the justifiability of abusive behaviour, which is consistent with the findings of Burman and Cartmel (2005). Many based their attitudes towards abusive behaviour on

the outcomes of situations. They felt that that abusive behaviour often had the desired outcome, and used this to judge the success of the interaction. This could be described as pre-conventional reasoning (Kohlberg, 1973), where judgements are based on expected consequences of actions, and whether the outcomes are in the interest of the individual. Research suggests that typically developing adolescents should reason at a conventional level, whereby judgements are based on concepts of loyalty, trust and gratitude (Kohlberg, 1973). However, this was not evident in the results obtained in this study, which suggests that the formation of moral reasoning in adolescents exposed to domestic abuse may be negatively affected.

Other research into the development of moral reasoning in adolescents with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties has also found significantly lower levels of moral reasoning than in populations without such difficulties (Chandler, Boyes, & Ball, 1990; Taylor & Walker, 1997). These findings highlight the importance of developing age-appropriate moral reasoning in adolescents, and particularly in those who have been exposed to domestic abuse.

Evaluative Considerations
 Design
In order to assess the validity of this research, a number of factors require consideration. I shall outline some of the factors considered when designing this study, and in the collection and analysis of the data.

When designing this research much thought was given to ethical considerations and to how the interview environment could be adapted to reduce potential stigmatisation and power issues. Consideration was also given to the appropriateness of using a conversational data collection technique with this group of young people. These issues are discussed in appendices 4.1.3 and 5.1.1 – 5.1.4.

Techniques such as triangulation and response validation were considered as methods to increase the validity of data collected. Triangulation was not felt to be appropriate in this case, as the purpose of this study was to explore the attitudes and reasoning of young people. Response validation was also not

felt to be appropriate, as this would result in having to remove the young people from lessons for a greater length of time.

A particular challenge arose when considering potential interviewer bias. As a female interviewer exploring attitudes and reasoning of abusive behaviour, it is possible that I may have biased the responses given during the interviews. It is possible that the young people interviewed may have provided different responses to a male interviewer. However, research suggests that these effects may be limited to gender-specific questions (Flores-Macias & Lawson, 2008). Therefore, based on this research, the interview questions were kept gender neutral.

It is possible that the young people taking part in this study felt too vulnerable in the interview context to consistently express themselves in an open and honest way. This study could be further improved by building time into the research process to allow for greater rapport building, to develop a trusting and safe interviewer-interviewee relationship. This could be achieved by spending more time with the young people taking part in such a study, or by taking an ethnographic approach. An ethnographic approach would provide the researcher with a greater understanding of the culture which the young people in this study are a part of, and the impact of being part of this culture on the formation and maintenance of certain attitudes and reasoning about abusive behaviour. This would also allow the researcher to make more informed judgements as to whether the young people taking part in this study were expressing their personal views, attitudes and reasoning in the interview context, or whether they were reciting the narratives of adults who have sought to alter their attitudes and reasoning.

Data analysis

Many factors were considered with the aim of increasing the validity of interpretation of the data, all of which cannot be discussed here in detail, but will be outlined. I sought to create permeability with the data analysis process, through demonstrating engagement with the data, and transparency with decision making. Detailed information about the data analysis process can be found in appendix 6.3 – 6.5. Evidence of the results obtained was

provided in the form of quotations and can be found throughout the results section.

In order to remain immersed in the data, I personally transcribed all of the transcripts. To facilitate a rigorous and consistent approach to data analysis, I used a number of data analysis techniques as suggested by Gibbs (2007), which can be found in appendix 6.2. A codebook was kept as a record of the arising themes and their definitions, to prevent definitional drift (see appendix 7.2.1 for details of the final code definitions). The reliability and validity of thematic analysis as a data analysis method was considered in detail, and can be found in appendix 6.2.2. To improve the validity of the data analysis process, a dual approach was chosen, where initially a computer software programme was used to support the coding process, and then the data was further annotated manually. This dual approach was chosen as research indicates that it is likely to achieve the best results (Welsh, 2002).

Reporting

I have sought to provide permeability when reporting this study, through disclosing both my background and my motivation behind this research. I have also chosen to include my reflections, to provide readers with an insight into my thought processes and decision-making, which can be found in appendix 5.3. I have endeavoured to get a balance between exploring issues in both depth and breadth, although it must be acknowledged that a compromise has had to be made. I have attempted to produce a coherent and self-evident report from both a reader's and an investigator's perspective. This should provide sufficient detail for a similar study to be conducted, so as to validate or dispute the results presented in this paper.

Implications

Direct implications

The aim of conducting research in this area has been to give a true voice to young people who have experienced domestic abuse, and for their voices to be heard in a wider public domain. In order to achieve this aim I intend to publish this research, thereby making it available to a wider audience.

I intend to produce a public domain document for stakeholders, which will provide an overview of this study as well as suggesting possible actions. The stakeholders include the local authority where this research was conducted, and the schools where the data collection took place. It is hoped that this document will result in an increased awareness of the effects of exposure to domestic abuse within these schools, and amongst county council employees. This may result in changes to policy and practice within schools, and perhaps a greater willingness to engage in the cross-governmental strategy (HM Government, 2009) outlined in the introduction. At a local authority level, this research has the potential to increase the prioritisation of resources allocated to meeting the needs of young people exposed to domestic abuse.

Wider implications relating to further research in this area might include a renewed focus on the effects of exposure to domestic abuse on children and young people, through exploring their attitudes and reasoning. It is intended, through publication that this information will help to develop a theoretical basis for understanding the complex processes involved in the formation of attitudes and reasoning in young people exposed to domestic abuse. This can then inform the development of evidence-based therapeutic interventions.

Further research may wish to explore the development of attitudes and reasoning in this subject group over a length of time. This may provide an insight as to the appropriateness and effectiveness of certain interventions with different age groups, and also any protective factors contributing to positive attitude development. Further research which uses data collection methods based on Personal Construct Psychology (PCP) (Kelly, 1955), may provide a detailed insight into the underlying constructs driving abusive behaviour, and its links to identity. This may in turn have implications for the development of therapeutic approaches based on PCP (Kelly, 1955).

Intervention programmes seeking to change the normative attitudes and reasoning of abusive behaviour held by young people, need to recognise the potential of the participants to internalise the language of adults, without altering their cognitions. Interventions should therefore aim to make sense

of the target groups' constructs, and use these as a starting point for change. This would be in contrast to the facilitators imposing their own constructs, and the attitudes held by wider society, on the participants. Cognitions need to change if long term behaviour change is to result. The use of cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) may well facilitate this process. If interventions targeting this group do not attempt to change cognitions through understanding the culture in which normative attitudes and reasoning about abusive behaviour are maintained, there is unlikely to be the desired behaviour change.

The role of Educational Psychologists

As a result of conducting this research, I feel that Educational Psychologists are well placed to raise awareness of the issues relating to domestic abuse and the effects on children and young people. I also believe that Educational Psychologists can play a key role in conducting further research in this area, as they have a sound understanding of the psychological theory underpinning many of the complex processes discussed in this report. Increasingly, more Educational Psychologists will be proficient in their understanding of the research process and in conducting quality research, which will be strengthened by newly qualified Educational Psychologists entering the profession from the three year training course. Arguably, through their training and continued professional development, Educational Psychologists also have the necessary skills to work with a range of people in exploring sensitive issues. They work within a number of systems at a variety of levels, and are therefore in a good position to effect change through putting theory into practice.

With the Government giving increasing priority to tackling violence and abuse amongst young people, I feel that in the next few years we may see this impact on Educational Psychology Services. This may take the form of increased awareness, prioritisation, and new ways of working to improve outcomes for children and young people exposed to domestic abuse.

The theoretical frameworks of Social Learning Theory and Cultural Spillover Theory offer Educational Psychologists new understandings that can support the inclusion of children and young people that have witnessed

domestic abuse. Research suggests that peer culture plays a crucial role in formation of values during adolescence (Pugh & Hart, 1999). If children are segregated and placed in specialist settings, attitudes toward abusive behaviours are likely to be maintained by the cultural norms of the group. If however they are educated within inclusive mainstream settings, where they are exposed to the views and attitudes of broader society, then according to Social Learning Theory and Cultural Spillover Theory, it is more likely that behaviour and attitude change will occur. The crucial part of this process is that children and young people are supported to feel part of the school community and hence adopt its norms. Educational Psychologists can support this process in many ways, by setting up small group interventions, delivering cognitive behaviour therapy or perhaps most importantly working systemically in order to shift thinking and practice at a whole school, community or service level.

The results of this study have implications for the theoretical basis of intervention programmes which seek to alter the behaviour of young people who are at risk of developing abusive patterns of behaviour. The results would suggest that programmes which seek to impose the normative attitudes and reasoning of a different culture, will have limited success in altering behaviour. This is because the behavioural norms of the adults who have designed and are delivering such programmes may be incompatible with those of the young people attending such programmes. Interventions must therefore be designed with regard to the normative cognitions held by target group, thus attempting to alter attitudes and reasoning from a position of understanding within the target groups' culture.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that a complex interaction exists between current and past experiences in adolescence, which impacts on developing attitudes and reasoning about abusive behaviour. The results indicate that childhood exposure to domestic abuse contributes to the formation of certain attitudes about involvement in abusive situations. These findings therefore offer an extension of the existing knowledge base by providing a richness of data and insight not previously available. We have an insight into the reasons that pro abuse attitudes are maintained. There is evidence of a culture clash between the normative attitudes and reasoning of this group in contrast to that of society more generally. This provides an alternative explanation of the apparent conflicting attitudes that are documented in the existing literature. In terms of better understanding how this group makes sense of their abusive behaviour and how this maintained, a number of factors have been identified. These relate to their level of moral reasoning, their identity, low emotional literacy and the positive reinforcement of behaviour through their own actions and social learning. In line with Cultural Spillover Theory these learnt behaviours may be generalized and acted out in other contexts.

Adolescence is clearly a vulnerable time when the impact of exposure to domestic abuse as a child may be amplified, as individuals begin to form intimate relationships, and are forging their adult identities. The impact of exposure to domestic abuse in childhood should not be underestimated. This research illustrates the extent to which attitudes and reasoning may be affected, and how this influences behaviour throughout the life cycle.

The findings presented in this research may have many implications, such as the theoretical basis for understanding the formation and maintenance of abusive behaviour. Intervention programmes will have limited success if they seek to impose the normative attitudes and reasoning of a different culture, without acknowledging the norms of the target population and setting out to change these cognitions using interventions like cognitive behaviour therapy. Educational Psychologists are well placed to support young people who have been exposed to domestic abuse based on their

academic training in psychology and their position within education systems and the wider community.

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An evaluation of an intervention for adolescents who have been exposed to domestic abuse and are displaying perpetrator behaviours

Abstract

Where domestic violence occurs, children and young people are likely to have been exposed to such abuse. Evidence suggests that this is likely to have a detrimental impact on them. There is an acute gap in provision for such individuals, despite evidence suggesting a link between exposure to domestic abuse in childhood, and involvement in abusive dating relationships in late adolescence and adulthood. There has been little research testing the effectiveness of intervention programmes which aim to reduce this risk. In this study a before and after design was used to evaluate a cognitive-behavioural intervention programme for young people who have been exposed to domestic abuse and are displaying abusive behaviours. This evaluation was based on the views of the young people on this programme. Results indicate that certain elements of the programme were more successful in achieving the programme aims. Considerations for the development of further programmes which target this client group are discussed.

Introduction

Effects of exposure to domestic abuse

In this report, 'domestic violence and abuse' will be referred to as 'domestic abuse'. It is estimated that at least 750,000 children a year are exposed to domestic abuse (Department of Health, 2003). Exposure to domestic abuse as a child may have a negative impact across a range of developmental areas, including cognitive, emotional, behavioural and social functioning (Kitzmann, Gaylord, Holt, & Kenny, 2003; Kolbo, Blakely, & Engleman, 1996; McAlister-Groves, 1999; Peled, 2000). These effects may be short term and/or long term (Hester, Pearson, & Harwin, 2000). An association with the development of domestically abusive behaviour in later life has also been suggested (Barter, McCarry, Berridge, & Evans, 2009; Fergusson & Horwood, 1998). This will be discussed later.

Policy

Over recent years, the Government has increasingly recognised the detrimental impact of domestic abuse on children, young people and families, and has responded in a number of ways. In 2004, the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims (DVCV) Act (Office of Public Sector Information, 2004) introduced a number of new powers to strengthen survivors' cases when brought to the attention of the criminal justice system. In 2008, the Government published their first Violent Crime Action Plan, designed to enable local authorities to meet central Government priorities on serious violent crime over the next three years (HM Government, 2008). In 2009, a cross-governmental strategy to enable a coordinated approach to ending violence against women and girls was proposed (HM Government, 2009).

Other developments include a change to the legal definition of 'significant harm', which has been extended to include the harm suffered by seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another, particularly in the home (Home Office, 2007). Additionally, the NHS report titled 'Responding to violence against women and children – the role of the NHS' (Department of Health, 2010) also sets out a series of recommendations for how the NHS will better support survivors of abuse.

Provision

Despite a combination of recent Government policies, strategy developments, and increasingly strong evidence linking exposure to domestic abuse with detrimental impacts on children and young people (Hester et al., 2000; Kitzmann et al., 2003; Kolbo et al., 1996; McAlister-Groves, 1999; Peled, 2000), there has been comparatively little progress in the UK concerning specific intervention approaches for such children (Hester et al., 2000; Save the Children, 2002).

The type of support which is available is varied, in terms of its form, the organisations offering it, and its distribution. From reviewing the available literature, there has been relatively little research into the effectiveness of these intervention programmes (Hosking & Walsh, 2005; Jaffe, Wilson, & Wolfe, 1986; Peled & Edleson, 1992), to inform the development of approaches aimed at supporting this client group.

Rationale

Due to an increasing focus on tackling domestic abuse and its impact on children and young people, I propose that there is a need for research into precisely which factors contribute to intervention programmes successfully achieving their aims. This should help to evaluate the financial cost and benefits of current strategies, whilst aiding the development of those adopted in the future.

This paper is the second of two papers. The first paper explored the attitudes and reasoning of abusive behaviour adolescents who had been exposed to domestic abuse, in order to gain a greater understanding of how this contributes the behaviour that they display. The results obtained in paper 1 indicate that childhood exposure to domestic abuse contributes to the formation of certain attitudes about involvement in abusive situations. There is evidence of a culture clash between the normative attitudes and reasoning of this group in contrast to that of society more generally. An insight into this groups' moral reasoning, identity, low emotional literacy and the positive reinforcement of behaviour through their own actions and social learning, provides us with a greater understanding of attitude formation and the development of reasoning styles amongst this group. The results also

provide a better understanding of how these learnt behaviours are maintained and generalized to other contexts.

This second paper seeks to evaluate a cognitive-behavioural based intervention programme for adolescents who have been exposed to domestic abuse and are displaying perpetrator behaviours. The principal aim is to inform the development of further intervention programmes for children and adolescents who have been exposed to domestic abuse and are displaying, or are at risk of developing, abusive patterns of behaviour.

Selected Literature and Theoretical Aspects

A literature search was carried out to investigate previous research into how children and young people were affected by exposure to domestic abuse, and what provision was available. Details of how this literature search was carried out, along with the full literature review can be found in appendix 1.1 and 9. The rest of this section offers an overview of the development of research literature into the effects of exposure to domestic abuse on adolescents, and research conducted into the development and evaluation of intervention programmes which target this group of young people.

Effects of domestic abuse on children

Growing up in an abusive home environment can critically jeopardise the developmental progress and personal ability of children (Martin, 2002; McIntosh, 2002). Such effects may also include aggression and anger, anti-social behaviour, low self-esteem, introversion and withdrawal, poor social skills, feelings of guilt, self-blame and bitterness (Baldry, 2003; Levendosky, Lynch, & Graham-Bermann, 2000).

The mechanisms by which exposure to domestic abuse as a child impacts on developmental progress is complex, involving many direct and indirect factors (Rossman, Hughes, & Rosenberg, 2000; Holden, Stein, Ritchie, Harris, & Jouriles, 1998; Hughes & Etzel, 2001; Jaffe, Poisson, & Cunningham, 2001; Levendosky & Graham-Bermann, 2001; McCloskey, Figuerado, & Koss, 1995; Sullivan, Nguyen, Allen, Bybee, & Juran, 2000). Currently no single hypothesis can fully explain the mechanisms by which exposure domestic abuse as a child may transpire to future behaviour and possible relationship difficulties; each hypothesis has its merit. A more detailed discussion of these theories can be found in appendix 9.

Adolescence

Adolescence is a unique developmental stage, characterized by heightened vulnerability to risky and reckless behaviour (Steinberg, 2008). In a review of literature within the field of neuroscience, Casey, Getz & Galvan (2008) highlight a number of important points. Recent neuroimaging studies have shown that changes in the brain structure of adolescents offer an explanation

for the risk taking behaviours that often characterise this developmental stage. It has also been suggested that there is an evolutionary function for this, relating to an increased likelihood of survival and reproduction (Steinberg, 2008). This is potentially exacerbated by individual biochemical reward systems when engaged in risk taking behaviour (Casey, Getz & Gavlan, 2008). Risk taking and other behaviours that indicate a lack of self-regulation are likely to be normative and biologically driven, (Steinberg, 2008). Given that this is typical of adolescents, and the adolescents within this study are arguably atypical (in light of their experiences) it further highlights the risks and challenges that are faced by this group. In addition to this, it is important that expectations relating to reduction of externalizing behaviours are made in relation to adolescents in general. Interventions should not aim to eliminate risk taking behaviour altogether, but should appreciate the developmental characteristics associated with adolescence.

Effects of domestic abuse of adolescents

Adolescence is a particularly vulnerable time for children who have been exposed to domestic abuse, as the impact of experiencing domestic abuse in childhood may go beyond the borders of the family and the individual, and affect the development of intimate relationships (Smith & Williams, 1992). Research has found that exposure to domestic abuse in childhood is a significant predictor of involvement in an abusive dating relationship in adolescence (Wekerle & Wolfe, 1998; Cantrell et al., 1995). However, in contrast to this, Levendosky, Huth-Bocks & Semel (2002) found that adolescents appeared to be less vulnerable than younger children to the impact of domestic abuse. The researchers consider that it is possible that the impact of exposure to domestic abuse is either delayed or not detected by the quantitative measures used in their study. High school students themselves support preventative interventions with younger students (Jaffe & Reitzel, 1990). From examining the research literature, there appears to be scope for intervention programmes which target both children and adolescents, with the emphasis being on early identification. There is currently a greater need for programmes targeting adolescents, as such programmes are particularly scarce.

Intergenerational Transmission of Violence

There is a wealth of evidence to suggest that children from abusive families go on to be abusive or abused in their intimate relationships (Coohey, 2004; Guille, 2004; Margolin, Gordis, Medina, & Oliver, 2003; Whitefield, Anda, Dube, & Felitti, 2003; Cunningham & Baker, 2004; Levendosky & Graham-Bermann, 1998; Fergusson & Horwood, 1998). However, the transmission of violence is a complex process, with many variables interacting to increase the potential for abusive behaviour, many of which are yet to be fully understood.

Provision and intervention programmes

In the 1980s, research and interventions aimed at lowering the risk to children and young people who had been exposed to domestic abuse had not been given a high priority. A few interventions did exist which aimed to provide support, reduce problem behaviours, and enhance the coping skills of such children (Jaffe et al., 1986; Emery, 1982). These programmes were not formally evaluated (Graham-Bermann & Hughes, 2003).

Today, the support available for children and young people exposed to domestic abuse is varied in the form it takes, in the organisations offering support, and the distribution of such support. However, there continues to be an acute gap in provision for these children and young people (Save the Children, 2002). Currently, the support which is available can range from low key interventions consisting of validation and affirmation of children's experiences, through to long-term therapy (Hester et al., 2000). A range of different theoretical approaches have been adopted as the basis for developing intervention programmes, but to date, there is no evidence of the superiority of any one theoretical framework.

There is relatively little research available which specifically seeks to evaluate the effectiveness of intervention programmes for this group. The research which is available has been funded by government grants (Sullivan, Bybee, & Allen, 2002; Jouriles, McDonald, Spiller, Norwood, Swank, Stephens, et al., 2001; Graham-Bermann, 2000). Many of these studies have relied primarily on standardised assessment tools to measure outcomes (Jaffe, Sudermann, Reitzel, & Killip, 1992; Lavoie, Vezina, Piche, &

Boivin, 1995; Levy, 1984). It is now recognised that there is a need to integrate multiple approaches to domestic abuse research, including combining quantitative and qualitative methods when appropriate (Stover, 2005). It can be concluded that there remains a need for well-demonstrated, systematically evaluated and effective intervention programmes (Graham-Bermann & Hughes, 2003), which combine both qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques.

Research Aims

This research seeks to address a gap in the existing literature concerning the effectiveness of intervention programmes for young people exposed to domestic abuse, who are deemed to be at high risk of developing abusive patterns of behaviour in their own relationships. It will focus specifically on evaluating one particular intervention programme, ultimately aiming to impact on policy and practice at a number of levels. To facilitate this, I intend to publish this research, and to produce a public domain document. These research questions have directed the approach taken through the overarching epistemological stance.

Research questions

1. Is there a difference in targeted behaviours/skills* between baseline and follow-up measures in young people on the Changing Places Programme?

2. Are there any additional effects of the intervention on other non-targeted behaviours or skills?

3. How do the young people feel about the programme? What positive elements can they identify and what would they like to see changed?

4. What do the young people on the Changing Places Programme feel they have gained from the programme?

Targeted behaviours/skills include attitudes to abusive behaviour, perspective taking, improved decision making and problem solving skills, emotional awareness, self-awareness, self-control, confidence and self-esteem.

The Changing Places Programme

The Changing Places Programme is a group-based intervention programme based on a combination of cognitive and behavioural psychology. It seeks to offer young people between 14-21 years of age with existing abusive behaviour patterns an opportunity to learn about themselves, and as a result, change their behaviour. The programme consists of 11 core sessions, plus 3 pre-group and 3-post group sessions. The duration of the core sessions of intervention programme was 11 weeks, with one session being delivered each week. More information about the rationale of the programme,

including its aims, structure and cognitive-behavioural approaches, can be found in appendix 2.3.

This programme was delivered to two groups of young people in two settings. I was involved in planning and organising the running of this intervention, and in co-delivering three sessions to one of the groups. I supported the team with approaching schools to offer this intervention, with producing materials to advertise this programme, and in discussion with schools to agree on requirements and time scales. I took on a management role for one of the groups, designing the facilitator rota, organising the resources necessary to deliver the programme, participating in weekly joint problem solving and joint planning meetings with the facilitators of one of the groups, and being the key point of contact for the facilitators and for the school. This level of involvement provided me with the opportunity to experience firsthand the challenges when working with this group of young people, and allowed me to further immerse myself in the research, to suspend my own preconceived views and as a result be truer to the views expressed by the participants. The potential negative implications of my involvement with the intervention programme on the validity of this research will be discussed later on.

Design and Methods

Epistemological stance

The epistemological stance taken is that of the pragmatist tradition. Adopting this stance permits a 'mix and match' design, which combines both qualitative and quantitative approaches to obtain the best chance of answering the specific research questions. As research is often multi-purpose, such a stance allows researchers to address questions that do not fit neatly into a wholly qualitative or quantitative approach (Armitage, 2007). The stance adopted incorporates elements of interpretive epistemology, and therefore elements of the data have been collected and analysed in this fashion.

Mixed methods

Based on careful consideration of my research questions, a mixed methods approach was chosen for one element of this study. Taking a mixed methods approach allows research to be collected in a way that the quantitative data complements the qualitative data, thus reducing the limitations of using each approach exclusively. In order to answer my first research question, qualitative data was combined with quantitative data. Qualitative data was collected in response to research questions two, three, and four.

Participants

Young People

Details of the young people participating in this study and sampling method are described in paper 1. Further information about the referral process can be found in appendix 3.1 – 3.3.

A total of eleven young people agreed to take part in this research, however only nine sets of complete data were obtained, as presented in this second paper. No young people explicitly declined to participate in this research, however their consent forms were not returned.

The young people taking part in this study consisted of four males and five females aged between 14-16 years of age, for whom data was obtained both prior to and following the conclusion of the programme. As part of the referral process, all of these young people were identified as displaying

externalising behaviours, in that they were displaying aggressive or violent behaviour, and were experiencing difficulties with their behaviour at school, including fighting or acting out. All participants were of white ethnic origin. Details of socio-economic status were not gathered. More information about sampling decisions can be found in appendix 3.4.

Facilitators

Three facilitators agreed to take part in this research out of a total of seven involved in delivering this intervention programme. All three were female, and of white ethnic origin.

Measures

Interviews with young people

Semi-structured interviews were used to gather information from all of the young people, providing qualitative data. Details of the decision to use semi-structured interviews, and a consideration of alternative data collection techniques can be found in appendices 4.1.1 – 4.1.4.

The interview questions were devised by drawing up a concept map (see appendix 4.2) (Ausubel, 1968). This allowed main areas of investigation to be identified. I also drew upon questions provided with the intervention programme (see appendix 4.3). These questions were chosen and adapted if they were deemed to be relevant to my specific research questions. When the main interview questions had been formed, prompt questions were developed in order to facilitate a deeper exploration of the young people's core constructs.

The interview questions were piloted to check for ease of understanding and appropriateness of language for 14-16 year olds. Feedback was obtained from two 16 year olds. Following this feedback, the wording of some of the questions was amended (see appendix 4.4 for pilot questions and feedback). In addition to this, the decision was made to use a rating scale of 1-10, to assist the young people with giving their views and opinions on certain questions. The information gained when using rating scales was not intended to be used quantitatively. See appendix 4.5, interview questions 5 and 6, for when these rating scales were used.

To ensure that each interview question was relevant to the research questions being asked, each interview question was matched up with the targeted behaviours/skills of the programme. See appendix 4.7 for the final interview schedule.

Emotional Literacy Checklist

In line with the pragmatist tradition, I felt that in order to answer research question one, the data would be enriched by combining qualitative and quantitative measures. Student Emotional Literacy Checklist's (Faupel, 2003) were used to gather quantitative information from each young person

about their self-awareness, empathy and ability to regulate behaviour. This measure was chosen because the Changing Places Programme, in addition to targeting other skills and behaviours, focuses on developing these skills. I therefore felt that this checklist would provide an indication of the level of development of these skills, and whether they had changed following the intervention programme. Further details justifying the decision to use this measure appear in appendix 4.6, along with a review of the reliability and validity of this checklist (see appendix 4.6.1).

Interviews with facilitators

Semi-structured interviews were used to gather information from programme facilitators, in order to triangulate the qualitative data gathered from the young people. Triangulation is a technique used to combine two data sources, in order to validate the results obtained through one source with that of another (Elliot, Fischer, & Rennie, 1999; Flick, 1992). Interview questions were developed from an evaluation questionnaire provided with the programme (see appendix 4.8). Questions were based around three themes: perceived impact of the programme and future directions, programme targeting, and their role as a facilitator. The facilitator interview questions can be found in appendix 4.9.

Procedures

Ethical considerations

Ethical clearance was sought and obtained from Exeter University (see appendix 5.2). The British Psychological Society's Code of Conduct, Ethical Principles and Guidelines (2005) for conducting research with human participants, was used as guidance when considering the ethical implications of this research. The issues addressed included consent, deception, debriefing, withdrawal from the investigation, confidentiality, and protection of participants (see appendix 5.1 – 5.1.2).

Initially, I obtained the contact details of all of the young people who had been identified as suitable for inclusion on this intervention programme. All of these young people and their parents/carers were provided with information outlining my research, and all of the young people were invited to take part (see appendix 5.1.3).

A total of eleven young people agreed to take part in this research, however only nine sets of complete data were obtained for inclusion in this paper. Informed consent was obtained from all of the young people who took part in this research, and also from their parents/carers. All participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study, and their right to expect that the information they provided would not be identifiable as theirs. This was achieved by assigning a number to each young person and noting this on their interview transcript. A list of the allocation of names to numbers was kept until the end of the study when it was destroyed. Procedures for contacting me were also provided. All of the young people were debriefed at the end of the interview (see appendix 5.1.4). Details about how the young people were debriefed at the end of the interviews can be found in paper 1.

Initial data collection

Data was gathered in the form of semi-structured interviews and student emotional literacy checklists prior to the young people beginning the programme. Details of this will now be outlined.

Interviews were carried out on an individual basis and were recorded by Dictaphone. Alternative arrangements were made for one young person, who did not wish for the interview to be recorded on Dictaphone, and therefore her answers were recorded manually during the interview. Student Emotional Literacy Checklists were administered at the end of each interview. Each question on the checklist was read out to the young person, as their literacy levels had not been checked prior to the interview. The initial interviews took place during school hours in a private room at the young person's school, and lasted between 20 to 45 minutes.

Data obtained prior to the programme was used as a baseline measure to enable comparisons to be made with data gathered from the same young people following the conclusion of the programme. Some of the information obtained through semi-structured interviews in relation to the young people's attitudes and reasoning of abusive behaviour was analysed and reported in paper 1.

Follow-up data collection

Following the conclusion of the programme, I arranged to see the same nine young people who were interviewed prior to the beginning of the programme. These interviews were conducted in the same manner as outlined above, with Student Emotional Literacy Checklists being administered at the end of each interview. Alternative arrangements were made for three young people, one of whom did not wish for the interview to be recorded on Dictaphone, and therefore her answers were recorded manually at the point of interview. Two other young people requested to be interviewed together, and therefore a joint interview was conducted.

The time span between initial and follow up interviews with the young people was between 11-12 weeks. All of the participants in this study were interviewed either in the week prior to the commencement of the core sessions of the intervention, or during the first week of the intervention. All follow up interviews took place following the last core session of the intervention.

Facilitator interviews

Following the conclusion of the programme, interviews were arranged with three facilitators who had agreed to take part in this study. One interview was carried out in a face-to-face context, and the other two were conducted over the phone. All three interviews were recorded by Dictaphone, and lasted between 38 to 53 minutes. The time span when the facilitator interviews were conducted was from the end of the intervention programme to up to 3 weeks following the end of the programme.

Data Analysis

Transcription of interview data

All interviews recorded by Dictaphone were transcribed and saved as Microsoft Word documents. The two manually recorded interviews were also word processed. A selection of transcripts can be found in appendix 6.1.1 – 6.1.3. The raw data was uploaded into a computer software programme, which supported me in carrying out a thematic analysis.

Qualitative data analysis

A thematic analysis of the interview data was carried out. This was driven by the nature of my research questions and the epistemological stance taken. Details about the nature of thematic analysis, plus alternative data analysis techniques that were considered, can be found in appendix 6.2 – 6.2.2.

In order to answer research question one, the raw data obtained from both the initial interviews and follow up interviews were coded according to pre-defined themes, and direct comparisons were made. These pre-defined themes reflected the skills and behaviours targeted by the intervention programme. A limitation of using pre-defined themes when analysing qualitative data is that other pertinent findings may be missed. However, the purpose of research question two was to explore other pertinent findings which had not been identified according to the pre-defined themes used to analyse data in order to answer research question one. A selection of coded transcripts can be found in appendix 6.4.

To answer research questions two, three and four, the data was analysed for emergent themes. Themes were given provisional labels and definitions, which were redefined and refined. Further details about the data analysis process can be found in appendix 6.5. A visual framework guided this process, and supported my thinking when exploring, organising, interpreting and integrating the data (Lewins & Silver, 2007) (see appendix 6.5.1). A reflective diary was kept to record my thoughts and decisions about the data analysis process (see appendix 6.3).

Quantitative data analysis

Data obtained from the Student Emotional Literacy Checklists were scored, (see appendix 6.6. for examples of completed checklists) and entered into a computer software package. A dependent t-test was carried out in order to compare whether there was a statistically significant difference in scores collected before and after the programme.

Results

The results are organised according to each research question and the codes used in the data analysis process. Details of these codes and how they relate to the research questions can be found in Table 2. More information about the codes can be found in appendix 7.2.2. Regrettably, the results of research question 4 have not been included in this paper, due to the extent of the findings. These results are however presented in appendix 7.3.

A selection of quotes from the interviews is provided to give contextual examples, and to represent the breadth and depth of themes. Some of the quotes contain expletives. I felt it important to include these references in their entirety, so that the young people's views were accurately represented. All names referenced in this paper are aliases, in order to preserve anonymity.

Table 2
Themes arising from thematic analysis of interview data

Research Question	Superordinate theme	Subordinate theme
1. Is there a significant difference in the degree of targeted behaviours/skills* between baseline and follow-up measures in young people on the Changing Places Programme?	Cognitions	Comparison of Attitudes
		Comparison of Attribution
		Comparison of Reasoning
	Behaviour	Comparison of Preventative Behaviours
		Comparison of Self-Control
	Affect	Comparison of Emotional Literacy
		Comparison of Confidence and Self-esteem
2. Are there any additional effects of the intervention on other non-targeted behaviours or skills?	Additional Effects	Identity
		Peer Groups and Friendships
		School
		Sense of Wellbeing
3. How do the young people feel about the programme? What positive elements can they identify and what would they like to see changed?	Programme Positives	Programme
		Delivery
	Programme Limitations	Programme
		Delivery

		Preparation
4. What do the young people on the Changing Places Programme feel they have gained from the programme?	Participant Views	Attitudes & Awareness
		Behaviour
		No Effect
		Preventative Behaviours & Problem Solving
		Relationships

1. Is there a difference in targeted behaviours/skills between baseline and follow-up measures in young people on the Changing Places Programme?

To answer this question, a mixed methods approach was used, gathering qualitative data via semi-structured interviews, and quantitative data through the Student Emotional Literacy Checklist (Faupel, 2003). Results from the interviews are presented first.

Interview data
Cognitions

References made to the following themes, in interviews conducted both prior to and following the intervention programme, were coded under the category of 'cognitions':

(i) Attitudes about abusive situations
(ii) Information about reasoning of abusive situations
(iii) Evidence of attribution of abusive behaviour to external (other) or internal (self) factors

The results suggest that none of the young peoples' attitudes towards abusive behaviour had changed following the programme. The majority of young people also showed little or no change in their reasoning of abusive behaviour. Some young people did however indicate a shift in their attribution of abusive behaviour.

(i) Attitudes

Two young people articulated concerning attitudes. One indicated that they felt that psychological abuse was a more powerful weapon than physical

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abuse, whilst another felt that emotional and verbal abuse was less serious than physical abuse.

(ii) Reasoning

Three themes emerged which gave an indication as to why the young people's reasoning of abusive behaviour had remained unchanged:

1. Abusive behaviour is morally justified; the immediate consequences of an action determines how right or wrong an act is; the right action consists of what instrumentally satisfies one's own needs:

   Well if they're saying stuff about you then, if they can give it then they can take it… If someone hits us, we'll hit 'em back, there's no point just standing there and taking it and then getting them in trouble, they can give then they can take. - Hannah.

2. Abusive behaviour is the easiest option, and the young people had not acquired the skills necessary to use alternatives to abusive behaviour:

   [Why do you think people resort to using violence, emotional or verbal abuse to solve problems?] It's an easier way to sort it out. [Tell me about it being easier.] Don't have to talk about it. It's quicker and it works. I've never tried the talking option. – Emily.

3. Abusive behaviour is inherently linked to ones identity; it is important to appear 'hard' and not 'weak' or 'scared':

   At the end of the day, I ain't scared of no one… some people think you're afraid of them but at the end of the day, you have a fight with them and then you beat the crap out of them, they'll soon learn won't they, that they're not harder than everyone else. – Hannah.

(iii) Attribution

Three young people suggested that their attribution of abusive behaviour had shifted, and that they were now taking more responsibility for their role in events.

For example, this young person initially attributed their difficulties at home to their mother's behaviour and alcohol consumption:

She (mother) goes drinking quite a bit and when she comes back she causes arguments over nothing, it just really annoys me. – Sophie.

However, following the programme she indicated that she was taking greater responsibility for preventing abusive situations from occurring:

> *Yes I have less arguments. [How have you managed to prevent this happening?] Well there's my Mum and Dad… they go down the pub for a couple of pints and by the time they come back I'm upstairs or on the computer or something, out the way. – Sophie.*

Two young people indicated some shift in attribution, but this was highly context bound, and dependent on the skills of others. They acknowledged their role in situations, but also highlighted the role of others. This determined how effective they felt they would be in using non abusive strategies to resolve potential conflict situations.

Behaviour

References to how abusive behaviour or situations could be avoided, (including references where the young person deemed that there was no way of preventing such situations), along with reported changes in self-control, were coded under the theme 'behaviour'.

(i) Preventative Behaviours

Prior to the programme, all but one young person was able to offer at least one example of how they currently attempted to prevent or avoid conflict situations. They were able to give many more suggestions, but were not currently using these.

The results indicated that for the majority, there was a positive change in their likelihood of trying alternatives to abusive behaviour. Some suggested that their approach to problem-solving had changed, and that they had developed greater self-control:

> *I'm not retaliating as much. I just try and keep it as a joke and not let it get too serious... [Before the sessions, were you aware of the things you could do, or not?] I didn't really do those things. I just stop now and think about it. – Josh.*

Two young people reported no change to the amount or type of preventative behaviours that they would use to avoid potential conflict situations. They did not feel that a non abusive approach would have a positive outcome. They suggested that this was because of difficulties with impulse control, a

lack of confidence in others, and that a non abusive approach would be inconsistent with their attitudes and reasoning about abusive behaviour:

[How do you solve problems, such as conflict situations?] I'd probably smack them one, cause I've got a temper on me. [Anything else you might try?] Definitely wouldn't talk about it, I'm too angry and fed up. I couldn't think of anyone where talking would work. – Emily

(ii) Control

The results suggest that the majority of young people had greater control over various aspects of their lives following the programme. For example:

[Do you feel more in control since the programme?] Yes, because I'm better able to control my anger. – Josh.

[Do you feel that you are more in control now, than before?] Yes. [Why's that?] I have more of an understanding of how to deal with things… it made me think about it. – Ben.

Affect

Data collected from before and after the programme indicating levels of (i) emotional literacy, and (ii) confidence and self-esteem, were coded under the theme 'affect. Many young people appeared to have gained confidence and self-esteem following the programme. However, levels of emotional literacy appeared unchanged.

(i) Emotional Literacy

Following the programme, the majority of young people continued to demonstrate difficulty with emotional expression and empathy. All showed a low level of emotional awareness, and many used inappropriate emotive language.

There was this lady she was like 30/40, I was in this field one day and she came over to me and she was like giving it, and I was like whatever, and carried on walking and that, and then she started saying stuff about me, so I just went up to her and pushed her and she fell over, and she just picked her bags back up and carried on walking. It was well funny, you should have been there. – Hannah.

(ii) Confidence and Self-Esteem

Following the programme, the information provided by the young people suggested that the majority had developed greater confidence and self esteem. They made references to future aspirations and used more positive language than was apparent in the initial interviews prior to the programme.
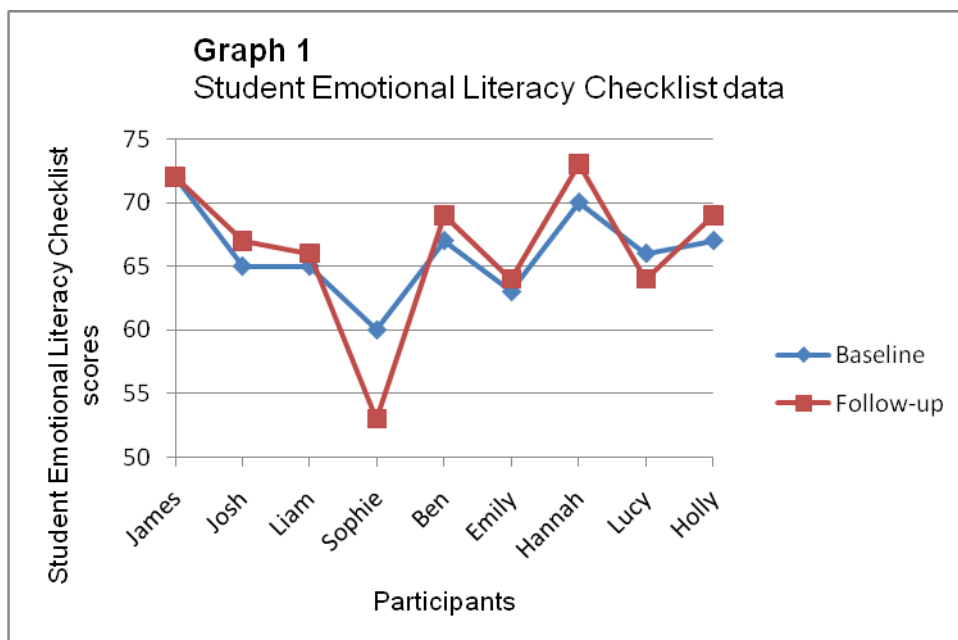
Student Emotional Literacy Checklist

Scores prior to the programme indicated that seven out of a total of nine young people gained an emotional literacy score of 'well-below average' or 'below average'. Following the programme, five of the nine young people achieved an emotional literacy score of between 'well-below average' to 'below average', with four obtaining an 'average' score. No young person achieved a score of 'above average' on this checklist.

According to the guidelines set out by Faupel (2003) the Student Emotional Literacy Checklist cannot be broken down into a number of domains, as can the Teacher and Parent versions, which were not used. The Teacher and parent versions can be broken down into the domains of Self-awareness, Self-regulation, Motivation, Empathy, and Social Skills. These versions were not used as the focus of this study was to gain young people's views, which are underrepresented in the existing knowledge base. Additionally, due to the strained relationships that many of these young people had with their parents and teachers, I questioned their ability to complete the checklists objectively.

Results gathered by this checklist indicated that there was no significant difference in the degree of targeted behaviours/skills between baseline measures *(M=66.11, SD=3.55)* and follow-up measures *((M = 66.33, SD = 5.92), t(8) =-.22, p>.05)*, according to this measurement scale. SPSS output data can be found in appendix 7.1.1.

To summarise, according to the data collected by the Student Emotional Literacy Checklist, there was no significant change in self-awareness, self-regulation, and empathy. This confirms some of the results obtained via semi-structured interviews, namely that the young people continued to demonstrate difficulty with emotional expression and empathy.

More detailed information about the Student Emotional Literacy Checklist scores of individual participants obtained both prior to and following the intervention is represented below in Graph 1.

Graph 1
Student Emotional Literacy Checklist data

The general pattern that is represented in Graph. 1 indicates that there was little movement between baseline and follow-up scores for the individual participants. Two of the participants obtained a lower score on the post programme Student Emotional Literacy Checklist.

Although two participants' scores dropped as represented in Graph 1, these participants did not change descriptive bands, in relation to the standardisation of the checklist. By comparing the banding of scores, it can be seen that there was an increase in the percentage of young people moving from a 'below-average' to 'average' range of emotional literacy. Table 3 dispays the descriptive category bands for baseline and follow-up scores obtained by the Student Emotional Literacy Checklist, and the percentage of young people achieving scores within these descriptive bands.

Table 3

Student Emotional Literacy Checklist Score Descriptors and Percentages

		Percentage of participants in each score range	
Description	Score Range	Baseline	Follow-up
WELL ABOVE AVERAGE	88 or above	0%	0%
ABOVE AVERAGE	82-87	0%	0%
AVERAGE	69-81	22%	44.5%
BELOW AVERAGE	63-68	67%	44.5%
WELL BELOW AVERAGE	62 or below	11%	11%

2. Are there any additional effects of the intervention on other non-targeted behaviours or skills?

Four additional positive effects of the programme emerged. These factors were coded under the theme 'additional effects'.

(i) Identity

The majority of young people felt that they were now more aware of their identity, and indicated that they were contemplating alternative identities. One young person had actively sought to make changes which challenged their identity. Two others indicated that they were in the process of considering an identity shift. For example:

> *No I don't think (violence is) the right thing (to do), but it's what I do. [Can you see anything changing for you over time?] I'll probably get less violent over the years. [Why do you think that?] Cause I don't want to be a violent person anymore. – Sophie.*

(ii) Peer groups and friendships

Many references were made to social support networks or specific individuals. Following the programme, just over half of the young people felt that their friendships had changed, commenting that levels of social support had increased and that they now had more friends.

The young people who did not feel that their friendships had changed suggested that they were happy with their friendship groups, and had not had any recent arguments.

(iii) School

Many young people felt that their experience of school had improved. This was attributed to changes in attitude and improved behaviour, such as reduced aggression, less swearing, and better listening.

Before the programme, one young person reported engaging in some low-level disruption and infrequent school attendance. However they now believed that education was important:

> *[How do you feel about school?]… I have to be here at the end of the day, education's important, that's why I'm here. If I didn't think it was important I would just be sitting round doing jack… I still don't want to be here at the end of the day, but we all have to do stuff that we don't want to. – James.*

Two of the young people were able to recall positive comments that they had received from teachers about positive changes in their behaviour:

> *My tutors and everyone have said that me and Lucy have been better since we've been doing it apparently (Hannah)… [And did she say what she thought had changed?] She just said that I have stopped my swearing as much and everything (Hannah). Yes so have I (Lucy). We've like started to calm down and just like been listening to them and everything (Hannah). I ain't got (sent out of lessons) yet (Lucy).*

(iv) Sense of wellbeing

Results indicated that four of the young people felt less angry and more in control of their anger following the programme. They reported that they were happier, by means of rating their level of happiness on a scale of 1-10 both prior to and following the programme. For example:

> *I feel like I can control my anger a bit better. Use different ways to stop getting angry. – Josh.*

> *I'm a lot happier now… I feel I get angry a bit less. – Sophie.*

> *… they said when you get angry don't take it out on no one, just try and let the emotion go, and it's helped because I don't get in trouble no more. – Holly.*

However, one young person felt that the group sessions had a negative impact on his emotions:

> *I came out of every session depressed, thinking oh great, it's brought up other memories that I don't need to think about it… I've seen*

enough of it in my life and I don't want nothing else to do with it, bringing it all back up. – James.

In relation to the quote above provided by 'James', I am not aware that the facilitators delivering the programme were conscious of the impact that these sessions were having on this young person's sense of wellbeing. In the interview, additional avenues of support were brought to the child's attention, along with the information provided in the debriefing.

3. How do the young people feel about the programme? What positive elements can they identify and what would they like to see changed?

The young people's views about the programme were coded under the broad categories of 'programme positives' and 'programme limitations'. Within these categories, a number of themes emerged. These results were triangulated with data obtained from the facilitators, which corroborated all of the findings outlined below, except for the 'programme positives' comments referring to the 'delivery' of the programme. A table illustrating these findings can be found in appendix 7.2.3. It must again be emphasised that given the nature of the person-centred focus of this study, the facilitator data are not described in detail within this thesis.

The codes for this research question are more descriptive in nature, than those relating to the other research questions in this paper. Within the pragmatic paradigm, the interview questions were designed to elicit responses that explicitly highlight the aspects of the programme that the participants felt were positive. The aim of this research question was not to explore participant perceptions of the impact the programme may have had on them. By coding the data descriptively, I was able to identify similar themes within the facilitator data.

Programme Positives
(i) Programme
References made to positive aspects of the programme related to certain activities, and to gaining some information which was helpful. Activities that were enjoyed by the young people included watching TV clips, and practical and visual activities such as role-play.

(ii) Delivery

The most frequent positive comments referring to the programme's delivery highlighted three features: the reward of receiving pizza following completion of the final session, having food during break times, and having group rules.

Programme Limitations

(i) Programme

The young people indicated a preference for fewer discussion based activities and shorter sessions. All but one young person said that they found it difficult to engage in discussion based activities and would have preferred more practical activities. Many described the sessions as 'boring'.

> *… all we did was sit around listening for hours and it got boring… [Were they (the facilitators) talking to you?] Well they were talking to us, trying to get us to talk as well, but none of us answered. It's boring. – Sophie.*

> *Only a couple of sessions were boring, too much talking. – Emily.*

> *I'd rather like do something than just be sat there talking. – Hannah.*

One young person did not feel that this programme was relevant for him, as he had attended other similar intervention programmes:

> *I was in there thinking how this is actually good for me, I know it already… I've been told by so many other people before, it's just repeating it… People who have been through this stuff before, it's not very helpful. – James.*

(ii) Delivery

The young people referred to several possible changes that they felt could be made in the delivery of the programme (separate from the programme materials and structure,) and these included the group rules, the location and timing of the sessions, and the facilitators.

References were made to the skills of the facilitators, their motivation to deliver the sessions, and their credibility based on their background and personal experiences. For example:

I actually said to (facilitator's name), "at a young age did your Dad beat the fuck out of your Mum? No? Well, there you go, so shut up". And I just sat back down. I put it straight. – James.

(iii) Preparation

References were made to scenarios and issues prior to starting the programme, some of which had not been addressed. These included the need for more preparatory work to develop group dynamics, cohesion and trusting relationships; for greater clarity regarding confidentiality; and for the need to explore possible motivational and disciplinary issues within the group.

For example:

…if they do more games at the start of it you're going to get comfortable with the others and trust them, then you'll be able to actually say what you want to say. – James.

[Why do you think no one answered?] I think it's because they don't trust anyone because they don't really know 'em. If I knew them then I would open up more. – Sophie.

…we were all mucking around to be honest, all of us didn't want to be there, but half of them didn't have no choice but to be there. – James.

To conclude, the results suggest that although some of the skills targeted by the programme appeared unchanged, a number of additional positive effects were indicated. The young people were able to provide a number of suggestions as to how the programme could be further developed and improved.

Discussion

Due to the abundance of findings, discussion of the results has been prioritised. The results which are discussed have implications for the development of further intervention programmes. Issues such as informed consent and confidentiality, boundaries and rules, learning styles, programme materials and emotional wellbeing have either had to be omitted, or only briefly discussed.

The results reported and discussed in this paper are done so with caution. This study represents a detailed but small scale investigation of one particular intervention programme being delivered across two settings, from a young persons' perspective. The results presented here are not indicative of a causal link between the programme and any resulting changes to behaviours or skills. The results do however suggest an association between the programme and certain changes to behaviour, skills and thinking. In order to increase the validity of the findings, interviews were carried out with facilitators in order to triangulate some of the data.

Overview of outcomes

The results obtained from the young people who participated in this research are mixed, in terms of how effective this programme was in achieving its aims. The results suggest that the intervention programme had limited effect on changing the group's attitudes and reasoning towards abusive behaviour. However, a number of positive effects emerged from the results. These include a better understanding of one's role or contribution to situations, improved confidence and self-esteem, greater awareness of identity, improved friendships, greater control over managing anger, improved experiences at school, and increased feelings of happiness. A selection of these findings will now be discussed.

Attitudes

The findings which indicate no change in attitudes towards abusive behaviour may reflect the complex challenge of altering attitudes, particularly in an isolated context. Following the programme, some young people continued to show attitudes about abuse that prompt cause for

concern, suggesting that they would use psychological manipulation to interrogate and control others in order to achieve a desired outcome. This manipulative behaviour is characteristic of perpetrator behaviour (Bancroft, & Silverman, 2002).

An increasing understanding of some of the processes involved in attitude formation and maintenance in this group of young people is required (as discussed in paper one), in order to develop intervention programmes which are effective in changing attitudes.

Reasoning

Three themes emerged as to how these young people reason and make sense of abusive situations: abusive behaviour is morally justified, it is the easiest option, and it is linked to one's identity.

The finding, which suggests that abusive behaviour was the easiest option for these young people, has links to Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1973), and to Cultural Spillover Theory (Straus, 1991). The latter is an extension of Social Learning Theory, which proposes that abuse legitimised in one area of life will engender violence in other contexts. These theories suggest that if a child is exposed to domestic abuse, they will learn that these behaviours are a legitimate way to resolve conflict in general.

When looking at results suggesting that some of the young people felt that abusive situations were morally justified, it is evident that many were reasoning at a level that was lower than would typically be expected for adolescents. According to Kohlberg's Stages of Moral Development (1973), these young people could be described as reasoning at stages 1 and 2. Kohlberg (1973) proposed six developmental stages of moral development. His scale reflects how people justify behaviors, and that as people move through the stages their moral behaviour will be more responsible, consistent and predictable (Crain, 1985). These six stages can be more generally grouped into three levels with two stages at each. Kohlberg (1973) named the three levels pre-conventional, conventional and post-conventional. The preconvention level of moral reasoning consists of two developmental stages. This level is especially common in children. Kohlberg proposed that reasoning about morality at this level is based on

the external consequences that certain actions may bring. Society's conventions regarding what is right or wrong is not considered (Kohlberg, 1976).

It is the second level of moral reasoning, named 'conventional reasoning', that is most typical of adolescents (Kohlberg, 1973). At this level, reasoning the morality of actions is based on society's conventions concerning right and wrong. At this level an individual obeys rules and follows society's norms even when there are no consequences for obedience or disobedience (Kohlberg, 1976). This level of moral reasoning was not evident in the results obtained in this study, which is consistent with the findings of other research (Chandler, Boyes, & Ball, 1990; Taylor & Walker, 1997).

It can be concluded that in order for these young people to change their reasoning about abusive behaviour, moral reasoning needs to be developed, practical skills need to be learnt and perceived to be effective, and an identity shift needs to take place.

Behaviour change
The results suggest that following the programme, the young people were more aware of alternative non-abusive ways of reacting to potential conflict situations. They were not currently using these, but felt they were more likely to do so. This would suggest that we need to address any additional barriers which may prevent these young people from trying new approaches.

As identified in paper one, potential barriers may include the following: positive reinforcement of abusive behaviour, low emotional literacy, external attribution of events, destructive attitudes, inflexible and contradictory reasoning styles, low levels of moral reasoning, being unwilling to take risks, having a lack of confidence in the skills of others, a lack of problem-solving skills, and a difficulty with regulating emotions. Some of these factors were targeted skills on the programme evaluated here.

An alternative explanation for the difficulties experienced by this group with regard to altering their behaviour may be explained by attachment theory (Bowlby, 1988). Over three decades ago, Bowlby (1988) claimed domestic abuse occurred due to the distorted versions of attachment

behaviours, developed in childhood and reactivated in adult partnerships. Such distorted versions of attachment behaviours were transmitted across the lifespan through *internal working models*. The internal working model can be described as a representation of how the individual perceives themselves in relation to others, which influences the way in which they engage in relationships (Bowlby, 1988). Unfortunately there has been very little research specifically examining the effects of domestic abuse on attachment. However, one study was that by Worley, Walsh and Lewis (2004) who investigated the parenting experiences of male perpetrators of domestic abuse. All of these men had experienced rejection, neglect and an absence of emotional care, as well as being traumatized through witnessing domestic abuse from an early age. They concluded that the men had developed *internal working models* of themselves as unworthy or incapable of getting emotional care, attention or protection.

Due to the lack of research in this area, at this point in time one can only speculate that internal working models *may* become constructed along perpetrator-victim dimensions, and adolescents *may* choose dating partners whose behaviours fit with their internal working models. It is therefore plausible that the young people in this study have internal working models which present them with a barrier when considering alternative behaviours. It is worth mentioning however that the internal working model is not fixed, and is subject to change through experience of significant relationships (Bowlby, 1988).

Emotional Literacy

The qualitative and quantitative results obtained indicate that this programme had little effect on developing the emotional literacy of these young people. They typically made many contradictions when expressing their feelings and their thoughts, which is a characteristic found in perpetrators of domestic abuse (Bancroft, & Silverman, 2002). In paper one, low emotional literacy was identified as a potential barrier for these young people developing non-abusive approaches to managing conflict situations. Perhaps more attention to assessing and developing the emotional literacy of young people, before embarking on intervention programmes of this kind,

would be advantageous. Other research supports this suggestion (Hosking, 2008; Winters, Clift, & Dutton, 2004).

Identity

Following the programme, the majority of young people felt that they were more aware of their identity, and indicated that they were contemplating alternative identities. This suggests that not all of the participants were at the contemplation stage of change (Prochaska & DiClemente, 1983) at the beginning of the programme. This implies that some young people were not in the right 'frame of mind' to consider the need for change, which may explain the reported lack of motivation to engage with the programme. Another possibility is that earlier intervention may mean that attitudes are less entrenched, thereby increasing 'readiness' to engage with the programme.

Increased control

The majority of young people felt that following the programme they had greater self-control over various aspects of their lives, such as managing anger. This is interesting because if these young people were displaying perpetrator behaviours, they would already have good impulse control (Bancroft & Silverman, 2002). It is a common misconception that perpetrators of domestic abuse have poor impulse control. As Bancroft & Silverman (2002) highlight, when a complete history of a perpetrator's abusive and controlling behaviours towards their partner is carried out, it often reveals much forethought or even planning, and a lack of impulsivity.

Research has found that anger management programmes which aim to develop greater impulse control, may actually have a negative impact on increasing manipulative and abusive behaviours in young people at risk of developing such perpetrator characteristics (Bancroft & Silverman, 2002). Anger management programmes are therefore not appropriate for perpetrators of domestic abuse. These results may imply that the needs of the young people in this sample were mixed with some requiring support for anger management.

Carlson (1990) conducted a study to explore the impact of domestic abuse on adolescents. She found the most common reasons for referrals to

participate in this study were family conflict (18%), homelessness (15%), problem behaviours (12%) and school problems (10%). The referrals made to the intervention programme evaluated here may be for similar reasons, leading to a skewed sample by the nature of referrals received. As schools were the primary referrer to this intervention programme, it may be that referrals received were predominantly for individuals displaying behaviour difficulties. Even though research has shown that while child witnesses of domestic abuse are nearly three times as likely to be involved in physical aggression at school (Dauvergne & Johnson, 2001), many attempt to conceal what is happening for fear of being teased or bullied (Buckley, Holt & Whelan, 2007) and internalise their problems (Amato, 1986).

These findings would suggest that when seeking appropriate referrals for such interventions programmes, one needs to be cautious as to any covert reasons as to why such referrals are being made. It is possible that some of the young people referred to this programme were referred not only because they had been exposed to domestic abuse, but because they were presenting with behaviour difficulties at school. It is imperative that referral systems identify young people who are equally affected by exposure to domestic abuse, whose externalising behaviours may not be as apparent. It is important the referrers are aware of both the internalising and externalising behaviours that may result from being exposed to domestic abuse. They need to understand that the needs of young people can be just as great, regardless of how they are managing the effects of being exposed to domestic abuse.

Implications

My involvement in this intervention was more than that of a researcher, as outlined earlier. I was involved in planning and organising the running of this intervention, and in co-delivering some of the sessions. This gave me an insight into what the implications might be for the delivery of future programme of this kind.

It is possible that due to my personal investment in this programme, when analysing the data I may have inadvertently biased the results. Two steps were taken to account for this possibility: maintaining a record of data

analysis decisions, and compiling a reflective diary. This is discussed further in appendix 5.4.

The implications presented in this paper thus far, have emerged from analysis of the data at this stage of the study. There are, however, a number of implications that have not directly emerged from the data, but from my firsthand involvement with this programme. These will not be discussed here as they do not directly relate to the research questions, which aim to ascertain the views of the young people in this programme.

Coordinated Community Response

In terms of promoting positive attitude change, the limitations of delivering such intervention programmes within a single context must be acknowledged. Future interventions may look to provide support for these young people across a range of contexts, by working with schools, families and whole communities. It is however a balance between the content, context and delivery of the programme that will determine whether positive attitude change occurs.

When exploring behaviour change, a number of barriers were identified. The results suggest that all intervention programmes targeting young people affected by exposure to domestic abuse should attempt to remove these barriers.

In terms of altering reasoning of abusive behaviour, perhaps future intervention programmes should provide opportunities for young people to engage with role models who have developmentally appropriate moral reasoning, which may in turn influence similar development within the young person. Although these young people will have had years of exposure to positive role models such as teachers and mentors, they may not have built a positive relationship with them. As positive relationships are recognised to be predictors of improved outcomes (Jackson, 2002; Jekielek, Moore, Hair & Scarupa, 2002; Rhodes, Grossman & Resch, 2000), relationship building could be incorporated into intervention programmes. Schools could support this work by integrating restorative approaches into their behaviour policy (Karp & Breslin, 2001), in order to teach young people new skills to manage conflict situations.

Personal Construct Psychology

In accordance with Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), perhaps positive identity formation could be further encouraged by creating more opportunities for young people who identify themselves as abusive individuals to engage with peer groups who hold anti-abuse attitudes and identities (Kinney, 1993; Pugh & Hart, 1999). This could be achieved through extra-curricular opportunities and youth projects. Additionally, as noted in Paper 1, therapeutic interventions based on the theoretical framework of personal construct psychology (PCP) (Kelly, 1955) may provide a mechanism for exploring belief systems. Using this approach, these young people may be able to gain a deeper insight into their beliefs and how these relate to their identity. This may result in them being better placed to make a shift in terms of their identity, which should influence their attitudes and subsequent behaviour.

Screening

When considering the results which indicated that the young people on this programme were not at the contemplation stage of change, perhaps more rigorous screening and preparation for readiness to engage at the point of referral would result in such programmes being more effective. Motivational interviewing (Miller & Rollnick, 2002) and other procedures used by the probation service may be appropriate (McMahon, Hall, Hayward, Hudson, Roberts Frenandez, et al., 2004). Participants who were at risk of developing perpetrator behaviours, appear to be better suited an intervention programme that does not aim to develop anger management strategies. Therefore, better screening of appropriateness for entry onto such a programme is required, as these needs require different intervention approaches.

It could be argued that group-based cognitive-behavioural approaches are less effective for supporting young people with regard to sensitive issues such as domestic abuse. A potential reason for this is discussed in the next section. However, the probation service has found such an approach to be successful in reducing recidivism of adult male sexual offenders (Marshall, Jones, Ward, Johnston & Barbaree, 1991; Thornton, 1992). With regard to children and young people, cognitive-behavioural based programmes have

been found to be effective in helping them to manage sensitive issues such as sexual abuse (Cohen & Mannarino, 1998). There is also research to suggest that cognitive-behavioural based approaches can be successful when delivered in a group context (Barrett, 1998; Silverman, Kurtines, Ginsburg, Weems, Lumpkin & Carmichael, 1999).

There is, however, little research which has evaluated group-based interventions for children and young people who have been exposed to domestic abuse. The research findings concerning the effective use of cognitive-behavioural based programmes in group setting with adults, indicate that such programmes for children and young people can also be effective when delivered in such a context, providing the participants are ready to engage in a programme of this sort.

Preparatory work

The majority of young people indicated that they found it difficult to engage with discussion based activities, and did not feel comfortable in a group situation. This might indicate that an individual therapeutic approach would be preferred. However, as these young people were very articulate in expressing their views on an individual basis during the research interviews, perhaps this suggests that more preparatory work is needed to develop trust within a group situation. The results confirm this hypothesis, as many young people suggested a preference for more preparatory work, to develop group dynamics, cohesion and trusting relationships.

The role of Educational Psychologists

Educational Psychologists (EPs) have a key role in improving outcomes for children which extend beyond working at a variety of levels in mainstream schools, to working with other professionals, children and families in the wider community. This may include working with colleagues from social services, health professions and youth services. Settings could include women's refuges, community and youth centres. EPs could promote understanding and awareness through training, and contribute to the development, delivery, and evaluation of intervention programmes. A better understanding of the processes by which such attitudes and reasoning develop and are maintained may lead to a shift in thinking about the most

effective ways to support young people who have been exposed to domestic abuse. As highlighted by the extent of my involvement in planning and organising the running of the intervention evaluated here, EPs are ideally placed and appropriately skilled to take on such roles.

As discussed in paper 1, EPs have a key role in supporting the inclusion of such children and young people who may be at risk of exclusion from school, or greater social exclusion. It is crucial that young people are supported to feel part of the school community, to develop a sense of belonging and hence adopt the normative attitudes promoted in inclusive educational settings. According to the principles of Social Learning Theory and the Theory of Reasoned Action, normative attitudes and hence behaviour will be maintained in settings where there are other children and young people who share these normative attitudes and reasoning.

EPs work within a number of systems at a variety of levels, and are therefore in a good position to effect change through the application of psychology. EPs can effect change through providing INSET, signposting schools to appropriate agencies, and in planning, developing, and potentially facilitating interventions within the school. This may take the form of developing emotional literacy through small group work, supporting schools with organising adult mentors and working with other agencies such as family support workers to engage parents. They may also carry out individual therapeutic work which could be grounded in personal construct psychology or cognitive-behavioural principles.

Considerations
'Snap-shot' research findings
A number of considerations need to be taken into account when interpreting this research. The results reported in this paper were evident immediately following the completion of the intervention programme. It is not known whether these positive effects will continue more generally into the future, as this study was a snap-shot of the situation immediately following the programme. It is possible that the effects of the programme may change over time, with targeted behaviours/skills possibly diminishing or increasing.

Additionally, the intervention programme evaluated here spanned 11 weeks in duration. It may be that this length of time was not long enough for a programme of this kind to result in positive change for the participants. It could be argued that a time scale for changing attitudes and reasoning cannot be set in advance, and that formalised schedules shift the focus to adhering to delivering material within a time frame, as opposed to adapting the time frame to the needs of the group. I would suggest that when developing programmes of this kind, only loose time-schedules can be given, as the needs of different groups vary, i.e. in relation to readiness to engage. Each group will have their own unique experiences and needs, and it is therefore important that programmes are able to be flexible in order to respond to the particular needs of any group.

Longitudinal studies would provide further information about the long-term impacts of all programmes of this kind. Funding may need to be available in order for such studies to be conducted. This appears to be the most feasible and sustainable model for undertaking longitudinal research with this group (Holland, Thomson & Henderson, 2006). EPs and those in training are well-placed to undertake longitudinal research, given their research-based training (Webster & Beveridge, 1997), particularly in light of the new doctoral training programme. This however may be difficult to realise given the current climate in LA children's services which may have significant impact on the funding available to Educational Psychology Services (Brooke, 2010).

Longitudinal research findings about how this group respond to such interventions in the longer term, could then be used to indicate whether there is a need for follow-up sessions, or a change in approach altogether. Such additional sessions may be helpful in reinforcing the messages given within the programme, and provide the young people with an opportunity for reflection.

Participant sample

A discussion of ethical considerations, possible gender effects and measures taken to increase the validity of the data analysis process can be found in paper one. The young people taking part in this study consisted of four

males and five females aged between 14-16 years. As part of the referral process, all of these young people were identified as displaying aggressive or violent externalising behaviours, and were experiencing difficulties at school. Therefore, the results obtained and discussed in this paper refer to a group who were displaying externalising as opposed to internalising behaviours, and had been exposed to domestic abuse. The results presented here may not, therefore, be reflective of young people who display internalising behaviours, such as withdrawal, and isolation. It is important that similar research is conducted in order to explore the effectiveness of such intervention programmes with young people with these characteristics. Only then can firm conclusions be drawn about the effectiveness of similar interventions for young people who have been exposed to domestic abuse.

Conclusion

This study has sought to address a gap in the research literature concerning the effectiveness of intervention programmes for young people who have been exposed to domestic abuse. The results suggest that this programme was only partially successful in achieving its aims. However, a number of additional positive effects of the programme were evident. Whilst acknowledging the limitations of this study and the potential biases, the results nevertheless have implications which can be generalised to other programmes. This may contribute to their further development. Longitudinal research is required in order to identify the complexity of factors necessary for programmes such as these to be successful in achieving their aims. This is necessary if we are to ascertain whether these programmes have long-lasting beneficial effects. There is also a need for further research to explore alternative approaches to group-based intervention programmes for young people who have been exposed to domestic abuse.

This research has extended the existing literature base in a number of ways. This is the first time that this particular intervention has been formally evaluated, which provides information on the efficacy of a programme of such design and orientation. By adopting a partial mixed methods person-centred approach, a novel framework for evaluating interventions within this field of study has been introduced and may influence the design of future studies. The qualitative person-centred aspect of this study has allowed me to evaluate the programme from the point of view of the target group, as opposed to those delivering the programme. This is a novel approach within this field. In addition to this, the findings of this study provide pragmatic suggestions for further interventions. The most salient of which relate to screening, preparatory work and readiness to engage; delivery within a single context; an approach based on cognitive-behavioural principles; and group delivery.

We can only hope to break the cycle of abuse linked with this target group by achieving a better understanding of two crucial issues: the processes

involved in the 'Intergenerational Transmission of Violence', and the key factors that enable intervention programmes to achieve their aims.

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Appendix

1. Selected Literature

1.1 Literature Search

This was achieved by using electronic databases, such as the University library catalogue. I also used search engines such as EBSCO, JSTOR, and PsycArticles, which led me to the location of electronic and/or hard copies of the required articles. Key search phrases included variations of the words 'domestic violence', 'domestic abuse', 'child witnesses', 'domestic abuse attitudes', 'domestic abuse child intervention' and 'domestic abuse prevention'. A number of articles from journals such as 'Violence and Victims' and 'Journal of Interpersonal Violence' were found using the methods described above, and obtained through the University's inter-library loan service from The British Library, London. Other materials, such as conference papers and reports were obtained by searching the World Wide Web, using the key word search phases given above.

Initially, searching these sources provided me with hundreds of 'hits'. I narrowed down my search for articles by altering my search criteria, therefore making my searches more specific. I selected a number of core research papers to individually comment on, which have had a major influence in the area of domestic abuse and child witnesses. The references cited in these key papers led me to find other important and relevant research papers.

2. Design and Methods

2.1. 'Furnishing the pragmatic room'

Smaling (1994) proposes an eight dimension guide for 'furnishing the pragmatic room', which can be used as a framework for considered the appropriate research method. Smaling (1994) argues that these eight dimensions should guide the research to the most appropriate research method, and that qualitative and quantitative methods can be justifiably combined.

The following make up the eight dimensions:

1. **Researcher or research team** – methodological and theoretical education and experience, personal preferences, personality traits

2. **The object of study** – accessibility of the chosen data collection method

3. **The research situation** – appropriateness of the research method when considering where the data collection will take place

4. **The research question/s** – the nature of the research questions and the nature of the information required to answer them

5. **The research goal** – what function or purpose the research serves and the appropriateness of the research method in achieving this

6. **Relevant audiences** – Who are the stakeholders of the research and which research method is most appropriate in meeting their needs

7. **Conditions and circumstances** – time limits, budgets, pertinent demands from the investigated subjects or institutions, availability of materials, availability of data analysis software

8. **Time-dimension** - The available body of knowledge about the area of study is likely to be reflected in the chosen research method.

2.2 Qualitative Method

The reason for choosing a qualitative method was based on a number of considerations:

- Historically research into domestic abuse and the effects on children and young people has taken on a positivist stance, and has adopted quantitative methods. Therefore as an original piece of research, I wish to use a different approach.

- A review of the literature highlights the shortcomings of quantitative methods for this type of research.

- When studying attitudes, values and reasoning, I consider these to be subjective realities, and therefore more appropriately studied using a qualitative technique.

- This research seeks to provide an insight into the relationship attitudes of these young people. Quantitative data would not provide the rich insight that I am seeking.

2.3 The Changing Places Programme (Alison, 2005)

The Changing Places Programme was developed in 2005 by the Cheshire Domestic Abuse Partnership, in response to requests from several agencies for an intervention to address the destructive behaviours of young men, who had been exposed to domestic abuse and were now taking on the role of the perpetrator (Alison, 2005).

The programme has been piloted by Cheshire County Council. Results indicated that following the completion of the programme, the young people experienced lower levels of emotional distress, lowered risk of violent behaviour, increased self-control, self-worth and empathy (Alison, 2005). This study is the first formal evaluation of the programme, which was being piloted by a local authority in 2009.

The aims of this programme are the following:
- to develop self-awareness and self-control
- to promote positive social skills
- to teach pro-social problem-solving skills
- to increase self-esteem and confidence
- to change attitudes towards abusive behaviour
- to increase the range of preventative behaviours that the young people are able to use
- to improve decision making.

The Changing Places Programme is based on cognitive behavioural principles. It uses the following cognitive-behavioural approaches:
- behaviour modification, consisting of positive and negative reinforcement;
- behaviour therapy which includes relaxation training;
- social skills training using instruction, modelling, role-play and coaching;
- self-instructional training, using cognitive restructuring; problem solving training;
- rational emotive therapy; cognitive therapy; and schema focus therapy.

3. Participants

3.1 Initial referral form (Alison, 2005)

Changing Places Programme	

Preferred Name or nickname	
Family Name	
Forename	
DOB (dd/mm/yyyy)	
Current Address **Postcode**	
Telephone **Mobile**	
Ethnicity **White** **Mixed** **Asian** **Black** **Chinese** **Other**	**British** **Irish** **Other white background** **White & Black Caribbean** **White & Black African** **White & Asian** **Other mixed background** **Indian** **Pakistani** **Bangladeshi** **Other Asian background** **Caribbean** **African** **Other Black background** **Chinese** **Any other ethnic group** **Decline**
Risk Factors ___	*These risk factors indicate the potential for abusive behaviour in the future and are the basis for referral to this programme. If your recommended participant does not have *at least 2* of these factors, please consult the programme facilitators to determine whether they are appropriate. **Experience of or witness to violence as a child**

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—	**Frequent arguments or violence with family/ friends**
—	**Police or Social Services contact for behaviour**
—	**Behaviour problems/ truancy/ exclusion from school**

Referring Agency **(please circle appropriate selection)**	Connexions YOT Social Services Education Authority NSPCC CAFCASS Self-referral
Contact/ Key worker	
Phone number & Area (of Referring Agency)	
Criminal record	Currently on supervision ASBO On curfew order Home detention (tagged) Pending charges Outstanding fines No criminal record
Living situation	Living at home with both parents Living at home with single parent Living with other family member In sheltered accommodation with parent In sheltered accommodation without parent/ guardian Staying with mates Living with partner NFA
Relationship status	___ Currently in a serious relationship ___ Length of current relationship ___ Sexually active ___ Currently dating more than one partner ___ Not currently with anyone ___ Never in a serious relationship

3.2 Risk of Future Abusive Behaviour (RFAB) Scale (Alison, 2005)

Environmental Factors			**Score:**
Have you had any kind of experience involving someone being violent?	YES	NO	
If yes, was the violence: *(both can be circled)* *(Extreme - A one off experience and how serious were the consequences)?* *(Chronic - Or did it happen over a longer time – say 3 incidents in 6 months?)*	Extreme Chronic		
Have you ever been slapped, spanked, cuffed round the ears, or been hit with a slipper etc?	YES	NO	
Is it hard for you at home, to know what will make your parent/carer pleased or angry?	YES	NO	
Are you scared to break the rules at home?	YES	NO	
Aggressive/ Violent Behaviour			
Frequent arguments or conflict with peers: (arguments once a week or more)	YES	NO	
Frequent arguments or conflict with family: (arguments once a week or more)	YES	NO	
Frequent arguments or conflict with people that you are especially close to: *(arguments once a week or more)*	YES	NO	
Evidence that he/she uses violence to try to solve problems: (reasons given for using violence indicate they see it as a way to deal with the issue)	YES	NO	
Evidence of violence to people that you are especially close to: *(close friends, family members)*	YES	NO	
Statutory Agency Contact			
Criminal conviction for violence	YES	NO	
Under 16 at first conviction	YES	NO	
Contact with police	YES	NO	
Under 16 at first contact with police	YES	NO	
Social Service contact for behaviour problems	YES	NO	
Under 16 at first Social Service contact	YES	NO	
Contributing Social Factors			
Behaviour problems at school*:* *(fighting, acting out, removal from class)*	YES	NO	
Frequent truancy: *(Truant once a week or more)*	YES	NO	
Withdrawn or isolated from peer groups: *(Describes having no friends, doesn't like talking to people)*	YES	NO	
Evidence of making poor choices: *(history of getting into trouble, being easily led,*	YES	NO	

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anti-social behaviour)		

3.3 Referral Process

The criteria used by the programme organisers to assess suitability for this intervention programme involved the following:

1. an initial referral (see above)

2. an assessment of the risk of future abusive behaviour using the RFAB (Risk of Future Behaviour) Scale developed specifically to identify young people suitable for this programme.

Adults making referrals to the programme completed the initial referral form, where at least two risk factors were required for entry on to the programme, indicating the potential for abusive behaviour in the future. These risk factors included experiencing or witnessing violence/abuse as a child, frequent arguments or violence with family/friends, police or social services contact for behaviour, and behaviour problems/truancy/exclusion from school.

All young people who were referred to the groups run and evaluated in this study had experienced domestic abuse.

3.4 Sampling decisions and considerations

The following criteria provided me with a framework to consider the appropriateness of my chosen sample (Miles & Huberman, 1994):

- Relevance of sampling to research questions
- Whether descriptions and explanations, which are believable and are true to life, can be produced
- Feasibility of the sampling plan, in terms of time, money access to people
- Ethical nature of sampling, in terms of informed consent, potential benefits and risks, and the relationship with the participants.

Control groups were not used for this study. The sample being studied for this piece of research had been exposed to domestic abuse. This sample could therefore be described as a 'clinical' or 'extreme or deviant case' sample. For the purpose of this research, I am interested in this homogenous sample, and not how these young people compare to the rest of the population. Therefore control groups were deemed inappropriate.

Indirect purposeful criterion sampling was deemed most suitable when considering the purpose of this research and my research questions. Due to ethical considerations, it would be unethical to invite young people experiencing difficulties as a result of experiencing domestic abuse to participate in this study, and not provide them with some therapeutic intervention.

The sampling method chosen was feasible in terms of accessibility. The participants attended schools within reasonable travelling distance, in one county. The participants attended one of two schools, and therefore good links and relationships could be formed with key staff at those schools, such as the designated person for child protection and other staff who come into daily contact with the participants.

4. Measures

In this section, the qualitative and quantitative data collection measures used will be discussed.

4.1 Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were the chosen data collection method for paper one, and were used in conjunction with a checklist in paper two. In this section I will outline the advantages of used semi-structured interviews, potential disadvantages of using this method, the appropriateness of this data collection method with the sample in this study, plus alternatives that were considered.

4.1.1 Advantages

A semi-structured interview, as opposed to a structured interview, allows the interviewer flexibility and freedom to explore any issues that may arise as a result of one of the pre-planned core questions. Therefore, any additional information of interest, which comes to light in the interview, can be explored.

Interviews also enable rapport to be built between the participant and the interviewer, therefore putting participants at ease. It is therefore a useful format to discuss sensitive topics.

A semi-structured interview as opposed to an unstructured interview provides enough structure to allow comparisons to be made between individual participants.

4.1.2 Potential disadvantages and sources of bias

A disadvantage of this method is the possibility of interviewer bias. As the interviewer, I may inadvertently bias information obtained in a number of ways.

My presence in itself may elicit certain responses that would not be the case with a different interviewer.

The interviewer's tone of voice when asking questions may influence responses.

A 'response effect' can arise, out of the eagerness of the respondent to please the interviewer (known as demand characteristics), or from a tendency by the interviewer to seek out answers that support preconceived notions, and to dismiss certain responses.

Timing and venue for an interview can also lead to bias.

Although many of these potential biases are unavoidable, some measures can be taken to minimise this, such as tape recording interviews, and being a reflective interviewer (Herbert, 1990).

Potential disadvantages of this method are that interviewing skills are required. When choosing this method, I considered that over the course of my training as an Educational Psychologist, that at I have developed adequate skills to be able to orchestrate an effective interview.

I made the decision to pilot my interview questions, to ensure that the language used was accessible to the age group of the participants.

A further consideration of using this data collection method is the analysis of the resulting data, which can often be complex to analyse. I have made the decision to analyse the resulting data using computer assisted qualitative data analysis software. I have also followed a specific data analysis technique so that I analyse my data in a systematic and rigorous way.

4.1.3 Appropriateness of a conversational method

Having considered the conversational skills of the young people and how I can overcome any resistance or difficulty with engaging in conversation. I devised the following plan:

- Pilot the interview questions – to ensure that they make sense, that the language used is assessable, and that they are not too challenging.

- Question order – needs to be carefully considered to ensure that the questions flow on from one another, starting with the less sensitive questions at the beginning and gradually moving on to more sensitive issues.

- Rapport building – Establish a plan of how to build rapport. Use of music was piloted but disregarded. Use of pictures was also considered but disregarded, as rapport was built without these elements.

- Use of prompt questions – Plan a number of prompt questions and 'probes'.

- Questioning techniques – The use of personal construct style questioning could be used to elicit a deeper level of response from the participants.

4.1.4 Alternative data collection methods

An individual data collection method was chosen over a group based data collection method for a variety of reasons. Group based data collection methods such as focus groups were considered, as focus groups may encourage others to speak, may be a safer environment for participants to speak, and is also a more time efficient way of collecting data in terms of the time demands made on the school to release pupils (Buckley, Holt and Whelan, 2007). However, in focus groups louder characters may dominate, and it may be perceived as a threatening environment for some participants. I also have my personal safety to consider, plus the views and opinions of the young people may be influenced by 'group think' in a focus group situation (MacDougall, 1997).

Alternative data collection methods to conversational methods that were considered included the use of drawings. I considered using the kinetic family drawing (Burns & Kaufman, 1972) to explore family dynamics, however I did not want to directly focus on personal family issues, but rather allow the young person to talk about other factors such as their family life if they chose to do so. This technique would not provide me with the data required to answer my research questions.

I also considered the personal construct psychology technique of drawing the ideal self (Moran, 2001). This would provide me with information about the individual's self-concept, but again would not address other research questions.

Finally, I considered the use of rich pictures (Checkland, 1981). I felt that with this technique I could have potential difficulties with engaging the participants in such a drawing exercise. This technique would also still require a conversational element in explaining and exploring the picture, and I questioned how useful this technique would be in gaining information about attitudes and beliefs.

4.2 Concept Map

I drew up the following concept map for both papers 1 and 2 to assist me in formulating my interview questions.

PROGRAMME AIMS			
	SELF-ESTEEM		
		IN YOURSELF	FUTURE ASPIRATIONS
		AT SCHOOL	
	CONFIDENCE		
		IN YOURSELF	
		AT SCHOOL	
	ABILITY TO REGULATE BEHAVIOUR		
		IN YOURSELF	
		AT SCHOOL	ATTENDANCE
	SELF-CONTROL		
		IN YOURSELF	
		IN CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS	
		WITH FRIENDS	
	SELF-AWARENESS		
		IN YOURSELF	
		WITH FREINDS	
	PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS		
		WITH FRIENDS	
		IN CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS	
	PERSPECTIVE TAKING		
		WITH FRIENDS	
		IN CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS	
YOUNG PEOPLE'S VIEWS/ ATTITUDES			
	RELATIONSHIP ATTITUDES		
		AT SCHOOL	TEACHERS
		IN CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS	
		WITH FRIENDS	
	ATTITUDES TO ABUSIVE BEHAVIOUR		
		WITH FRIENDS	
		IN CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS	
	PURPOSE OF RELATIONSHIPS		
		WITH FRIENDS	
		IN CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS	
	VIEWS AND OPINIONS ABOUT THE PROGRAMME		
		GOOD BITS	
		BAD BITS	
	EMPATHY		
		WITH FRIENDS	
		IN CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS	
	ARGUMENTS AND ABUSIVE BEHAVIOUR		
		WITH FRIENDS	
		IN CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS	

4.3 'Where I'm at now' Questionnaire

'Where I'm at now' (Alison, 2005) is an evaluation questionnaire provided with the Changing Places Programme materials. It was used to assist me with formulating my interview questions.

Changing Places Participant Questionnaire:

'Where I'm at now'

Since you started the programme...........

1)	Do you feel happier overall?	YES	NO
2)	Do you feel happier at school?	YES	NO
3)	Do you feel less angry?	YES	NO
4)	Do you think you argue less?	YES	NO
5)	Do you have a better relationship with your girlfriend/boyfriend?	YES	NO
6)	Do you have a better relationship with your teachers?	YES	NO
7)	Do you get on better with your mates?	YES	NO
8)	Do you feel more confident about yourself?	YES	NO
9)	Do you think you are less likely to use violence to resolve arguments?	YES	NO
10)	Do you feel more positive about your future?	YES	NO

Before you started the programme………

1) Did you have frequent arguments or conflict with school mates or friends:

(arguments once a week or more)   YES   NO

2) Did you have frequent arguments or conflict with family members:

(arguments once a week or more)   YES   NO

    If yes, who was the family member you argued with most often?
    ………………...

3) Did you have frequent arguments or conflict with girlfriends/boyfriends:

(arguments once a week or more)   YES   NO

4) Did you use violence to try to solve problems?   YES   NO

5) Did you use violence towards people you have a close relationship with:

(partners, family members, cohabiters)?   YES   NO

6) Were you frequently in trouble at school for mouthing off or fighting?

                                                          YES   NO

7) Did you skip school frequently? (once a week or more)   YES   NO

8) Did you have a solid group of friends at school?   YES   NO

How about now………

1) Do you have frequent arguments or conflict with school mates or friends:
2) (arguments once a week or more)   YES   NO

2) Do you have frequent arguments or conflict with family members:

(arguments once a week or more)   YES   NO

    If yes, who is the family member you argue with most often?
    ………………...

3) Do you have frequent arguments or conflict with girlfriends/boyfriends:

(arguments once a week or more)   YES   NO

4) Do you use violence to try to solve problems?   YES   NO

5) Do you use violence towards people you have a close relationship with:
    (partners, family members, cohabiters)?   YES   NO

6) Are you frequently in trouble at school for acting out or fighting?
    (every couple of weeks)   YES   NO

7) Do you skip school frequently? (once a week or more)   YES   NO

8) Do you have a solid group of friends at school?   YES   NO

4.4 Pilot Interview Questions and Feedback

Feb. 2009   Part 1 Pilot Interview Questions

Tell me about

1. **What do you think about school**. — Provide prompts to *Explore* elaborate. point further, school *more generally*

   Closed questionning

   - How you get on with your teachers.

   Leading question.

   - Do you skip school? *Ever? Occasionally? Clarify this question.*

   - Do you have a solid social group? — *Not clear. Change to 'friends'*

   More prompts needed for this question.

2. **Do you have a good relationship with peers?**

   Leading

   - (What) do you get from these friendships? *Unclear - change to 'purpose'* *More prompts needed.*

   - (What) do you value in these relationships?

   (What) would a relationship would be like if it didn't have this quality?

   Tell me about
   - What do you enjoy doing with your peers. *Could respond "nothing" or "don't know". Change.*

   - Do you have arguments with them?

   - What preventative behaviours do you use? *Language is unclear. Better - 'prevent or avoid'*

   - How are they feeling at these times? *May not know, check understanding first.*

3. **Tell me about your relationships with people you are close to**

   feel you
   - Who do you have a close relationship with?

   - What is the purpose of these relationships? *Prompts needed, difficult question.*

   Tell me
   - (What) do you enjoy doing with these people?

   - Do you have arguments with them? *How often? Ever? Change to include word 'frequent'.*

   - How does this make them feel?

   → *Explore further about preventing arguements??*

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4. **How do you avoid arguments with these people who you are close to?**

[handwritten: Tell me / Do you feel...]

- What is good about these strategies? *[handwritten: Unclear - change to 'what are good ways of avoiding arguments?']*

- Can you empathise with the other person? *[handwritten: change to 'how would the other person feel?']*

- What makes a positive relationship? *[handwritten: → Difficult question. Use prompts]*

- In what other positive ways do you feel you could prevent arguments?

- Why does this not happen? *[handwritten: 'avoid']*

5. **Tell me how you feel about yourself.**

- How happy or sad are you at the moment? *[handwritten: → Question too closed. Better - 'How do you feel...']*

- How often do you feel angry, and why? *[handwritten: and how does it affect you?]*

- Are you positive about your future? *[handwritten: Leading → 'How do you feel..']*

- Do you feel in control of your life? *[handwritten: Closed question. Change. Use a rating scale ??]*

6. **Tell me your views on physical aggression in close relationships.**

[handwritten: Simplify language.]

- Is engaging in abusive acts the right way to deal with certain situations? *[handwritten: Difficult question. Provide prompts.]*

- When is it right/ not right? *[handwritten: How wrong is it?]*

- Why do people engage in abusive acts with those people that they have a close relationship?

- What preventative behaviours could be used as an alternative? *[handwritten: Too messy. Suggest - 'How else could someone react?']*

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Feb 2009

Part 2 Pilot Interview Questions

1. **Tell me about school**. *More prompts about school in general.*
   → *Negatively worded.*

- Do you often get in trouble at school?

- How do you get on with your teachers? Are you getting g on with them any
  better? *Leading - 'has this changed?'.*

- Have you skipped school recently? *Leading. How often?*
  How recently?

2. **Tell me about your relationships with school mates or friends**.

- Are you getting on any better with your peers since the programme? *friends*

- Do you have arguments with them? *Has this changed?*

- How are they feeling at these times? *Check whether they can understand first.*

- What preventative strategies could you use to avoid arguments?
  prevent / avoid.

3. **Tell me about your relationships with people you are close to**
   who?

- Has this changed recently? *How? Better / worse?*   → *Prompt questions*

- Do you have arguments with them?
  How   → *Explore further*

- What do you do to prevent arguments with them? *avoid*

- How does this make them feel? *can you understand...*

Tell me

4. **How you feel about yourself**?   *Rate on a scale of 1-10.*

- How happy or sad are you at the moment and has this changed? *Too closed / restricting Explore further.*

- How often do you feel angry and why? *How? What causes? How do you react?*

- Are you positive about your future? *Make neutral*

- Do you feel in control of your life? *How*

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5. **How do you approach problems**?

- How do you solve problems and has this changed? *[handwritten: Not clear. Complex. Need prompts.]*
- Would you use violence to solve problems? *[handwritten: Just violence, or arguments etc. too?]*
- Would you solve problems by engaging in abusive behaviour? *[handwritten: Confrontational – perhaps 'would you consider'...]*
- Why do you think people are abusive? *[handwritten: When? Add context.]*

6. **What are your views on violence and abusive behaviour**?

- Is it right to use violence and abuse to solve problems? *[handwritten: Confrontational] [handwritten: Closed question – Yes/No answer.]*
- When is it right/ not right? *[handwritten: How wrong is it? you think]*
- Why do people engage in abusive acts with those people that they have a

  close relationship? *[handwritten: Not clear. Prompts needed.]*
- What preventative behaviours could be used as an alternative? *[handwritten: Language - change.]*

4.5 Paper 1 Interview Questions

1. **Tell me about school**.
   - How do you feel about school? *(Self-esteem and confidence)*
   - Do you ever find yourself often in trouble at school? Now and in the past? *(Ability to regulate behaviour)*
   - How often? What happens? *(Ability to regulate behaviour)*
   - Tell me about how you get on with your teachers. *(Relationship attitudes)*
   - Do you skip school frequently? (once a week or more) *(Ability to regulate behaviour)*
   - Could anything be done to prevent this? *(Problem-solving skills)*
   - Do you have a solid group of friends at school? *(Self-esteem and confidence)*

   - Tell me about them? *(Relationship attitudes)*

2. **How well do you get on with school mates and friends**?
   - <u>What do you feel is the purpose of these friendships</u>? <u>What do you value in them</u>?*(Purpose of relationships)*
     E.g. Laddering:
     What do you value most in the relationship that you have with a close friend/(name of friend)?
     Can you tell me what a relationship would be like if it didn't have …... (answer to above)?
     Tell me, what is it about …..(initial value) that is important to you?
     And what is it about (answer to above) that is important to you? Etc.

   - Tell me about the good times with these friends. *(Purpose of relationships)*
   - Do you have frequent arguments with them? (arguments once a week or more) *(Problem-solving skills)*
   - Are there times when you are able to prevent or avoid an argument? How? *(Problem-solving skills)*
   - Are you able to understand how they are feeling at these times? *(Empathy)*

3. **Tell me about your relationships with people you are close to (best friends, boyfriend/ girlfriend, family members)**.
   - Who do you feel you have a close relationship with? *(Relationship attitudes)*

- What do feel is the purpose of these relationships? What do you value in them? E.g. Security, love, comfort *(Purpose of relationships)*

  E.g. Laddering:

  What do you value most in that relationship/(name of individual which they have a close relationship with)?

  Can you tell me what a relationship would be like if it didn't have …..(answer to above)?

  Tell me, what is it about …..(initial value) that is important to you?

  And what is it about (answer to above) that is important to you? Etc.

- Tell me about the good times with these people. What do you do? How do you feel? *(Purpose of relationships)*

- Do you have frequent arguments with these people? (arguments once a week or more) What about? *(Problem-solving skills)*

- Are you able to understand how they feeling at these times? *(Empathy)*

4. **How do you avoid arguments with these people who you are close to (family members, boyfriend/ girlfriend, close friends)**.

   - Do you feel these are good ways of avoiding arguments? Explain why? *(Relationship attitudes)*

   - How would the other person feel as a result? *(Empathy)*

   - What makes a positive relationship? *(Relationship attitudes)*

     E.g. Pyramiding:

     What would a relationship be that was not (answer to above)?

     Can you give me an example of someone you know who has a (original answer) with another person? What sorts of things make it a (original answer)?

     How do you know that they (original answer)?

     What does that look like? Etc.

   - In what other positive ways do you feel you could avoid arguments? How would this happen? *(Problem-solving skills)*

   - Why does this not happen? *(Problem-solving skills)*

5. **Tell me how you feel about yourself**.

   - How do you generally feel about yourself? (Give rating scale) *(Self-awareness) (Self-esteem and confidence)*

- Tell me about feeling angry. When does this happen, why does this happen and how does it affect you? *(Ability to regulate behaviour, self-awareness)*
- How do you feel about your future? *(Self-esteem and confidence)*
- How in control of your life do you feel? *(Self-esteem and confidence)*

6. **Tell me your views on physical aggression in close relationships**. *(Use of violence in close relationships)*
   - <u>Do you feel using physical fights is the right way to deal with certain situations?</u> *(Relationship attitudes)*
     E.g. Pyramiding:
     What would make getting into a fight the right way to behave?
     What would make getting into a fight the wrong way to behave?
     Can you give me an example what getting into a fight that is justified would look like?
     What would you see?
     What would be happening? Etc.

   - When is it right/ not right? *(Relationship attitudes)*
   - How wrong is it? (Give rating scale) *(Relationship attitudes)*
   - Why do you think people have physical fights with those they have a close relationship with? *(Relationship attitudes)*
   - How else could someone react in such situations? *(Problem-solving skills)*

4.6 Student Emotional Literacy Checklists

The Student Emotional Literacy Checklist (Faupel, 2003) was chosen for a variety of reasons:

(i) The ELC is a widely used research tool - in developmental, social, clinical and educational studies. Therefore the results are likely to be comparable with other research findings.

(ii) The ELC is a well established tool for evaluating outcome - "Before" and "after" ELCs can be used to evaluate specific interventions.

(iii) Studies using the ELC, along with research interviews and clinical ratings, have shown that the ELC is sensitive to treatment effects.

(iv) The components measured by the ELC match up with the behaviours/skills that the Changing Places Programme emphasises. See below:

Table 3

Components of the Changing Places Programme matched up with measures of the Emotional Literacy Checklist

Components of the Programme	Components of the Emotional Literacy Checklist
Emotional awareness	Self-awareness
Attitudes to abusive behaviour	*(to be explored in interview)*
Perspective taking	Empathy
Self-control	Self-regulation
Problem-solving skills	*(to be explored in interview)*
Self-awareness	Self-awareness
Self-esteem and confidence	Self-awareness
Preventative behaviours	Ability to regulate behaviour

The adult and teacher versions of the emotional literacy checklists were not used because as this research is young person focused, I felt that it would not be appropriate to use the other two checklists. Previous literature has gathered information from parents and teachers about this group of young people, and therefore this research seeks to fill a gap in the literature by focusing on obtaining a young person centred perspective. Although I recognise the benefit of triangulating this data with that of parents and

teachers, due to the strained relationships that many will undoubtedly have with their parents and teachers, I felt that administering checklists to parents and teachers could also potentially provide me with skewed results.

4.6.1 Reliability and Validity

There are advantages and disadvantages of using standardised checklists to collect data. The advantages include the standardised wording and order of the questions, allowing responses to be compared; checklists can be filled in the participant's own time; and it is a relatively speedy way of collecting data. The disadvantages are that the participants may not understand the questions, there is no way of checking whether the participant has understood the questions in the way intended, and the resulting mass of data may be difficult to analyse (Herbert, 1990).

The Emotional Literacy Checklists (ELCs) measure perceptions and are subject to biases. It should be acknowledged that participants may present themselves in a favourable light, known as social desirability bias, or may downplay their qualities. The ELCs mix up positive and negative items in an attempt to reduce response bias, reducing the tendency of participants to put ticks in the same column. It should be noted, that the author of the ELCs states that these checklists should be used to provide group averages or distributions, as opposed to individual results (Faupel, 2003).

The Emotional Literacy Student Checklist (11-16 years) was standardised using a randomly selected nationally representative sample of primary and secondary schools (967 pupils in total) in England, in March 2003 (Faupel, 2003). Reliability was assessed, and the Emotional Literacy Checklist Student Version was found to be adequately reliable when the scale was calculated as a whole. Using Cronbach's Alpha, the Emotional Literacy Student Checklist achieved an overall score of 0.76. Scores of around 0.70 are assumed to be indicatively of adequate reliability (Faupel, 2003).

The Emotional Literacy Student Checklist has not been analysed for its validity. The validity of the 5 dimensions of the checklists (self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, social skills) have been checked, but this only applies for the parent and teacher versions, as the dimensions of the student version on their own were not found to be of adequate reliability. However, the parent and teacher versions do support the validity of

Goleman's (1996) five dimensional structure of emotional literacy, on which these checklists are based.

4.7 Paper 2 Follow-up interview questions

How these questions relate to the targeted behaviours/skills of the programme can be found in italics after each question.

1. **Tell me about school**.
- How do you feel about school at the moment? *(Self-esteem and confidence)*
- Have you recently (last month) found yourself frequently in trouble at school for acting out or fighting? (every couple of weeks) *(Ability to regulate behaviour)*
- Tell me about your current relationships with your teachers. Has this changed? *(Relationship attitudes)*
- Recently (last month) have you skipped school? (how much) *(Ability to regulate behaviour)*

2. **Tell me about your relationships with school mates or friends**.
- Have your relationships with your school mates or friends changed in any way since the programme? Got better or worse? Would they have noticed a change? *(Self-control, self-awareness)*
- At the moment, do you have frequent arguments or conflicts with your friends? (arguments once a week or more) *(Problem-solving skills)*
- Tell me about understanding their perspective. Are you able to? *(Perspective taking)*
- Tell me how you avoid arguments or conflicts with them.*(Self-control, self-awareness)*

3. **Tell me about your relationships with people you are close to (family members, boyfriends/ girlfriends)**.
- Have any of your relationships with family members changed in any way since/as a result of the programme? Got better or worse? *(Self-control)*
- Do you have frequent arguments or conflicts with them? Has this increased/ decreased? (arguments once a week or more) *(Problem-solving skills, self-control)*
- Tell me how you avoid arguments or conflicts with them. *(Problem-solving skills, self-control)*
- Tell me about understanding their perspective. Are you able to? *(Perspective taking)*

4. **Tell me how you feel about yourself**.
- How you feel about yourself and has this changed since you started the programme? (Give rating scale) *(Self-awareness, self-esteem and confidence)*
- Tell me about feeling angry. When does this happen and why? Has this changed in any way since the programme? *(Ability to regulate behaviour, self-awareness, self-control)*
- How do you feel about your future? Has this changed in any way since the programme? *(Self-esteem and confidence)*

- How in control of your life do you feel? *(Self-esteem and confidence)*

5. **Tell me about how you approach problems**. *(Problem-solving skills)*
- How do you solve problem, such as conflict situations? Has your approach to solving problems changed since the programme?
- Would you consider using violence to try to solve problems?
- Would you consider using verbal or emotional abuse to try to solve problems?
- Why do you think people resort to using violence, emotional or verbal abuse to solve problems?
- Tell me how you would avoid using violence or abuse to solve problems?
- Has this changed since you started the programme?

6. **Tell me your views on violence and abusive behaviour** *(Attitudes to abusive behaviour)*
- <u>Do you feel using violence or being abusive is ever the right way to deal with certain situations?</u> *(Relationship attitudes)*
  E.g. Pyramiding:
  What would make getting into a fight the right way to behave?
  What would make getting into a fight the wrong way to behave?
  Can you give me an example what getting into a fight that is justified would look like?
  What would you see?
  What would be happening? Etc.

- When is it right/ not right? *(Relationship attitudes)*
- How wrong is it? (Give rating scale) *(Relationship attitudes)*
- Why do you think people have physical fights with those they have a close relationship with? *(Relationship attitudes)*
- How else could someone react in such situations? *(Problem-solving skills)*

4.8 Facilitator Evaluation Questionnaire

This questionnaire was provided with the programme materials. The interview schedule for semi-structured interviews carried out with the facilitators was loosely based on this questionnaire.

Changing Places Programme: Evaluation Questionnaire

Programme Materials: (Manuals- Group and One-to-One, Supplementary handouts/worksheets, Visuals- Comic, Pit, Communication Wheel, RFAB & Questionnaire Pack, Copies of Training Slides)

1. Please discuss what aspects of the programme materials you have found the most useful:
2. Please discuss what aspects of the programme materials you would like to see improved:

Impact of Programme:

1. Please discuss what impact you feel the programme has had on the young people participating:
2. How has involvement in this project affected your view of working with young people:
3. How has delivery of the programme affected your workload:
4. Are there any suggestions as to how your agency could get more out of using the programme with the young people they serve:
5. Are there other agencies you feel would benefit from involvement in the project/ and if yes, how do you feel they should be involved (i.e. referral, delivery, resources, etc.).

Management Support:

1. How do you feel management in your agency has supported delivery of the programme?
2. Do you feel management in your agency would support multi-agency collaboration in delivery of the programme?
3. Has management in your agency proactively sought referrals for the programme?
4. What support from management would help to make the programme successful within your agency?

Programme Targeting:

1. Do you feel the skills covered on the programme are applicable to the target population (i.e. young men at risk of future abusive behaviour):
2. Would you support using the programme with any other population (i.e. young women, wider age range, etc.)?
3. Has the RFAB- Risk of Future Abusive Behaviour Assessment been useful in targeting people appropriately for the programme?

Future Directions:

1. Would you recommend this programme for continued use with young people in Cheshire?
2. Do you feel it is appropriate and useful for your agency to be a 'delivery provider' of this programme?
3. What ongoing support would you like to have to sustain your skills and confidence in delivering the programme? (i.e. booster training, supervision, quarterly practitioner meetings, etc.)

4.9 Facilitator interview questions

"The information that you provide in this interview will be used solely for the purpose of my research. All information that you give will be anonymised and you will not be identifiable."

Impact of the programme and future directions
1. **Tell me what worked well with the Changing Places Programme?** *(Possibly using some solution focused prompting questions it they find this difficult)*

2. **Tell me how you feel the sessions could have been better?** *(Providing the facilitators with a chance to offload, as I believe there is a lot of emotion around how this programme was supported by management)*

3. **What do you feel needs to be put in place to change this?**

4. **Tell me what support from management would help to make the programme more successful?** *(I feel asking this question early on will enable the facilitators to be more balanced when answering the other questions)*

5. **Tell me what impact you feel the programme has had on the young people participating?**
   - Ability to regulate behaviour
   - Friendships/relationships
   - Self-esteem/self-awareness/self-confidence
   - Approach to problems/perspective taking
   - Attitudes to abusive behaviour
   - Any other skills/ behaviours which were not targeted?

Programme targeting
6. **Tell me your views about the RFAB scale in enabling young people to be appropriately targeted for the programme.**

7. **Tell me how appropriate you feel the skills covered on the programme were for the target population.**

Your role as a facilitator
8. **Tell me three skills/characteristics that you feel you have as a facilitator, which enabled you to work effectively in this context?** *Explore beliefs and values using laddering*

9. **Tell me your views about the underlying principles of this programme, namely that it is CBT based?**

10. **Is there anything else you would like to add or tell me?**

"Thank you very much for participating in my research. Should you wish to contact me to discuss anything concerning my research and the information that you have provided, you have my contact details. I will be in contact to provide you with feedback of my research findings."

5. Procedures

5.1 Ethical considerations

As this research requires interviewing vulnerable young people about emotive issues personal to them, I felt from an ethical viewpoint that all participants should be enrolled on a therapeutic programme. It was therefore essential that participants had been referred to an intervention programme and met the suitability criteria for the programme. Alternative sampling methods, such as maximum variation sampling, intensity sampling, random or stratified purposeful sampling, which did not directly lead to participation on a therapeutic programme were therefore dismissed.

Ethical principles for conducting research with human participants according to the British Psychological Society's Code of Conduct (2005), have been considered, and are as follows:

- **Consent**: Informed consent will be obtained from all participants prior to their involvement in this study.
- **Deception**: There will be no deception involved in this study.
- **Debriefing**: All participants will be debriefed at the end of the follow-up interview.
- **Withdrawal from the investigation**: All participants will be informed of their right to withdraw from the study.
- **Confidentiality**: All participants will be given the right to expect that the information they provide will be treated confidentially and will not be identifiable as theirs. In the event that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, the participant will be warned of this in advance.
- **Protection of participants**: The risk posed to mental health by this study is no greater than in ordinary life. Participants will be informed of procedures for contacting me within a reasonable time period following participation should stress, potential harm, or related questions or concern arise. As this research involves questioning behaviour or experiences that participants may regard as personal and private, the participants will be protected from stress by all appropriate measures, including the assurance that answers to personal questions need not be

given. There will be no concealment or deception when seeking information that might encroach on privacy.

5.1.1 Ethical practices of previous studies

This is clearly a sensitive area of study, with many ethical issues to consider. By reviewing previous research studies into the effects of domestic abuse where the participants were children and young people, I found that the majority of researchers sought ethical consent from both the school-aged participants involved in the study and their parents (i.e. Avery-Leaf et al., 1997; Buckley, Holt & Whelan, 2007; O'Keefe, 1997). Most of the research studies report that participants were guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality, unless they indicated unreported child abuse or neglect during the interviews. In such an event, participants were informed that this would have to be reported to the appropriate authorities (i.e. Carlson, 1990).

Worley, Walsh & Lewis (2004) explained that 'all participants were provided with an information sheet about the study and asked to give their permission to be approached by the researcher and for their interview to be tape-recorded' (pp. 38). A fairly recent study (Avery-Leaf et al., 1997) obtained consent by means of an 'opt out' form, where returned forms signed by a parent and student would indicate refusal to participate. It is interesting to note that very few researchers report that the participants were debriefed following the study and offered relevant information and available resources if required, with the exception of O'Keefe (1997).

The sample in the current study was restricted due to ethical considerations. Only young people who had gained a place on a therapeutic intervention programme were invited to take part in this research, thereby limiting the sample size. Ethical procedures adopted were informed by the procedures used in other studies.

5.1.2 Additional Consideration of Other Ethical Issues

There was no deception involved in this study. The risk posed to mental health by this study was deemed to be no greater than in ordinary life. As this research involved questioning behaviour or experiences that participants may have regarded as personal and private, the participants were protected from stress by all appropriate measures, including the assurance that answers to personal questions need not be given. There was no concealment or deception when seeking information that might encroach on privacy. In addition to this, all participants were enrolled on an intervention programme which would create an opportunity for the participants to discuss their feelings around their previous experiences. They could also seek additional support from trained professionals if appropriate. Details of this intervention programme are discussed in section 2.3.

5.1.3 Ethical consent form

-Local Authority logo here-

April 2009

CONSENT FORM – CHANGING PLACES

I have received a copy of the leaflet regarding this group work programme that will take place over twelve weeks during the Summer Term. I understand that the group work sessions will take place within school time.

I am aware that I can contact the school at any stage should I wish to discuss my child's participation or receive feedback regarding his/her progress within the group. I also understand that this will not be precisely what they have discussed but will be the facilitators' evaluation of progress. The point of contact at school is ...., who can be contacted on ....

An evaluation of the Changing Places Programme and an exploration of young people's friendship values, attitudes and reasoning, will be carried out by a Trainee Educational Psychologist on behalf of ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮, in partnership with the University of Exeter. The purpose of this project is to inform and improve future programmes, similar to the one your child is participating in. Your child will be invited to answer some questions around relationships prior to the start of the Changing Places Programme. Following the programme, another session will be held to gain feedback on the usefulness of the programme.

In giving permission for my child to participate in the Changing Places Programme, I also give permission for this person to gather my child's views about the effectiveness of the programme, their values, attitudes and reasoning. If you have any concerns about the project that you would like to discuss, please contact me at the following email address: ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ or alternatively request that I contact you through the school.

If you would like your child to participate in the Changing Places Programme and associated research, please read the statements below, sign at the bottom and return to the school.

CONSENT FORM

I give my permission for my child to attend the Changing Places group work programme. Additionally, I have been fully informed about the aims and purpose of the evaluation project.

I understand that:

- All the information my child gives will be treated as confidential.

- The researcher will make every effort to preserve my child's anonymity.

- It is not compulsory for my child to participate in this research project and, if they do choose to participate, they may at any stage withdraw their participation.

- Any information which my child give's will be used solely for the purpose of this research project, which may include publications.

- My child has the right to refuse permission for the publication of any information about them.

....
(Name of Young Person)   (Signature of Parent/ Carer) (Printed name of Parent/ Carer)

-Local Authority logo here-

Changing Places

CHANGING PLACES

NAME:…………………………………………………..

D.O.B.:…………………………………………………

START DATE:…………………………………………..

In order for me to take part in the 'Changing Places' programme I agree to the following:

- I have read the 'Information leaflet for Young People' about the Changing Places Programme

- I will turn up to every session on time

- I will join in the sessions as best I can

- I will not be badly behaved in any way

- I understand that anything talked about in the group will be confidential

- I understand that if the Changing Places staff feel that I or others are in danger, this information may be shared with others

- I understand that my Parent/Carer will be made aware of my attendance and progress

- I am willing to speak to the Trainee Educational Psychologist about how I am finding the programme, and understand that the feedback I give will be kept confidential.

Signed…………………………………………………

Date……………………………………………….

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5.1.4 Debrief

The following debrief information was given to the young people in leaflet format following every interview. It was also read out to each young person.

Changing Places Programme Research Study

Thank you for taking part in this study. All the information that you have given will not be able to be identified as yours. Should you want the information that you have given to be removed from this study, please email me before September 2009. Also, if you have any other questions please feel free to get in touch.

My email address is: ██████████████████

If you have been affected by this research, the following adults at school are available to talk through any issues:

██████████████

████████████████

The following agencies may also be able to provide support:

████ **Women's Aid Outreach Service** - providing a range of practical and emotional support. ██████████

████ **Safe Project** - a confidential outreach project for girls and young women (aged 14-25 yrs old) affected by domestic violence and abuse in ████████████████
They provide emotional support through telephone or one to one contact. Phone or text a message to ████████████

Once again, thank you for taking part.

5.2 Certificate of Ethical Approval

Page 1

UNIVERSITY OF
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School of Education and Lifelong Learning

Certificate of ethical research approval

STUDENT RESEARCH/FIELDWORK/CASEWORK AND DISSERTATION/THESIS
You will need to complete this certificate when you undertake a piece of higher-level <u>research</u>
(e.g. Masters, PhD, EdD level).

To activate this certificate you need to first sign it yourself, then have it signed by your supervisor and by the Chair of the School's Ethics Committee.

For further information on ethical educational research access the guidelines on the BERA web site: http://www.bera.ac.uk/publications/guides.php and view the School's statement in your handbooks.

<u>READ THIS FORM CAREFULLY</u> **AND THEN COMPLETE IT ON YOUR COMPUTER** (the form will expand to contain the text you enter)**.**
DO <u>NOT</u> COMPLETE BY HAND

Your name: Bryony Curtis

Your student no:

Degree/Programme of Study: Doctorate in Educational, Child and Community Psychology

Project Supervisor(s):   Andrew Richards and Tim Maxwell

Your email address: @exeter.ac.uk

Tel:

Title of your project:

Relationship attitudes in young people who have experienced domestic violence. Evaluating the 'Changing Places' programme

Brief description of your research project:

Domestic violence is a large and widespread problem. Where domestic violence occurs, children and young people are likely to witness such abuse, and this is likely to have a detrimental impact on them.

Chair of the School's Ethics Committee
last updated: September 2007

There is an acute gap in provision for such individuals, despite evidence suggesting a link between exposure to domestic violence in childhood and involvement in abusive dating relationships in late adolescence and adulthood. The Changing Places programme seeks to offer young people with existing (or the potential to develop) abusive behaviour patterns in their relationships, an opportunity to learn about themselves and as a result, change their behaviour in the future. This study is the first formal evaluation of this programme, which is being piloted by   County Council in 2009. There has been relatively little work testing the effectiveness of such programmes, however, results from research which is available is encouraging. The two elements of this research will consist of part one, an illuminative piece of research where baseline data will be presented along with detailed information from the participants, and part two, and evaluative piece of research where follow-up data will be compared to baseline data. Part one seeks to explore relationship attitudes prior to the programme, whereas part two seeks to evaluate the programme.

Give details of the participants in this research (giving ages of any children and/or young people involved):

Participants for this research will already have been selected for this programme by the programme organisers. Participants will range in age from 14-21 years. At present only an approximation of numbers can be given. At this time I anticipate there being 30 participants.

Give details regarding the ethical issues of informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality (with special reference to any children or those with special needs) a blank consent form can be downloaded from the SELL student access on-line documents:

Ethical principles for conducting research with human participants according to the British Psychology Society Code of Conduct (2005), have been considered, and are as follows:

- Consent: Informed consent will be obtained from all participants prior to their involvement in this study, covering the aims of the research, and the potential consequences for the participants. The language used will be understandable to the participants. Should the participant be unable to access the data protection notice in written form, it will be read aloud by myself.
- Deception: There will be no deception involved in this study.
- Debriefing: All participants will be debriefed at the end of the follow-up interview.
- Withdrawal from the investigation: All participants will be informed of their right to withdraw from the study.
- Confidentiality: All participants will be given the right to expect that the information they provide will be treated confidentially and will not be identifiable as theirs. In the event that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, the participant will be warned of this in advance.

Chair of the School's Ethics Committee
last updated: September 2007

- Protection of participants: Ethical approval and consent for all individuals participating on the programme would have already been obtained by the programme organisers. The risk posed to mental health by this piece of research is no greater than in ordinary life. Participants will be informed of procedures for contacting me within a reasonable time period following participation should stress, potential harm, or related questions or concern arise. As this research involves questioning behaviour or experiences that participants may regard as personal and private, the participants will be protected from stress by all appropriate measures, including the assurance that answers to personal questions need not be given. There will be no concealment or deception when seeking information that might encroach on privacy.

- Data Protection: Participants will be given the following data protection notice in writing prior to any data collection at the time when informed consent is sought. It will also appear attached to the measurement scale checklist and the information will be available at the point of interview. Should the participant be unable to access the data protection notice in written form, it will be read aloud by myself.

  "Data Protection Notice - The information you provide will be used for research purposes and your personal data will be processed in accordance with current data protection legislation and the University's notification lodged at the Information Commissioner's Office. Your personal data will be treated in the strictest confidence and will not be disclosed to any unauthorised third parties. The results of the research will be published in anonymised form."

Give details of the methods to be used for data collection and analysis and how you would ensure they do not cause any harm, detriment or unreasonable stress:

The methods which will be used in this study include the use of a measurement scale and semi-structured interviews.

A measurement scale has been chosen as one of the preferred methods of data collection for this research, as it enables quantitative data to be collected and statistical analyses to be carried out. Of specific importance in this research, is the use of measurement scales to allow for a comparison before and after intervention. I intend to use the Emotional Literacy Checklist (ELC) (Faupel, 2003) in both parts of this research. The ELC is a widely used research tool - in developmental, social, clinical and educational studies. There are advantages and disadvantages of using standardised checklists to collect data. The advantages include the standardised wording and order of the questions. This enables responses to be compared but additionally provides us as researchers with well-tested and widely used questions, which it is felt do not cause any harm, detriment or unreasonable stress. Checklists can be

filled in the participant's own time; and it is a relatively speedy way of collecting data. The disadvantages are that the participants may not understand the questions, there is no way of checking whether the participant has understood the questions in the way intended, and the resulting mass of data may be difficult to analyse (Herbert, 1990).

Semi-structured interviews will be used to obtain information in both parts of this research. I intend to carry out semi-structured interviews in part 1 to explore relationship attitudes, and in part 2 to investigate behaviour/ attitude change following the intervention programme. The semi-structured interview has been chosen for a number of reasons. A semi-structured interview, as opposed to a structured interview, allows the interviewer flexibility and freedom to explore any issues that may arise as a result of one of the pre-planned core questions. Therefore, any additional information of interest, which comes to light in the interview, can be explored. Interviews also enable rapport to be built between the participant and the interviewer, therefore putting participants at ease. A disadvantage of this method is the possibility of interviewer bias. As the interviewer, I may inadvertently bias information obtained in a number of ways. My presence in itself may elicit certain responses that would not be the case with a different interviewer. Tone of voice when asking questions may influence responses. A 'response effect' can arise, out of the eagerness of the respondent to please the interviewer (known as demand characteristics), or from a tendency by the interviewer to seek out answers that support preconceived notions, and to dismiss certain responses. Timing and venue for an interview can also lead to bias. Although many of these potential biases are unavoidable, some measures can be taken to minimise this, such as tape recording interviews and asking outsiders to judge interpretations (Herbert, 1990). As this research involves questioning behaviour or experiences that participants may regard as personal and private, the participants will be protected from stress by all appropriate measures - informed consent will be sought from all participants and parents where the participant is less than 16 years of age, participants will be given the assurance that answers to personal questions need not be given, that they have the right to end the interview at any point, and they will be debriefed at the end of the follow-up interview, and will be informed of procedures for contacting me within a reasonable time period following participation should stress, potential harm, or related questions or concern arise. There will be no concealment or deception when seeking information that might encroach on privacy. Taking these considerations and precautions into account, it is felt that any potential risk posed to mental health by this study is no greater than in ordinary life.

Give details of any other ethical issues which may arise from this project (e.g. secure storage of videos/recorded interviews/photos/completed questionnaires or special arrangements made for participants with special needs etc.):

Data recorded by measurement scale will be made anonymous at the point of completion by the participant, by marking it with their initials alone. Only I shall keep a record of the participant names, which shall be kept encrypted by password for accessing the file, on my personal laptop. Following transference of data from the paper copies, these paper copies shall be shredded.

Data recorded by interview will be saved on a Dictaphone. This will be kept secure until interviews have been transcribed, where the tape will be disposed of securely, using   County Council's procedures. The data file containing the transcribed interviews be kept encrypted by password for accessing the file, on my personal laptop.

Give details of any exceptional factors, which may raise ethical issues (e.g. potential political or ideological conflicts which may pose danger or harm to participants):

This form should now be printed out, signed by you below and sent to your supervisor to sign. Your supervisor will forward this document to the School's **Research Support Office** for the Chair of the School's Ethics Committee to countersign. A unique approval reference will be added and this certificate will be returned to you to be included at the back of your dissertation/thesis.

I hereby certify that I will abide by the details given above and that I undertake in my dissertation / thesis (delete whichever is inappropriate) to respect the dignity and privacy of those participating in this research.

I confirm that if my research should change radically, I will complete a further form.

Signed:..date:......9.3.09......

N.B. You should not start the fieldwork part of the project until you have the signature of your supervisor

This project has been approved for the period: until: 31 August 2010

By (above mentioned supervisor's signature):..........................date:..........17 MAR 2009

N.B. **To Supervisor:** *Please ensure that ethical issues are addressed annually in your report and if any changes in the research occurs a further form is completed.*

SELL unique approval reference:............D..08.09.37............

Signed:....Salah Tlou.......................date: 23/03/09
Chair of the School's Ethics Committee

Chair of the School's Ethics Committee
last updated: September 2007

5.3 Extracts from Reflective Journal

2.12.08

Logistics of running intervention programmes:

I order to get these intervention groups up and running, I have volunteered to contribute to working through the logistics of getting these intervention groups running. There appears to have been many barriers so far, including a lack of adequate management support, additional responsibilities placed on facilitators that they were not previously aware of, a lack of time to fulfil these responsibilities on the facilitators' part, and difficulty with marketing this programme to schools and gaining their support in delivering the programme within their settings.

Is this because this area is still a taboo subject, with perhaps schools not wanting to highlight the extent of the problem in their school?

Are school staff just being bombarded with intervention programmes, and are not equipped to identify which intervention programmes should be prioritised?

Should there be a central body within each authority who communicates directly with head teachers on interventions programmes which will be offered to schools, with a clear summary about what each intervention entails and requirements of the school etc.?

As educational psychologists forge working relationships with schools, and have a good understanding of the education system but also the holistic needs of children and young people, plus an understanding of psychological theory on which interventions are based, are they in a

good position to play a role in working with schools to identify and prioritise the organisation of intervention programmes within educational settings?

7.5.09

Ease of conversation and potential stigmatisation:

Following conducting several interviews today, I was pleasantly surprised with the extent to which the young people wanted to share their views and experiences with me. Perhaps I was the first person who had ever asked them about such issues, which is quite possible. I imagine that the young people were somewhat surprised by the way in which we were able to engage in what felt to be a free and equally balanced interaction in terms of power and mutual respect.

I had previously considered the degree to which coming to speak to me would be considered stigmatising by the young people. However, I now feel that in the context of an inclusive school environment, with many children receiving tailored sessions, and one-to-one support, that to come out of lessons for this purpose, probably would not have raised too many eyebrows or questions amongst the class mates and peers of these young people. Certainly I am not aware that any of the young people that I have seen so far have expressed concern about coming to see me and what others would think.

8.5.09

Contradictions:

Today was very revealing, in the sense that I was taken aback by the number of contradictions made by one particular young person during our interview. Reflecting back on other interviews, this has also been the case. The young people appear to have an apparent lack of awareness of the contradictions that they are making. This is something which I suspect may emerge more and more in the coming interviews. I will be interested to see whether this theme consistently emerges from the data when I come to analyse the interviews. Also, why are these young people not aware of the contradiction that they are making? Could this be a defence mechanism?

10.5.09

Ability to communicate in an interview setting:

I was initially concerned that the young people in this study would find it difficult to communicate in an interview set-up. However, I was surprised and relieved by how able the majority have been to express themselves, when given prompt questions. I feel that I have been able to build a good rapport with the young people I have interviewed so far. The art of active listening and validation of feelings is really important in this context.

14.5.09

Emotional literacy:

Something which I have become increasingly aware of is the acute difficulty that the young people I am

interviewing have with expressing emotions, and with responding to questions asking how they feel. Is this because they do not have the emotional literacy to do so? Or would doing so put them in a vulnerable position, which they are not prepared to do? Or in a psychological sense, in terms of Johari's window, perhaps this is not a safe enough place for them to reveal more of their hidden selves

16.7.09

Impact of my involvement on the young people:

Although I have considered ethical issues in detail when designing this research study, I am considering how adequate the measures that have been taken actually are. How good was the debrief that followed the interview? Would the young people have felt able to express if they had been emotionally affected by these interviews? Are the support systems set up in school adequate?

All young people were given a name of a member of staff at school who was the link person, whom they could discuss and concerns. The young people taking part in this research appear to have a good relationship with this member of staff. But how available would they be if one of these young people wanted to discuss any issues that had arisen from the interviews, given the time pressures of members of staff at schools, and also the difficultly that some of these young people have in communicating their needs?

Is it possible that we might therefore see a negative change in their behaviour, if they are not able to access the

support they require? I am reassured that a number of young people on the programme have already been offered follow-up one-to-one sessions with outreach workers from Women's Aid who were co-facilitating the programme. It is one thing following ethical guidelines, but conducting truly ethical research is another issue.

18.7.09

The impact it has had on me as an EP:

Reflecting back on the process of devising, and planning this research, and meeting the young people taking part, it has had a profound effect on my desire to continue to develop my understanding of how such young people are affected by these adverse experiences, and how I, as an Educational/Child Psychologist, can work to improve outcomes for these young people. I feel in a privileged position to be able to do this, however I am aware of the numerous barriers I will undoubtedly face when seeking to raise the profile of these young people, and to shift school priorities to support this vulnerable group in new and creative ways. At this point in time, I am considering progressing and developing my career so that at some point in time, I am in a position to contribute to developing policies and provision to help young people and their families who have been affected by domestic abuse and other adversity.

5.4 Details of my involvement in setting up and organising one of the groups

I have been heavily involved in coordinating the running of this programme, and have been involved in co-delivering three of the sessions in one of the two settings. I have sought throughout this research process to create valid and unbiased data, by remaining objective, and have remained consciously aware of my position and the impact that this could potentially have on the validity of the results throughout this process. I was not involved in designing or developing this programme, and therefore do not have a personal interest from this perspective in it achieve its aims.

Through carefully devising the interview questions, to ensure that they are neutral and non-leading, and by carrying out a rigorous and transparent analysis of the data, I hope to have reduced any potential bias created by my involvement with the coordination and running this programme. I have sought to highlight both what the data showed and what the data did not show. I have reported changes/effects that were not apparent, in addition to changes that were found. I have also been very explicit in stating whether the majority of participants reported a particular issue or whether it was a minority or only an individual, so not to inadvertently inflate any effects.

6. Data Analysis

6.1 Transcripts

Sample transcripts from data collection with participants for paper one, and with participants and programme facilitators for paper two, have been included as supporting evidence.

6.1.1 Paper 1 - Sample transcript

Part 1 Participant Number 6

How do you feel about school?

I hate it, most of the lessons, sometimes I don't get along with the teachers. And I get stressed out easily. **What kind of things stress you out?** People being harsh to my friends and everything. I get really angry and I just walk out. Like the other day I was outside just after a lesson and these lads grabbed my bag and I got really angry. **Are there any positive things about school, anything you enjoy**? Yes lunchtime. **What happens at lunchtime?** I've moved from green band to yellow band and at lunchtimes I get to see my friends in green band. **So do you feel lonely in lessons?** Yes because I've only got about 8 friends now, because I've just moved groups.

Do you ever find yourself often in trouble at school? Now and in the past?

Yes. I lash out and swear at teachers. It doesn't happen very often because I've tried to calm down now but sometimes it's just started and it carries on. This happens about twice a month. They've got this thing on the computer where you get P1's and C1's, if I get another C1 I'm going on report. I've just come off it.

Tell me about how you get on with your teachers.

Depends what teacher it is really. Some make me really angry. **What is it about them?** I don't know I just don't like them. **What about the other ones?** Oh they're really nice. **What do they do?** They know what I'm like. If I get stressy they just leave me to it.

Do you skip school frequently?

No, never.

Do you have a solid group of friends at school?

Yes, I've got about 8.

Tell me about them?

Most of my friends are younger than me.

How well do you get on with school mates and friends? What do you get from these friendships?

Happiness. We just go round together, have lunch together, have fun. Do stuff after school. **So it's like companionship and someone to share things with**? Yes. I can tell .... anything.

Tell me about the good times with these friends.

We go shopping.

Do you have frequent arguments with them?

Yes over pathetic things. Like what? If I've lost my pen or something. But we make friends again afterwards. These arguments happen about twice a day. So it's always about little things is it? Yes, never have big arguments.

Are there times when you are able to prevent or avoid an argument? How?

No, they always happen. They normally start it, or I start it.

Are you able to understand how they are feeling at these times?

Sometimes. One of my best mates gets really emotional. So it's easier to see how she's feeling? Yes.

Tell me about your relationships with people you are close to (best friends, boyfriend/ girlfriend, family members). Who do you feel you have a close relationship with?

........, they're my best friend.

What do you get from these relationships?

I don't know. They're just my best friend and they have been since primary school. And we've been through loads of stuff together. She's helped me at home and I've helped her at home. We just have fun together.

Tell me about the good times with these people. What do you do? How do you feel?

Shopping, paintballing, stuff like that.

Do you have frequent arguments with these people?

Not really.

Are you able to understand how they feeling at these times?

Yes. When we fell out it was over this lad. Because there was a mix up, and we just didn't get along with each other for about a week, she was just really upset. She just came up to me and said can we be friends again.

Tell me how you avoid arguments with these people who you are close to (family members, boyfriend/ girlfriend, close friends).
Do you ever fall out with your Dad? It depends what I've done. If I've done something really bad then yes.

Are you ever able to avoid arguments with this person?

With my Dad I can but not with my Mum.

What do you do to avoid arguments? I just go upstairs to my room, just stay out the way, and calm down a bit. **Are there any other ways in which you manage to avoid arguments?** Not really.

How do you generally feel about yourself? It might help to think of a rating scale of 1-10 with 1 being very unhappy and 10 being very happy.

About a 5.

Tell me about feeling angry. When does this happen, why does this happen and how does it affect you?

I don't know. It's mostly my Mum that makes me angry. Because she goes drinking quite a bit and when she comes back she causes arguments over nothing, it just really annoys me. **What happens?** We just have these massive arguments, and sometimes she hits me but she doesn't mean to. But one time I flipped and I put my hands around her throat, but then I let go and I ran upstairs. **How did things get better from there?** I said sorry and we just started growing closer and closer. We're still not close close. **Do you think things at home are linked to how you feel at school?** Yes I can't get it out of my head when I'm at school.

How do you feel about your future?

Alright. I know what I want to be. I've got two things, but my Dad says I won't be able to get the job that I want because I'm too dumb, which is a forensic scientist. But if not then a hairdresser. It involves working with dead bodies and working out the cause of death. I wouldn't mind working at crime scenes and stuff.

How in control of your life do you feel?

I can kind of control what happens to me, but not all of the time. **Would you say your life is fairly uncertain?** Yes. **Has life always been like that?** Yes, I've just learnt to live with it.

Do you feel having physical fights is the right way to deal with certain situations?

No I don't think its right, but it just happens. If she gets violent, I get violent back. **When is it right/ not right?**

Do you think that's the right way to deal with things? No but, last year this girl came up to me and said she wanted a fight. It must be very difficult to avoid when someone wants to attack you? Yes. And I didn't even know why. Do you think it's ever right? No, but if it happens it happens.

How is it wrong? You can get in really really big trouble. Like my mate got beat up the other day by two girls and its all on camera and everything. **So would that be the main thing that would stop you fighting with someone because of the trouble you could get in?** Yes, yes. **Any other reasons?** I just don't want to get in trouble with the police. **What do you think people do sometimes have violent relationships?** I don't know. I know that with my Mum, when she drinks it makes her violent.

How else could someone react in such situations?

If everyone kept going on about it (a situation) I would go off and punch something, that's what I'm like.

6.1.2 Paper 2 - Sample transcript

<u>Part 2 Participant Number 4</u>

How do you feel about school at the moment?

Yes it's good. I'm having a good time, lots of friends, not being bullied, it's good.

Have things changed at all, in the last couple of months?

Not really, it's just the same.

Have you recently (last month) found yourself frequently in trouble at school for acting out or fighting? (every couple of weeks)

No. Got much better. I'm going to all my lessons. I get paid now.

Tell me about your current relationships with your teachers. Has this changed?

Most of them are all right. A lot of them I don't like, but I don't show open aggression to them or anything. **Has this changed at all?** Yes. I'm a bit better, getting on a bit more.

Recently (last month) have you skipped school? (how much)

No. Maybe like once.

Have your relationships with your school mates or friends changed in any way since the programme? Got better or worse?

Not really. I'm still good friends with all of them. I think I've got like bit better friends with most of them. My two best friends switch, they keep switching really. **Do you think you've got more friends?** Yes. I've made friends with most of them from the sessions who are still left obviously, yes I like them.

Would your friends have noticed a change in you at all?

I'm not sure, they haven't said anything. I don't know. Hopefully they think I'm a bit nicer or something.

At the moment, do you have frequent arguments or conflicts with your friends?

No.

Tell me how you avoid arguments or conflicts with them.

Yes most of the time I'm quite good at avoiding arguments. If people joke around, if someone is getting a bit hurt by it, I would quickly stop and say sorry or whatever. **Do you recognise when this is happening?** Yes I recognise when people are getting upset.

Tell me about your relationships with people you are close to (family members, boyfriends/ girlfriends). Have any of your relationships with family members changed in any way since/as a result of the programme? Got better or worse?

No much the same really. Still the same with my brother. We're all right still lots of arguments but it's a bit better. We've just been getting along better because he started school, got to look after him and stuff.

Tell me how you avoid arguments or conflicts with them.

I'm not retaliating as much. I just try and keep it as a joke and not let it get too serious, play fighting or something. **How do you manage to do that?** Well my Mum helps a lot, because she like says don't retaliate, just calm down.

Tell me about understanding their perspective. Are you able to?

I probably could but I don't really want to. **If you did want to what do you think they would be feeling at the time**? Maybe a bit angry I don't know. **How come you don't really want to?** Because I like having arguments, 'cause things get dealt with. **Does it make you feel good in some way?** Not good like, I feel amazing I've hurt him. But I like to prove him wrong. **Why's that?** It makes me feel better than him. **Why do you want to feel like that?** I'm not sure. **Are you quite competitive?** Yes.

How you feel about yourself and has this changed since you started the programme?

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Yes I feel like I can control my anger a bit better. Use different ways to stop it, getting angry. When I'm getting angry, I can do things to calm me down, like go to my room and stuff like that. Take a moment to stop and think. **Before the sessions, were you aware of those things you could do or not?** I didn't really do those things. I just stop now and think about it. I would probably put myself at an 8. I also thought of another thing. I'm also quite good at accepting responsibility, so it's not always the other persons fault for creating arguments. **Has that helped you to avoid certain situations?** Yes I get into less trouble.

Tell me about feeling angry. When does this happen and why? Has this changed in any way since the programme?
Yes a lot of the time with my brother. But I'd like go to my room or something like that. **So you tend to feel angry at home do you?** Yes. Not really at all at school. **Has this changed in any way at home?** Yes it's got a bit better with less arguments.

How do you feel about your future? Has this changed in any way since the programme?
Looking good, I'm in the top sets for everything. Doing well, it's good. **What do you hope to do when you leave here**? I'm not completely sure, but I want to do something with sport.

How in control of your life do you feel?
Pretty in control. I'd put myself at a 6-7, somewhere around that area. **Do you feel more in control since the programme?** Yes, because I'm better able to control my anger.

You said that you take time out and you now take more responsibility and that you now know different things you can do as opposed to carrying on with the argument, has anything else changed in the way you deal with situations you come across? Maybe just like stopping, maybe not even like having to time out, just like being cooperative with my brother and not insult him for everything he does wrong. **Has that changed quite a bit then?** Yes. **Why do you think that is?** One reason is because I

think the programme has like really helped, but I mean he's starting in school and I'm feeling a bit protective and stuff like that.

Would you ever consider using violence to try to solve problems?

I had lots of them with my brother, I've never had fights at school. Yes quite a bit of the time with my brother but it's getting better.

Would you ever consider using verbal or emotional abuse to try to solve problems?

Yes. I've had to do that but I never say like personal insults, like fat or something like that. **Does that help to solve problems?** Maybe not but it kind of gets them back a bit.

Why do you think people resort to using violence, emotional or verbal abuse to solve problems?

Because it makes you feel better putting someone else down, like verbally. Fighting is just to prove that you're hard really.

Do you feel using violence or being abusive is ever the right way to deal with certain situations?

Not never because like police use it and stuff. But you shouldn't use it as an excuse, for he hit me so I can hit him back.

What about yourself, can you ever imagine a situation when it would be right? Maybe not right but it's kind of hard not to do really.

How is it wrong? Because it hurts people. **Were you aware before the programme of how much it hurts people?** Yes, but when you're angry you don't really think these things through do you.

Best bits of the programme and your worst bits?

Best bits, I got something out of it obviously and pizza. The people who do it, they were nice. The worst bits, everyone was saying it could have been a bit more fun, but obviously that's not the point because it's a serious topic isn't it. But they try to do that a bit more towards the end.

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6.1.3 Paper 2 - Sample of facilitator transcript

'Helen'

Interviewer   *The first one is just about what you feel worked well with the programme.*

Helen   Oh gosh, that's the hardest one to start with! What didn't work well, we could talk for hours about. What worked well, well I think when you came on board, that was a vast improvement, having somebody who took more control over organising venue, groups, things like that, I mean that compared to where we were, although it was always stressful, compared to when it was a group of us sitting around talking about all the stuff that needed to be done but no-one had time to do it, you know, it was much better when we had you come on board to take a lead in that stuff, so I guess what would work well in the future would be if you know, having someone who's got the capacity to do that. I mean I thought it was a lot less stressful in some ways, going to a school, I think if we had still been trying to do it where we were getting volunteers, getting participants from all different sources, I think that would have been such a logistical nightmare. But I think it worked well, I mean there were problems, but it worked well in some ways, having it in the school, having one venue, one group of participants.

Interviewer   *So in terms of logistics, it was just a lot easier given the kind of time scale and everything like that and the kind of capacity I suppose, being able to sort out*

Helen   I'm trying to think what else went well, I think there were things that could have worked well but for whatever reason, they didn't do. I mean I think having people from different agencies running it, should have been a real strength in some ways, but I think because of the lack of time around, you know, we didn't have time to get together to plan, sort stuff out, because it was all so new and because of all the problems in the group, it wasn't an advantage to us in the end. I think even

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those of us that came from the same agency didn't get any time apart from when we were actually at the school and an hour before the session, we didn't get any time to meet together to plan or anything, so

Interviewer   *Yes, difficult. Anything else you can think of? I don't know if you can remember anything specific about any of the sessions?*

Helen   Yea, well the cartoon, the one that really stands out, is the cartoon strip session which we had anxieties about, which were about going to be, they're going to laugh at that, they're going to think it's really childish, it's not cool enough, and they loved it. It was the one time when they were really quiet and they just got into it and that really stood out as a good session. One of them actually we hadn't anticipated that they would read it, well one of them said, can I read it? And she did it like she sort of acted it, she put on a voice for it and so yea, for some reason, the comic strip really worked.

Interviewer   *And what was it about that session then, that you think they really enjoyed?*

Helen   It was the comic strip, the rest of the session was just as difficult, but it was when we read through the comic strip, the cartoon, they just all went really quiet and they were all reading and you know, while one of them was reading it out, and that really worked, so maybe a kind of drama or something that sort of a bit like removed from reality

Interviewer   *Yes, and the person that chose to kind of read out the thing, would you say that they were quite an influential member of the group? Or do you think that didn't really have any influence on?*

Helen   I think it was really hard with that group, they didn't really seem to be like someone who was, I don't know, because they could be so sort of mean to each other that I never really got a

sense of who was in charge. I didn't feel there was anyone that was a particular ring-leader; I think they all sort of really did their own thing. It was XXXX that did it, but I don't know what you've got from, you know, from what XXXX has said about her sort of role in the group, but I mean I think if one of them played up, the others were influenced by whether or not that person would be deemed an influential person.

Interviewer *Yea, interesting, anything else you want to add then, about what worked well?*

Helen   Any other sessions, I think it's really hard to judge material, because they weren't engaged, so the material could potentially work really well, I suppose, but I don't think we ever got, we never had an opportunity to really put it to the test.

6.2 Thematic Analysis techniques

Thematic analysis is a method of categorising segments of qualitative data into meaningful themes, which may be based on the specific research questions being asked (Gibbs, 2007). 'Coding' is a central element to this data analysis technique. Using this technique, I must identify themes and organise these into meaningful 'codes' or categories. Decisions about what counts as a category can come from all kinds of 'places' – theory, literature, research experience, the data themselves. Code development will involve a process of immersion in data by repeatedly reading the interview transcripts, generating tentative codes, followed by applying and developing new codes, by refining, elaborating, re-defining, rejecting, and splitting initial codes (Gibbs, 2007).

There are several techniques which I will use when carrying out a thematic analysis of the data (Gibbs, 2007):

- Open coding
- Constant comparison
- Analysis of word, phrase or sentence
- Flip-flop technique
- Systematic comparison
- Far-out comparisons
- Waving the red flag
- Line-by-line coding

6.2.1 Alternatives to Thematic Analysis

Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) and grounded theory analysis were the two alternative data analysis approaches which were considered in addition to thematic analysis.

Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) is an inductive data analysis technique which focuses on analysing each individual case at a time. This approach is suitable for research questions that require a detailed exploration of personal and social experiences, and therefore would be appropriate when considering my research questions. However, for paper 1, I did not want to analyse the cases individually, but wanted to analyse across cases and draw the information together when answering my research questions.

Grounded theory analysis is derived from the pragmatist tradition (Bohman, 1999). It is an exploratory data analysis technique which is suitable for research where there a no grand theories, which is the case for paper 1. This approach requires an initial analysis of the data, followed by further sampling and data analysis. An initial analysis of the data followed by further sampling would not be possible given time constraints. Therefore I have chosen thematic analysis as my preferred data analysis technique for both papers 1 and 2, which allows me to analyse data both inductively and using pre-defined themes.

6.2.2 Advantages and limitations of thematic analysis

The following advantages and limitations of thematic analysis were considered:

Advantages:

- A means of organising and summarising the findings from a large amount of data.

Limitations:

- The flexibility of thematic analysis is sometimes associated with a lack of transparency.

- It can be difficult for the reader to understand the data analysis process.

- It is not clear whether the results obtained by thematic analysis should refer to the frequency with which each theme is reported by the researcher.

Reliability is a critical aspect of thematic analysis (Boyatzis, 1998). In this context, reliability refers to consistency of observation, labeling and interpretation. Consistency of judgment can take two forms: consistency of judgment among various viewers, and consistency of judgment over time, events and settings (Boyatzis, 1998).

I have rejected the possibility of assessing for consistency of judgment using these two forms. In addition to this, I am unable to add confidence in my judgments by employing multiple observations, multiple observers, and observing multiple samples, which many authors believe adds to the reliability of research (Mason, 1996; Silverman, 1993; Zyzanski et al., 1992). So I have looked to other methods available to attain reliability of data analysis, such as keeping a diary of data analysis decisions, and using the data analysis techniques consistently which are set out in section 6.2.

6.3 Extracts from Reflective Journal on the data analysis process

<u>Paper 1 Data Analysis Reflections</u>

07/01/2010 15:36

I have decided to begin my thematic analysis with the transcript from participant 2. The reason for this is because participant 2 had much to say about relationship attitudes and therefore I feel many codes will come from this initial transcription. As I am using thematic analysis, I will identify themes in one transcript initially. I will be making individual 'nodes' for each theme that emerges from the data. This is an inductive process.

07/01/2010 16:31

Going through the first transcript it was helpful to annotate parts of the text that I was unsure about coding. I could then come back to this at the end of coding the transcript and decide how best to code these parts of the text, whether they could be coded under existing nodes or whether new nodes were needed.

I have just finished going through the first transcript and coding it for the first time. I have managed to assign the text that I was unsure of and had annotated to nodes. I currently have 11 nodes, when I am aiming for 7 +/- 2, so I shall look at my nodes, define them, and revisit this transcript before moving on to the next one.

09/01/2010 16:33

Just going to relook at participant number 2's transcript, define the nodes that I have identified and make sure that I have not missed anything. I have looked to see if I can reduce the number of nodes identified and I have

managed to combine negative behaviour with negative schooling experiences. Loosely defining the nodes has helped with this. I would now like to create a tree node called 'relationships', and underneath this I would like the free nodes 'friendship values', 'friendship or relationship difficulties' and 'social support'. I feel that by putting these free nodes under a tree node that when I look through the next transcript there will be less likelihood that I will miss any potential coding opportunities, as there will be fewer categories to hold in my head during coding.

I will need to use the constant comparison technique to ensure that I am coding in a consistent way, and coding strictly according to my code descriptors.

09/01/2010 17:00

Looking over the nodes again, I have now created one tree node. I feel it may be helpful to create two further tree nodes, one called 'cognitions' the other called 'behaviours'. Looking at the nodes that I have coded from the first transcript, it appear that 'cognitive distortions or logical reasoning', 'locus of control' and possibly, 'attitudes about relationship abuse or violence' may fit under this tree node category. Also, I feel that 'negative behaviour or experiences', 'positive schooling experiences' and 'preventative behaviours' could fit under a tree node labelled 'behaviours'. This actually fits nicely, considering that the programme from which this sample was selected was a cognitive-behavioural programme. This leaves me with the free node 'emotions' which I shall leave as a free node for now, possibly changing it to 'affect' later.

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Therefore in this first transcript I have identified themes or nodes and linked themes together into clusters of themes or tree nodes. This is in line with the method of thematic analysis that I am using. I am coding at a number of levels according to which is most relevant to my code descriptors - sometimes coding a few words, other times coding whole sections of text. I feel that it is important to ensure that the context in which some things were said is kept where relevant.

09/01/2010 18:56

I have been through the tree node for 'cognitions' annotating it and have found it a useful way of recording my initial thoughts about the data for this first participant. This deeper level of analysis has allowed me to check that I have not missed any codes, and has also brought my attention to data which applies to more than one code. Next job is to annotate emotions, and tree nodes behaviours and relationships. I am finding it helpful to use the model called 'qualitative tasks enabled by CAQDAS packages' as a guide to this data analysis process.

11/01/2010 21:25

I have just annotated the 'emotions' node and behaviours and relationships tree nodes. In terms of my thinking a number of psychological theories are coming up - Kohlberg's moral reasoning, locus of control, externalisation and internalisation, attribution error and bias, impulse control difficulties. Next I need to start coding the next transcript, but which one should I choose? I will also have to be more selective in the information that I code, or I will have too much data to draw

meaning from.

12/01/2010 12:50

I have decided to code participant 6's transcript next as she was a very articulate young person. I have just coded the second transcript based on codes identified from the first transcript plus some new emerging nodes – 'family situation' and 'identity'. These may need to be further refined later on. I now I need to go back and look at the first transcript to see whether any of the newly emerging codes can be found. I am looking for examples which show the extremes of what my code descriptor defines. I am looking for evidence which confirms this and evidence which contrasts this.

17/01/2010 16:07

I will now code participant 1's transcript based on the codes already identified, but also looking for any more emerging codes. I am still debating whether I have grouped the codes together in the best possible way. Finished participant 1. No new codes identified.

18/01/2010 11:16

I have now coded participant number 3's transcript. It's not taking too long now. I am going to re-evaluate my codes.

Emotions - Emotional Literacy
Cognitive distortion/logical reasoning - Reasoning
Negative behaviour or experiences - Abusive behaviour
Attitude about relationship abuse/violence - Attitudes
Friendship values - Values

Friendship or relationship difficulties - Difficulties
Locus of control - Attribution

Merge 'Difficulties' with 'Abusive behaviour' because of lots of overlap between the two codes. Label 'Abusive Behaviour'.

Move 'Values' which is under the tree node 'relationships' to under the tree node 'cognitions'.

Change tree node label of 'relationships' to 'other factors'. Put 'social support', 'identity', 'family situation' and 'emotional literacy' free nodes under this tree node.

18/01/2010 12:29

I have now coded participant number 4's transcript with my newly named codes. It is getting quicker and quicker. I have a lot of codes so it is difficult keeping them all in mind and distinguishing between certain codes which are similar yet distinct i.e. reasoning and attribution. So I'm now going to type out a list of my current codes and redefine each of them.

I am also considering adding another code (!) of future 'aspirations'.

Having formally written up the descriptors for each code, I am wondering whether 'identity' should be merged with 'attribution'. They share similar qualities, although they are distinctly different. Also whether 'identity' should be moved to 'cognitions' tree node from 'other factors'.

18/01/2010 14:57

Done participant number 5's transcript. Think I'll finish the initial coding by today. I have observed that I appear

to be using all the codes that I have identified in my analysis of each transcript, so perhaps this is an indication that my codes are appropriate and the data set is fully saturated. Now onto participant number 7 (participant number 6 already done). Wow, it took ages to code the transcript from participant number 7. 63 references to the 12 codes in total! That's a record so far!

21/01/2010 16:06

Just finished the initial coding of all of the transcripts.

25/01/2010 13:52

I'm just going back through each code looking at the data to ensure that I have coded each theme fully and correctly. I will then print out each code and begin to make further annotations on the paper copies of the sorted results.

25/01/2010 17:28

I'm working upwards through the tree nodes, re-checking relevance of codes. I've got to 'values 'and am an on 'What do you value most in your friends?' - Participant Number 7 halfway down the page.

Paper 2 Data Analysis Reflections

07/02/2010 17:36

This part of my research shall be partially thematically analysed by pre-defined themes, directly resulting from the targeted skills of the programme. I have the codes from the first part, I now need to:
(i) look for these codes within the second part or the data

(ii) look for codes deductively based on research questions - perspective taking, self-esteem, confidence

(iii) look for anything new emerging

(iv) Plus look at the views of the participants about the programme and compare this to before and after results

The aim is to compare individual cases on a before-after basis but to also look at the group as a whole in a before-after way.

(iii) I will then look at the second part of the data as a whole for new themes which have emerged.

I carried out an initial analysis of the data in September 2009, not using NVIVO, and the following themes emerged:

School

Friends

Family

Anger and violence

The sessions

Group dynamics

Appropriateness of referrals

07/02/2010 18:20

I think I'm first going to start with identifying perspective taking, self-esteem and confidence in all of the transcripts (paper 1 and 2). I have done participants 2, 4, and 5 - parts 1 and 2 for perspective taking. Next do 6, 9, 10 and 12.

08/02/2010 11:25

It is interesting to note that the participants are reluctant to explicitly state positives of the programme, yet are able

to identify positive changes in their behaviour. It appears that they are not attributing these changes necessarily to the programme.

I've just gone through the free node 'programme-positives' and have ordered these into tree nodes under more specific headings:

EXTRINSIC MOTIVATORS

FACILITATORS

INCREASED AWARENESS

RULES

SELF-EXPRESSION

SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES

Now I will do the same with the free node 'programme-change'. DONE. The tree nodes that have come up are:

CONFIDENTIALITY

FACILITATORS

GROUP DYNAMICS AND COHESION

INCREASED NEGATIVE FEELINGS

IRRELEVANT MATERIAL

LACK OF MOTIVATION TO PARTICIPATE

LENGTH OF SESSIONS

LOCATION AND TIMING

RULES

TOO MUCH TALKING AND LISTENING

12/02/2010 15:37

OK, so I'm going to go though each of the phase 2 transcripts looking at what the participants report as having gained from the programme or positives from the

programme. This overlaps somewhat with the programme positives, but this can be addressed later. Actually, to get a more balanced picture I think I will code this as self-perceptions following the programme, including positive and negative/neutral effects of the programme. EFFECTS ATTRIBUTED TO THE PROGRAMME BY THE YOUNG PEOPLE (this is too difficult to establish from the questions asked, but I can look at all changes/ non-changes identified by the young people, regardless of whether they can be attributed to the programme. I'll need to examine this when I have finished coding on a case by case basis, comparing the views of the participants about the effects of the programme, with their previous answers prior to the programme.

CODE NAME - EFFECT OF THE PROGRAMME

Participant 2 - feels the programme had no impact on his beliefs/attitudes/behaviour.

Participant 4 - contradictory reports, can identify some changes but doesn't explicitly attribute these to the programme.

Participant 5 -

13/04/2010 16:54

Next I need to go back and finish the coding for EFFECT OF THE PROGRAMME for participants 5 onwards.

Looking at these on a case by case basis.

14/04/2010 11:43

Firstly I am going to revise the node for EFFECT OF PROGRAMME by dividing it into sub categories based on the themes emerging. DONE.

Difficultly coding self-esteem and confidence because it is so subtle and implicit. Think I may merge these codes with emotions. I have merged these codes together but have kept them separate as they are distinctly different to the emotional literacy code.

I have moved the code SCHOOL from participants' views to additional effects, as I feel it is better placed here, as the references that the participants make to school are not explicitly linked to the effect of the programme.

I have decided to move EMOTIONS node from participant views to additional effects, as it is more relevant here.

14/04/2010 19:05
What I am going to do now is go through all of the codes where I have made comparisons between data collected in part 1 with part 2, and make annotations about these comparisons for each participant. Then I will print off the codes and annotate further by hand, enabling me to be more analytical.

14/04/2010 21:59
I have now annotated the codes under the superordinate code ADDITIONAL EFFECTS. All that is left to do now is to annotate the codes under the superordinate nodes of COGNITIONS, BEHAVIOURS, AFFECT, and OTHER for each participant, so that direct comparisons have been made. This will aid the data analysis process once I have printed the codes out.

6.4 Coded transcripts

A small selection of coded transcripts has been included as evidence.

Paper 1 Example - Page 1

= Contradiction or exception. (handwritten)

Name: Tree Nodes\Cognitions\Reasoning

Description: Any reference which provides infomration about the young peoples' reasoning of situations, events or behaviours. How they make sense of situations. Examples of reasoning other than attribution.

<Internals\A Part 1 Participant Number 1> - § 7 references coded [23.36% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.74% Coverage

Do you ever have arguments with him?

Yes, my brother sometimes, quite a lot. **What about?** Just random things, they're stupid, but we always have arguments about them. **Why do you think that is?** Because we're always together all the time, that's probably why

Reference 2 - 1.85% Coverage

Have you ever started an argument? Sometimes. **What was that about, was that about the rumour spreading?** Yes. It's normally how fights happen. **Why do you choose that way of dealing with a situation?** Because it's quick and easy. It tends to work and it's worked in the past. *(handwritten: Immediate gratification)*

Reference 3 - 4.42% Coverage

Does having a fight always work? Yes because they don't come back to you again if you batter them they just leave you alone. **So would fighting be a preference over talking to them because you know...** Yes you know it's bad, it's not a good thing to have fights with people because you make a lot of enemies, and like, you also get in trouble. Talking to people you don't, but it doesn't always work as you wanted it to work. **Is there anything that would sway you to make the decision to talk to the person even though it might not work?** Yes it does sometimes because I don't want to get in trouble, so I would try that but I'm not sure it would work. *(handwritten: Positive reinforcement; Enemies; Trouble; Doesn't always work-; Cost-benefit reasoning)*

Reference 4 - 3.29% Coverage

Is there anything else that makes you particularly angry? Just like talking about my mates behind my back, saying that they're dicks and other stuff like that, and saying that they're worthless and things like that, get's on my nerves. **How often would you say this happens? I** don't know. It's kind of died down a bit now, because they're like scared of us. That's not a *(handwritten: Moral reasoning vs. Learnt behaviour)*

1 / 14

good thing either. I don't mind it because it keeps people off my back. I don't know, it doesn't happen that often.

Reference 5 - 5.12% Coverage

When would it be right to have a fight with someone you're particularly close to? It wouldn't really. Are you on about physical fights? **Yes.** No that wouldn't really be right at all. **And what about verbal arguments?** They're gonna happen. You're going to have to let your anger out somehow, you can't just keep it bottled up, so you have to like talk about it. But I like talk with my family because they like listen, unlike other people, that actually take it in. **So it's right in terms of not letting it get bottled up?** Yes. **And when's it not right to have a verbal argument? It is ever not right?** Don't know. Maybe if you're like just angry like everything else but it's nothing to do with your family and you have a go at your family, then it's bad.

Reference 6 - 0.69% Coverage

Can you think of someone else who behaves in a completely different way? Not really, everyone argues.

Reference 7 - 6.25% Coverage

And how would someone be feeling? I'd feel bad, but it depends, are you on about physical fights? **Yes or verbal arguments.** If its fighting sometimes I feel good cause you're like oh yeah the problem's solved. But often I feel bad for smacking people but good in a way as well. I don't feel good like smacking people to feel hard, I just feel good for smacking people because then you're problem is out the window.

Why do you think people do have arguments or physical fights with people they are close to? I don't know because they are always with each other, they can get on each other's backs, like sort of thing. In my experience it's like my Mum, she's always on my back, always, so like sometimes I get annoyed with her for doing it but I know why she's doing it, she's only doing it to help me but like sometimes you just don't think about that., if you're like tired or stressed or something, just like argue.

<Internals\B Part 1 Participant Number 2> - § 9 references coded [17.74% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.15% Coverage

189

Could anything be done to prevent this?

Not really. With me, once I've got my mind set on something I'll carry it through[1].

Reference 2 - 2.02% Coverage

So do you think there is anything that could be done to prevent this? Not really. **Why's that?** I'm one of these people who open my mouth before I think.[2] If I'm in that situation I don't really care about the other person[3].

Reference 3 - 0.76% Coverage

He's not really the type of person who's argumentative. He just wants an easy life.

Reference 4 - 1.13% Coverage

Why do you think she's trying to discipline you? She wants me to go the right way in life really, follow the correct path.

Reference 5 - 2.30% Coverage

Last week I was getting a cup of water, someone nudged me accidentally, but I thought they'd done it on purpose[4], and I chucked the water over his face, he went for me and I just went for him back. **And what happened?** It just all kicked off. Now we're ok.

Fight-flight regulation - Maslow - safety

Reference 6 - 2.30% Coverage

if they both annoy each other, just leave 'em to it, not really bothered about it. But then if you see a kid, done nothing wrong, keeps himself to himself, just walking down the road, some other person run up to him and just pushed him and punched him.[5]

Reference 7 - 2.83% Coverage

The police said you shouldn't be hitting kids that's younger than you. Well I said he shouldn't be hitting kids that's younger than him. So he knows how it feels like. And he goes well really you can't take the law into your own hands, and I was like well I can't really call the police in that situation can I.[6]

Logical reasoning - dilemma - mixed messages/expectations judgments of authorities

Reference 8 - 3.19% Coverage

Do you feel having physical fights is the right way to deal with certain situations?

It's not really acceptable. I just think it's pointless and stupid, but when it needs to be done it has to be done.[7] You've got to defend yourself, if someone comes up to you you've got to defend yourself. If someone comes up to me, I'll give it as good as it gets[8].

[Handwritten annotations: Cognitive-Behavioural conflict; Culture of violence + victimisation; Opposing beliefs + behaviour; Social-learning theory; Victimisation theory]

Reference 9 - 2.03% Coverage

Why do you think they might choose this way of dealing with their problems? I dunno, it's just their bond really, it's the way they understand each other. **Does that make is right?** Not really, but still, each to their own.[9]

<Internals\C Part 1 Participant Number 3> - § 4 references coded [21.81% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.81% Coverage

What is it about the teachers that you get along with? They're fair. Other's just kick you out of lessons for not much.

Reference 2 - 6.82% Coverage

What do you vale most from these relationships? I dunno. Mum's fair. **Tell me why that is important.** Cause if you're not fair you get told off for things that you don't think is bad. Or you're not allowed to do things that you think you should be allowed to do. **How does that make you feel?** Bad, annoyed. **Tell me why it is important that you don't get annoyed with them?** I dunno, it's my Mum and Dad. **And what is it about that?** They're always going to be there.

Reference 3 - 8.25% Coverage

When is it right/ not right?

It would be the right way to behave if the situation was serious. **Like what?** I dunno, I can't really think. **Give me an example of a serious situation when it would be right to get into a fight.** Dunno. Can't think of one. **Can you think back to when you were in more fights? Can you think of a time when you felt it was the right thing to do?** I would after, I would have thought yeah that was good, now I think, no it's stupid. **What's changed?** Everyone else used to be doing it too. Now I think it's stupid following people.

Reference 4 - 4.93% Coverage

Starting a fight for not much reason, when you didn't need to have a fight, fighting won't solve anything. **Tell me about why you feel fighting won't solve anything.** Say someone

smashed a window and beat him up because of it, then it's not going to do anything is it. Just talk about it, see if they might pay for it or something.

<Internals\D Part 1 Participant Number 4> - § 6 references coded [44.52% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 14.47% Coverage

If I feel that I've been wrongly accused or something, then I usually end up being a bit rude. **What would happen?** I'd just probably answer them back and not do what they say, and shout at them sometimes. **Do you feel that you get wrongly accused a lot?** Yes. **Why do you think that is?** Well sometimes teachers, well if you've behaved badly one lesson they think you're that person all the time, and they like pick on you and when they've seen something happen but they don't know who it is, they might blame you. It's really bad. **How often does this happen?** Um, not often but it does happen, every week I'd say.

Reference 2 - 4.64% Coverage

Tell me about how you get on with your teachers.
I get on well with my PE teacher. **Tell me about them.** He's like kind to me and it's a fun subject, I cooperate and everything and it's better.

Reference 3 - 11.25% Coverage

How well do you get on with school mates and friends?
Well I've had this best friend since I've started primary school, but now we're like falling out all of the time. **Do they go to this school?** Yes. **Tell me what you fall out about.** We fall out about anything. Well my best friend, he was best friends with some other person and they fell out and had a fight. He used to spend a lot of time with him. We're just falling out about anything now, just silly things really.

Reference 4 - 3.76% Coverage

Are there times when you are able to prevent or avoid an argument? *Learned helplessness*
No not really. If someone starts on you there's nothing that you can do about it really.

Reference 5 - 6.21% Coverage

Tell me your views on physical fights in close relationships.

Power, controls, dominance

Learned helplessness

Social learning theory

I don't know why it happens but it just does. People just want to feel better about themselves so they put others down. It's not right but it happens, and there's nothing that can be done about it.

Reference 6 - 4.19% Coverage

Do you feel having physical fights is the right way to deal with certain situations?
No it's not right but it happens. Sometimes there's no other way of sorting things out.

<Internals\E Part 1 Participant Number 5> - § 5 references coded [32.89% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 8.98% Coverage

Do you ever find yourself often in trouble at school? Now and in the past? How often?
What happens?
Sometimes. But it only happens like once every month. **What happens?** Just get in a mood and mess around, don't do any work. **What puts you in that mood?** Dunno, getting up too early or something or when I'm really stressed. **Do you find that you stress builds up or is it something that's happened the day before?** Something that's happened the day before.

Reference 2 - 5.77% Coverage

Tell me about these arguments. It's about the same thing everytime, when I've done something and have beaten him or something, then we get in an argument. **So would you say that you are competitive with one another?** Yes. **And what normally happens as a result?** We just have a go at each other.

Reference 3 - 3.71% Coverage

Sometimes my brother winds me up, that makes me angry. **When does this happen?** Outside of school at home. **How does that affect you?** It doesn't really, just will stay away from him really.[10]

Reference 4 - 3.14% Coverage

There are only some things that I can control. Like sometimes I just kick stuff, cause I'm annoyed. Stuff like that I'm not in control of, and like arguing.

Reference 5 - 11.29% Coverage

Do you feel having physical fights is the right way to deal with certain situations?

No. **Is it ever acceptable?** It's ok for the police to use, if someone's trying to attack them and it's self-defence. **Any other ways that you think violence in a relationship would be justified?** No. People shout and that, but it's not violence. **How is violence wrong?** Because people like get hurt. **Why do you think some people have violent and abusive relationships?** With their brothers and sisters, because they're living in the same house together and they get on each other's nerves.

<Internals\F Part 1 Participant Number 6> - § 2 references coded [3.13% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.34% Coverage

Because there was a mix up, and we just didn't get along with each other for about a week,

Reference 2 - 1.79% Coverage

Do you think things at home are linked to how you feel at school? Yes I can't get it out of my head when I'm at school.[11]

<Internals\G Part 1 Participant Number 7> - § 7 references coded [21.16% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 4.65% Coverage

What do you value most in your friends? If I like really hurt myself, they're always there to look after me. If one of my friends fell and really hurt themselves, I would get them help, and they would get me help. **So they look after you and look out for you?** Yes. **So if someone didn't look out for you what would they be doing?** Well ...., he's goes hyper sometimes and really loses it sometimes, but I know he doesn't mean to he's just really hyper. **Why is it important to you that you have people to look out for you?** Because if I didn't have anyone to look after me, like care about me, other kids would take the mickey out of me, saying oh you've hurt yourself, I'm not helping you, cause no one really likes me at this school because I different. .... and all that lot, they've got problems and they're really nice to me.[12]

Reference 2 - 1.52% Coverage

Does it bother you? No not really, it's been like that since my primary school so I've lived through it. **How does that make you feel?** Pretty upset because no one cares about me, except .... and my girlfriend ....., they're the only people who really care about me.[13]

Reference 3 - 6.94% Coverage

Why do you think they want to do that? Um I don't really know 'cos, sometimes in double English we pretend that we're saying something, and we whisper to each other, in each others ears, laughing, were just having a bit of a jiggle, but sometimes .... thinks we are doing it on purpose. **How do you think he feels?** Pretty upset. Sometimes he just walks out of the class crying. **How often does this happen?** Well, we only do it in double English, not in other classes. **So every double English?** Not every double English, sometimes my helper she helps to keep me quite and for me to get on with the lesson. **So you feel that this boys finds it difficult to take your whispering as a joke?** Yes.[14] **Do you think there us any way that you could prevent him from getting upset?** Yes just saying like, calm down, or we'll hang around at lunch, because he likes hanging around with us at lunch, because everyone else calls him ginger boy or four eyes, so when he's around us we don't really call him that stuff. **So he must like you as he wants to hang around with you, but also gets upset by you?** Yes but he knows we're joking, he takes it too seriously. We don't call him dumb arse or four eyes or anything we just whisper in class.[15]

Reference 4 - 1.98% Coverage

So going back to you nice friends, how do they make you feel? Happy, and just protected. **And why's that important to you?** Because if I didn't have any friends no one would be there for me if I fall over or start to get bullied. **And why's it important that you friends are there for you?** Because if they're not there for me, I can't be there for them.

Reference 5 - 2.60% Coverage

What about your parents? Sometimes my Mum doesn't let me do stuff. **What kind of things happen?** Like when I'm grounded, if I shout or accidentally smash a window, 'cos once I kicked a football and it broke my window, I get grounded for that and she took my Xbox out of my room and then I calmed down and I was grounded for about a week. **So when you were shouting at her because you thought it was really unfair, what was she doing?** Just keeping me in my room.

Reference 6 - 1.71% Coverage

How often in a week would you say you feel angry? I'd say sometimes every day. But sometimes when I calm and my Mum and my Dad are home I'm ok, but when my Dad's not

home because he works away sometimes, I get really hyper. When my dad is here, he buys me ice-cream and shows me that he cares about me.

Reference 7 - 1.76% Coverage

On a scale of 0-10, with 10 is really wrong a 0 is not wrong at all, how wrong would you say it is? About a 5 I guess. It's not really nice to shout but it happens. **How come is only a 5 and not a 6?** Because sometimes I have to shout at ... to calm him down, because if I just like talked to him it wouldn't work.[16]

<Internals\H Part 1 Participant Number 9> - § 4 references coded [30.09% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 9.43% Coverage

What do you get from these friendships?
Get's you through the day, people that you can talk to and trust instead of being on your own. **You say that you can trust your friends, can you tell me why that is important to you?** So that you won't have worry about falling out. **And can you tell me why that is important to you?** Well there is no point in having friends if you fall out every 5 seconds. **Tell me why that is?** Because then you would have no friends and you would be back at the beginning.

Reference 2 - 7.24% Coverage

Tell me how you avoid arguments with these people who you are close to (family members, boyfriend/ girlfriend, close friends).
With my brother it's very hard to avoid arguing. If we're not in the same room we don't argue, but doors have to be closed. We argue about anything.

Do you feel this is a good way of avoiding arguments?
Yes because we don't have to see each other.

Reference 3 - 4.71% Coverage

How would the other person feel as a result of an argument?
Half the time I don't care because he's so annoying. He's probably feeling pissed off and wound up and then I laugh even more. Don't think he's feeling anything else other then annoyed.

Reference 4 - 8.71% Coverage

Do you feel having physical fights/arguments is the right way to deal with certain situations?

It could be worse, I could end up stabbing someone, especially my brother when we're standing in the kitchen. The majority of my friends would do the same. **When you're angry, what else could you do?** There is no way that I could just sit there, I'd have to chew my own fist off. **Why do you think people have arguments or fights?** I don't know, could be anything.

[handwritten margin note: Minimisation]

<Internals\l Part 1 Participant Number 10> - § 7 references coded [22.47% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 3.27% Coverage

Are there times when you are able to prevent or avoid an argument? How?

Say I'm in school then it's completely different because unless it really does spark off then I won't start anything in school, because there's no point in me getting in trouble. Say something's happened outside of school there's no point bringing it into school, cause then you just get in trouble in and out.

Reference 2 - 3.31% Coverage

Are you able to understand how they are feeling at these times?

Yes, I do understand. Everyone says there's always two sides to every story no matter what, but it depends whether they're making up what they're saying. Cause like if you were both there and you know what happens and you said it and then they said something completely different then that's when you know something's wrong.

[handwritten margin note: Mistrust, suspicion, attachment]

Reference 3 - 5.52% Coverage

What makes a positive relationship?

I dunno, I suppose its like if you both put something in to make it work, whether its friends, family or a proper relationship. I reckon that they should both put stuff in and I dunno. **So would you say that effort is important?** Yes. **And what else?** Say they've got a problem or something they need to talk about like get it off their mind, they'll at least tell you about it, cause like say you're doing something wrong and you don't know about it and they think that you're doing something wrong they tell you, then you can try and find a way to sort it out. **So would you say that communication is important**? Yes.

Reference 4 - 3.87% Coverage

Do you have any idea as to how you can achieve that? It depends, some people I do hang around with, we do cause shit sometimes, well we used to, and I have cut down on that cause the cops will be over. I've calmed down since the first month. **So you think the key to moving to a 9 is who you hang around with?** Yes sometimes it is the people I hang around with, other times I do admit I can be bitchy and I will go on one but it depends what mood I'm in.[17]

Reference 5 - 1.86% Coverage

After you've had an argument with someone, how do you actually feel? It they've said something that's like offensive to me or any of my mates or anything, then I'll probably feel better for getting it out of my system.

Displacement

Reference 6 - 2.37% Coverage

How else could someone react in such situations?
They could talk or something, but not everyone want s to talk. **Can you tell me more about that?** Some people can't listen, they won't listen, they want a fight and there's nothing you can do about it. Talking won't do anything.

Previous experiences culture.

Reference 7 - 2.28% Coverage

Tell me why you feel some people get into fights? Because of something bad that they've done. If someone messes you around or treat you bad or hits you. My Mum's always said that if they hit you then you hit them back. The schools says two wrongs don't make a right.[18]

Role model, significant other, family engagement

<Internals\J Part 1 Participant Number 11> - § 2 references coded [12.17% Coverage]
Reference 1 - 5.50% Coverage

Are there times when you are able to prevent or avoid an argument? How?
Yes I normally walk away from an argument anyway, it does my head in. But then teachers, I just have an argument. **When you walk away from an argument does that prevent it from escalating?** No, because when you see them again they start arguing again, so I might as well have stayed there and argued back.

Reference 2 - 6.67% Coverage

You said that you walk away from some situations to prevent arguments from happening. Do you think walking away is a good strategy? No. **Why's that?** Just stand

there and punch them in the face and then walk away.[19] **Why would that be preferable?** Because they're arguing with you first. **So do you think that ends the argument then and there?** Yes. **Why would you not choose to just walk away?** Dunno. **Could it be because it wouldn't be dealt with then and there?** Yes.

<Internals\K Part 1 Participant Number 12> - § 4 references coded [14.86% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 4.21% Coverage

Are some better than others? Yes. Some can be better than others, some of the teachers let us get away with everything, but other teachers don't and are like really strict, it's like go away. **In which classes do you learn more?** The teachers that are strict, you learn lots, but the teachers, some of the classes that you can just sit there and don't do nothing you don't get told off and it's really fun. We can chuck pencils at each other. **But you're not really learning?** No. **Are there any teachers that can make it fun and you can learn?** Not really.[20]

Reference 2 - 2.00% Coverage

So what do you do outside of school together? We chuck stones and that, and they phone the old bill and they chase us like up the road and that. It's so funny, they can't catch us. **Could you tell me why you do this?** Because we're so bored, there's nothing to do.

Unmet needs

Reference 3 - 5.72% Coverage

When you're having an argument with someone, are you able to understand how you are making them feel? Yes. **How do you think you are making them feel?** Sad. **Why do you think you're making them feel like that?** Because I'm angry. **And how does that make you feel?** Well happy sometimes, when they've started it. **Can you tell me why that is?** Because they're getting what they deserve. **Do you always feel happy or do ever feel maybe I went too far?** Yes sometimes I feel like that, it goes too far and that, it's horrible. I feel really gutted after. **What do you feel?** Really sad that I had a go at them, it's stupid. **Then what happens?** Then everyone makes up. **Do you often feel like that after an argument, or just sometimes?** Sometimes. **Most of the time?** Yes.[21]

Taking the law into their has
Experience injustice
Not relying on anyone or anything
- Attachment

Reference 4 - 2.94% Coverage

So when you're with her 24/7 then you're going to get annoyed with little things that she does? Yes. Like when you're going out with your boyfriend and that, like 24/7, you're having an argument with them. Does it tend to be over silly things that you are irritated by? Yes. Do you understand how she feels when you are having an argument? I dunno. Can you understand afterwards? Dunno.

Annotations

[1] This could suggest that this participant has inflexible and rigid thinking. They are also implying that they do not have control over their behaviour.

Annotations

[2] This could indicate some difficulty with impulse control. The participant is saying that the cannot think through a situaiton first before choosing what to do.

[3] Lack of empathy

[4] This demonstatres that the participant has made a perceptual error of judgment.

[5] Here the participant is saying one thing 'just leave 'em to it' but then provides an example of when he intervened in a violent situation. Therefore the participants thoughts do not appear to match their behaviour. What was it about the situaiton that led him to intervene? Previous role reversal? Confirmation of identity? Easier to empathise with a situation that he has been in?

[6] This provides some infomration about the participant's logical reasoning and level of moral reasoning. According to Kohlberg they are in the post-conventional stage. Kohlberg suggests that at this stage individuals 'live by their own abstract principles about right and wrong-principles that typically include such basic human rights as life, liberty, and justice'. In stage 6 'action is never a means but always an end in itself; the individual acts because it is right, and not because it is instrumental, expected, legal, or previously agreed upon'. This is one explanation, could it also be that the behaviour described here by the participant serves to confirm their own identity?

[7] Here the participant is expressing his views/thoughts/beliefs about abusive behavour but is behaving in the oppposite way to his beliefs. Does he therefore experience some kind of cognitive dissonance?

[8] Moral reasoning in terms of 'en eye for an eye'.

[9] Here the participant is not overtly excusing abusive behaviour but provides an explanation for why it happens. The participant appears to convey that abusive behaviour can have a function, it can help the two parties to 'understand each other'. When the participant says 'each to their own' this may indicate that the particioant feels that we all have a choice and some individuals choose to interact in this way. Is this therefore suggesting that the participant perceives there to be no power imbalances in violent and abusive relationships?

[10] This is quite interesting. Here this young person is attributing his anger to his brother's actions. He says that this makes him angry but that it doesn't really affect him. What does he mean by this contradiction? Does this reflect an error in logical reasoning or an emotional literacy difficulty?

[11] Not sure whether this bit should be coded where it is, she is making an explicit link here about home life and school.

[12] Interesting section. This young person feels he has freinds at school but also feel that people don't lke him becasue he is 'different'. Is this an accurate attribution? The young person also makes an assumption that other people where the programe is being held will probably like him. How has he reasoned this?

[13] Contradiction here - Does it bother you? No not really. How does that make you feel? Pretty upset. How can something not bother you and also make you pretty upset??? A logical reasoning error??

[14] Here the young person is able to suggest how the person mught ne feeling that they tease. But they are also attributing that people who want to get in arguments with him do so becasue he has trased them. But he reasoned it that they are just 'having a bit of a giggle' and therefore it is justified.

[15] This is an interesting bit. This young person can suggest how negative behaviours can be prevented. He also

expressess an unhealthy bully-bullied relationship going on between him and the friend in question. he reasons that this is ok. This also suggests that he understnads the purpose of friendships to be like this.

[16] Another reference here to witnessing domestically abusive father.

[17] Peer group influecing behaviour or externalising??

[18] An example here of a young person receiving contradictory advice, and perhaps an indication of the wider issue of educating families and communities.

[19] Here the young person advocates the use of violence as opposed to just walking away...

[20] Contradiction here

[21] Here the young person expresses there level of moral reasoning - an eye for an eye.

Name: Tree Nodes\Participants Views\No effect

Description: Explicit references where the participants feel that the programme has had no effect.

<Internals\L Part 2 Participant Number 2> - § 1 reference coded [0.65% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.65% Coverage

Its rubbish, it's not helping anyone in the slightest. I was in there thinking how this is actually good for me, I know it already.

[handwritten: Programme generally]

<Internals\M Part 2 Participant Number 4> - § 1 reference coded [1.32% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.32% Coverage

Have things changed at all, in the last couple of months?

Not really, it's just the same.

[handwritten: No changes at school, Then makes a contradiction.]

<Internals\N Part 2 Participant Number 5> - § 1 reference coded [3.15% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 3.15% Coverage

Tell me how you would avoid using violence or abuse to solve problems?

Just keep out of his way. **Do you think you are more aware since the programme, has it highlighted anything for you?** No.

[handwritten: No changes to insight or awareness. Then makes a contradiction.]

<Internals\P Part 2 Participant Number 8> - § 4 references coded [7.80% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.54% Coverage

[handwritten: "Has this (getting into a fight changed recently?" - Not really but it I think.]

Have your relationships with your school mates or friends changed in any way since the programme?

No not really.

[handwritten: No changes in relationships.]

Reference 2 - 0.64% Coverage

So nothing's really changed for you at home? No.

[handwritten: No changes in family dynamics.]

Reference 3 - 4.54% Coverage

Tell me about feeling angry. When does this happen and why? Has this changed in any way since the programme?

I get angry with teachers sometimes. **Any other times?** Not really, no. **Has this changed at all since the programme?** No, not really.

How do you feel about your future? Has this changed in any way since the programme?

Not really.

No change in regulating emotions. But contradicting behaviour at school has got better

Reference 4 - 1.08% Coverage

Has your approach to solving problems changed since the programme?

Not really.

No change in problem-solving But contradiction are using more preventative behaviours.

<Internals\Q Part 2 Participant Number 9> - § 1 reference coded [7.61% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 7.61% Coverage

Have your relationships with your school mates or friends changed in any way since the programme? Got better or worse?

Not really, still the same friends. We don't really fall out at all. We haven't had any arguments recently. Nothing has changed really. **Have they have noticed a change in you?** Yes in a way, I'm in their classes more but they haven't said anything.[1]

No change with friendships.

<Internals\R Part 2 Participant Numbers 10 and 12> - § 1 reference coded [0.39% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.39% Coverage

So you don't feel that much has changed at home? No (10).

Annotations

[1] Participant 9 - Social Support - Does not perceive any change in social support, no recent arguments.

6.5 Data Analysis Process

In the first stage of the thematic analysis I read the interview transcripts twice to become familiar with the data.

With the support of NVIVO, I then looked at the first transcript in more detail, and searched inductively for the main themes emerging from the questions posed in the interviews, as opposed to pre-defined themes.

Themes were given provisional labels and definitions, which over the process of the data analysis were redefined and refined.

I then went on to analyse the other transcripts. Participants' responses were sorted under the emerging theme headings.

Following this, I identified which codes related to my research questions.

Annotations were made during the coding processes.

The codes were also annotated manually on paper copies.

A visual framework guided my approach to data analysis, and supported my thinking when exploring, analysing, interpreting and integrating the data. This model is titled 'Qualitative Tasks enabled by CAQDAS packages' (adapted from Lewins and Silver, 2007) and can be found in appendix 6.5.1.

6.5.1 Qualitative Tasks enabled by CAQDAS packages (Adapted from Lewins & Silver, 2007)

Qualitative Tasks enabled by CAQDAS packages

6.6 Emotional Literacy Checklists raw data examples

A small selection of completed Student Emotional Literacy Checklists has been included as evidence.

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	Very like me	Quite like me	Only a bit like me	Not like me at all
12 I carry on trying even if I find the work difficult.		✓		
13 I am easily hurt by what others say about me.		✓		
14 I calm down quickly after I have got upset.	✓			
15 I am rather a shy person.	✓			
16 When I notice people getting upset, I try to help them feel better.	✓			
17 I make a good effort with most of my school work.			✓	
18 I tend to put myself down even when I have done something well.				
19 I am usually a calm person.				
20 I spend too much time alone.				
21 I try to help someone who is being bullied.	✓			
22 I get distracted easily from what I'm supposed to be doing.	✓			
23 I worry a lot about the things I'm not good at.	✓			
24 I can wait patiently for my turn.				
25 I can make friends again after a row.				

Thank you for filling in this checklist.

Phase 1 No 7

Emotional Literacy Student Checklist

Ages 11 to 16

First name ____ Surname ____

Date 8/5/09 Year group 9 Male ✓ Female

Here are some questions about you. Please try to answer them as honestly as you can. Read each question and then put a tick in one of the boxes. Make sure you do each question.

Here is an example of how to answer the questions. If you do not think you are good at many things, you would tick the box 'not like me at all'.

	Very like me	Quite like me	Only a bit like me	Not like me at all
I am good at many things.				✓

Now please answer the rest of the questions.

	Very like me	Quite like me	Only a bit like me	Not like me at all
1 I try to listen to other people's views even when I think they are wrong.	✓			
2 I often forget what I should be doing.		✓		
3 I am aware of my own strengths and weaknesses.		✓		
4 I often lose my temper.				
5 A lot of people seem to like me.		✓		
6 I know when people are starting to get upset.			✓	
7 I tend to leave things to the last minute.				
8 When I'm sad, I usually know the reason why.	✓			
9 I get upset if I do badly at something.				
10 I can make new friends easily.	✓			
11 I get annoyed when other people get things wrong.			✓	

Please turn over

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Phase 1 N3 85

Emotional Literacy Student Checklist

Ages 11 to 16

First name _____ Surname _____

Date 7/5/09   Year group 9   Male ✓   Female ○

Here are some questions about you. Please try to answer them as honestly as you can. Read each question and then put a tick in one of the boxes. Make sure you do each question.

Here is an example of how to answer the questions. If you do not think you are good at many things, you would tick the box 'not like me at all'.

	Very like me	Quite like me	Only a bit like me	Not like me at all
I am good at many things.				✓

Now please answer the rest of the questions.

	Very like me	Quite like me	Only a bit like me	Not like me at all
1 I try to listen to other people's views even when I think they are wrong.	✓			
2 I often forget what I should be doing.	✓			
3 I am aware of my own strengths and weaknesses.			✓	
4 I often lose my temper.				✓
5 A lot of people seem to like me.		✓		
6 I know when people are starting to get upset.		✓		
7 I tend to leave things to the last minute.	✓			
8 When I'm sad, I usually know the reason why.	✓			
9 I get upset if I do badly at something.				✓
10 I can make new friends easily.				✓
11 I get annoyed when other people get things wrong.				✓

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	Very like me	Quite like me	Only a bit like me	Not like me at all
12 I carry on trying even if I find the work difficult.		✓		
13 I am easily hurt by what others say about me.	✓			
14 I calm down quickly after I have got upset.			✓	
15 I am rather a shy person.				✓
16 When I notice people getting upset, I try to help them feel better.		✓		
17 I make a good effort with most of my school work.				✓
18 I tend to put myself down even when I have done something well.				✓
19 I am usually a calm person.	✓			
20 I spend too much time alone.				✓
21 I try to help someone who is being bullied.			✓	
22 I get distracted easily from what I'm supposed to be doing.	✓			
23 I worry a lot about the things I'm not good at.				
24 I can wait patiently for my turn.	✓			
25 I can make friends again after a row.		✓		

Thank you for filling in this checklist.

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Phase 2 N° 4 (67)

Emotional Literacy Student Checklist

Ages 11 to 16

First name: _____ Surname: _____

Date: 8/7/09 Year group: 8•9 Male: ☐ Female: ☐

Here are some questions about you. Please try to answer them as honestly as you can. Read each question and then put a tick in one of the boxes. Make sure you do each question.

Here is an example of how to answer the questions. If you do not think you are good at many people, you would tick the box not like me at all.

	Very like me	Quite like me	Only a bit like me	Not like me at all
I am good at many things.				✓

Now please answer the rest of the questions.

	Very like me	Quite like me	Only a bit like me	Not like me at all	
1	I try to listen to other people's views even when I think they are wrong.		✓		3
2	I often forget what I should be doing.		✓		2
3	I am aware of my own strengths and weaknesses.		✓		3
4	I often lose my temper.			✓	3
5	A lot of people seem to like me.		✓		4
6	I know when people are starting to get upset.		✓✓		1
7	I tend to leave things to the last minute.		✓✓		3
8	When I'm sad, I usually know the reason why.	✓			2
9	I get upset if I do badly at something.		✓✓		3
10	I can make new friends easily.		✓✓		3
11	I get annoyed when other people get things wrong.		✓		3

Please turn over

	Very like me	Quite like me	Only a bit like me	Not like me at all	
12	I carry on trying even if I find the work difficult.			✓	2
13	I am easily hurt by what others say about me.			✓	3
14	I calm down quickly after I have got upset.			✓	2
15	I am rather a shy person.			✓	2
16	When I notice people getting upset, I try to help them feel better.		✓		3
17	I make a good effort with most of my school work.		✓		3
18	I tend to put myself down even when I have done something well.		✓		2
19	I am usually a calm person.		✓		3
20	I spend too much time alone.			✓	3
21	I try to help someone who is being bullied.		✓		3
22	I get distracted easily from what I'm supposed to be doing.		✓✓		4
23	I worry a lot about the things I'm not good at.	✓			3
24	I can wait patiently for my turn.		✓		3
25	I can make friends again after a row.			✓	4

Thank you for filling in this checklist.

nferNelson

Emotional Literacy Student Checklist

Ages 11 to 16

First name _____ Surname _____

Date 8/7/09 Year group ☐ Male ⊘ Female ○

Here are some questions about you. Please try to answer them as honestly as you can. Read each question and then put a tick in one of the boxes. Make sure you do each question.

Here is an example of how to answer the questions. If you do not think you are good at many things, you would tick the box 'not like me at all'.

	Very like me	Quite like me	Only a bit like me	Not like me at all
I am good at many things.				✓

Now please answer the rest of the questions.

	Very like me	Quite like me	Only a bit like me	Not like me at all
1 I try to listen to other people's views even when I think they are wrong.		✓		
2 I often forget what I should be doing.			✓	
3 I am aware of my own strengths and weaknesses.		✓		
4 I often lose my temper.			✓	
5 A lot of people seem to like me.	✓			
6 I know when people are starting to get upset.			✓	
7 I tend to leave things to the last minute.			✓	
8 When I'm sad, I usually know the reason why.	✓			
9 I get upset if I do badly at something.		✓		
10 I can make new friends easily.			✓	
11 I get annoyed when other people get things wrong.		✓		

Please turn over

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	Very like me	Quite like me	Only a bit like me	Not like me at all
12 I carry on trying even if I find the work difficult.	✓			
13 I am easily hurt by what others say about me.			✓	
14 I calm down quickly after I have got upset.			✓	
15 I am rather a shy person.			✓	
16 When I notice people getting upset, I try to help them feel better.		✓		
17 I make a good effort with most of my school work.		✓		
18 I tend to put myself down even when I have done something well.			✓	
19 I am usually a calm person.		✓		
20 I spend too much time alone.			✓	
21 I try to help someone who is being bullied.	✓			
22 I get distracted easily from what I'm supposed to be doing.	✓			
23 I worry a lot about the things I'm not good at.			✓	
24 I can wait patiently for my turn.				
25 I can make friends again after a row.			✓	

Thank you for filling in this checklist.

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7. Results

In this section, further details about the results obtained will be given.

7.1 Quantitative Data

7.1.1 Descriptive statistics and SPSS output tables

Emotional Literacy Checklist Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	ELC score before programme	66.1111	9	3.55121	1.18374
	ELC score after programme	66.3333	9	5.91608	1.97203

Emotional Literacy Checklist Results Dependent T-Test Correlations

		N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	ELC score before programme & ELC score after programme	9	.908	.001

Emotional Literacy Checklist Results Dependent T-Test

		Paired Differences			95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	ELC score before programme - ELC score after programme	-.22222	3.07318	1.02439	-2.58448	2.14003	-.217	8	.834

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7.2 Qualitative Data

7.2.1 Paper 1 Code Descriptors

Table 4
Paper 1: Themes arising from thematic analysis of interview data with code descriptors

Research Question	Superordinate Code	Subordinate Code	Descriptor
1	Attitudes	Normative attitudes	Any reference made to an abusive situation where abusive behaviour is the favourable option, and some judgment made about it which provides information about the young person's attitude and beliefs about violence and abusive behaviours. Include references to positive experiences of using abusive behaviour, and acceptance that it is part of everyday like,
		Societal influences and consequences	Any reference made to an abusive situation where abusive behaviour is the perceived as resulting in negative consequences. This may include references to wider society's views on abusive behaviour.
		Culture clash	References which provide evidence of mixed, muddled and conflicting attitudes. This may include normative attitudes contrasted with societal influences.
		Emotional language	Use of emotional language which provides an insight into attitudes towards abusive behaviour. Examples of emotional literacy difficulties, or understanding the emotions/feelings of others.
2	Reasoning	Normative attribution	Any reference made which highlights the normative attribution styles of the young people. This may include references to factors outside of one's control, and the justifiability of abusive behaviour.
		Contrasting narratives	References to reasoning about abusive situations which is more in line with that of the wider society, and contradicts the normative attribution of this group.
		Cultural identity	Any reference to internalising something or identifying something as ones identity.
		Emotional literacy	References to difficulties with understanding how others would feel during or following an abusive interaction which provides an insight into their reasoning of abusive behaviour.
3	Behaviour	Taught responses	Any reference to how violent/abusive behaviour/situations can be avoided, which echo the narratives of adults. This may include references to removing oneself from a potential conflict situation, or talking.
		Learnt and reinforced behaviours	References to avoiding abusive situations which appear to better reflect the cognitions of these young people. This will include references where the participant deems that there is no way to prevent such situations occurring. This may include references to past experiences and the varying success of using different approaches.
		Emotional regulation	References to emotions which have impacted on these young people's ability to prevent or avoid a potential conflict situation.

7.2.2 Paper 2 Code Descriptors

Table 5
Paper 2: Themes arising from thematic analysis of interview data with code descriptors

Research Questions	Superordinate code	Subordinate code	Descriptor
1. Is there a significant difference in the degree of targeted behaviours/skills* between baseline and follow-up measures of participants on the Changing Places Programme?	Cognitions	Comparison of Attitudes	**Data from part 1 and part 2.** Any reference made to an abusive situation and some judgment made about it which provides information about the young person's attitude and beliefs about violence and abusive behaviours.
		Comparison of Attribution	**Data from part 1 and part 2.** Any reference made to attributing a negative behaviour either internally or externally. References of how the young people make sense of events/behaviours by attributing these to specific factors. Locus of control. Their ability to see from different perspectives.
		Comparison of Reasoning	**Data from part 1 and part 2.** Any reference which provides information about the young peoples' reasoning of negative/ abusive situations/events/behaviours.
	Behaviour	Comparison of Preventative Behaviours	**Data from part 1 and part 2.** Any reference to how violent/abusive behaviour/situations can be avoided. Also include references where the participant deems that there is no way to prevent such situations occurring.
		Comparison of Self-Control	**Data from part 1 and part 2.** Explicit references about how much control the participants feel they have over their lives and specific situations.
	Other	Comparison of Emotional Literacy	**Data from part 1 and part 2.** Reference to emotional language. Examples of emotional literacy difficulties, or understanding the emotions/feelings of others. Evidence of emotional awareness.
		Comparison of Confidence and Self-Esteem	**Data from part 1 and part 2.** Implicit references to future aspirations; feeling positive/negative about oneself

Research Question	Theme	Subtheme	Description
2. Are there any additional effects of the intervention on other non-targeted behaviours or skills, explored through semi-structured interviews?	Additional Effects	Identity	Data from part 1 and part 2. Explicit references to internalising something or identifying something as ones identity.
		Peer Groups and Friendships	Data from part 1 and part 2. References made to social support networks or individuals.
		School	Data from part 1 and part 2. References about school, positive and negative, excluding friendships, but including references to teachers.
		Sense of Wellbeing	Data from part 1 and part 2. Regulation of emotions, specifically anger.
3. How do the young people feel about the programme? What positive elements can they identify and what would they like to see changed?	Programme Positives	Delivery	References to the way in which the programme was delivered by the facilitators, including the group rules, the facilitators' style, and extrinsic motivators.
		Programme	Specific references to the programme - includes references made to specific activities and how these increased their awareness.
	Programme Limitations	Programme	Specific references to the programme and changes that they would like to see- includes references made to specific activities, too much talking, increased negative feelings and length of sessions.
		Delivery	References made to the way in which the programmes were delivered, factors which are external to the material covered in the programme or the programme structure. These include group rules, location and timing of sessions, and facilitators.
		Preparation	References made to events or issues prior to starting the programme or that were not addressed prior to starting of the programme, that they would like to see happen differently or be changed. These include confidentiality, motivation to participate, group dynamics and cohesion.
4. What do the young people on the Changing Places Programme feel they have gained from the programme?	Participant Views	Attitude and Awareness	Evidence of insightfulness and also reference to attitudes or attitude change.

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Behaviour	Any reference to changes in general behaviour, regardless of context, positive or negative behaviours.
No Effect	Explicit references where the participants feel that the programme has had no effect.
Preventative Behaviours and Problem-Solving Skills	Any reference to how violent and abusive behaviour or situations can be avoided. Also include references where the young person deems that there is no way to prevent such situations. Also any reference to problem-solving skills.
Relationships	References to relationships with teachers, peers, and family members and some judgment about whether they feels these relationships have changed in any way following the programme.

7.2.3 Facilitators corroborated data

Table 6
Facilitator Code descriptors
Research Question 3: How do the young people feel about the programme? What positive elements can they identify and what would they like to see changed?

Superordinate code	Subordinate code	Code descriptor	Illustrative examples
Programme Positives	Programme	Positive references to the programme - includes references made to specific activities and how these increased their awareness.	The cartoon strip session… they loved it. It was the only time when they were really quiet and they just got into it. We actually ended up doing lots of YouTube clips, which are not in the programme, but you know, talking about conflict in relationships and domestic abuse.
	Delivery	Positive references to the way in which the programme was delivered by the facilitators, including the group rules, the facilitators' style, and extrinsic motivators.	
Programme Limitations	Programme	Specific references to the programme and changes that they would like to see- includes references made to specific activities, too much talking, increased negative feelings and length of sessions	Maybe a kind of drama or something, that sort of thing, a bit removed from reality. …they were trying so hard not to ever open up and tell us anything that they might regret, they ended up having to just block out most things, and not get drawn into discussion. I think (the sessions) could have been shorter… Two hours is too long, for that type of client group. Well I've got one quite large criticism that's a general one, just that it's quite an intellectually based programme in that there's quite a lot of written stuff, quite a lot of stuff to then read and work through, quite a lot of stuff to look at.
	Delivery	References to changes they would like to see made to the way in which the programmes were delivered, factors which are external to the material covered in the	(we) didn't get any time, apart from when we were actually at the school… to meet up and plan together. Maybe it would have been better at a youth club or something like that.

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programme or the programme structure. These include group rules, location and timing of sessions, and facilitators.	*It wasn't an ideal room for group work.... I don't think it was a great venue.* *We did end up in the school, which wasn't ideal. And we did get moved about six times I think, rooms. That really didn't help at all.*
Preparation	References made to events or issues prior to starting the programme or that were not addressed prior to starting of the programme, that they would like to see happen differently or be changed. These include confidentiality, motivation to participate, group dynamics and cohesion.	*They weren't engaged....* *I think the major first thing was the selection of participants. Maybe those girls would have been ok, had there been more sort of preparation.* *If those girls had had more preparation time or they'd been more stuff done around how comfortable they would feel in a group.* *I think maybe a couple of warm-up sessions before you actually start the material. But definitely some individual work.* *We were constantly trying to get them to listen and like contribute appropriately.* *They weren't in a place where they were able to engage with group work, so it wasn't the right time for them perhaps.* *I think the girls didn't think that their behaviour was causing them problems.* *...they definitely weren't talking about change and it felt a bit futile to start talking about change.* *...but I think, 'cos they were all finding their way and an awful lot of dynamics go on in those groups about who's top dog, especially among young men and who's the boss and who isn't and who's leading us and who isn't. I think you have to be quite firm as a facilitator and I think there were moments when as female facilitator, that was really severely challenged.*

7.3 Paper 2 – Research Question 4 Results

4. What do the young people on the Changing Places Programme feel they have gained from the programme?

Attitude and Awareness

Evidence of insightfulness, and explicit references to attitudes or attitude change were coded. Over half of the young people expressed that they had gained greater awareness of their abusive behaviour, the need to change this behaviour, and an understanding of how to go about this:

> *I'm recognising my abusive behaviour. – Sophie.*

> *I have more of an understanding of how to deal with things. – Ben.*

> *[Did it (the programme) change how you think about things?] Yes, they said when you get angry don't take it out on no one, just try and let the emotion go, and it's helped because I don't get in trouble no more. It's quite good actually. – Holly.*

Two young people initially did not feel that they had gained any insight, however upon reflection they were able to identify changes in their behaviour:

> *[So has school got any better or worse recently?] … It's like half and half really… I dunno, it's more better than it is bad but it's still round about the same… [So do you feel you're getting on any better or worse with the teachers?]… I don't think I (am) but I suppose that everyone else around you sees it except you. – Hannah.*

> *[So has school got any better or worse recently?] A little bit worse… [Why is it worse?]… I dunno why it's worse, I can't think… [Are there any teachers that you are getting on better with?] Yes. [Do you think you've changed at all?] Do you know what, one of my friends*

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told me the other day, that as soon as I've been doing that thing I've changed. – Lucy.

Behaviour

Explicit references to positive and negative changes in general behaviour, regardless of context were coded. The majority of young people were able to identify changes in their behaviour following the programme. The majority felt that they were displaying less negative behaviours, which had resulted in them getting on better at school and developing improved relationships with teachers. For example:

[What kind of things have got better (at school)?] Like behaviour in lessons and stuff… I'm just like not shouting at anyone across the room or anything. – Ben.

Some of the young people identified positive behaviours which had developed, such as improved listening and improved attention:

[Would you say you're getting in trouble less now?] Yes. [Why do you think that is?] Just paying more attention… Just like stopped talking to friends when the teacher's talking. – Liam.

… I have stopped my swearing as much and everything… We've started to calm down and just been listening to them and everything. – Hannah.

No references were made to an increase in negative behaviours or to a reduction in positive behaviours.

Family Situation and Relationships

References to family relationships or dynamics were coded. Out of the nine participants, four reported more positive sibling relationships following the programme, and two reported an improved relationship with their mother. For example:

Things have got better. Mum trusts me more… I haven't lied to her and have done as I'm told. – Sophie.

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> *My relationship has changed with my Mum. I used to be in trouble every day. – Emily.*

Only one participant made a reference to his father. This reference can be found in the results section under research question four, under the subheadings programme limitations: delivery. Other than this, no other references to fathers were made in any of the interviews, either before or after the programme.

Two young people reported no change in their family relationships.

No Effect

Explicit references where the participants felt that the programme had little or no effect were coded. All of the young people expressed at some point during the interview that they felt that they programme had had little or no impact on certain areas of their life. More specifically, the areas of their lives that the young people reported that the programme had little to no effect on were: school, their insight and awareness, their relationships, their family dynamics, regulating their emotions, their friendships and problem-solving. There were, however, many contradictions. When they were questioned further, the majority were able to identify some changes following the programme. Few explicitly expressed that they felt that this was as a direct result of the programme and were keen to dismiss the effectiveness of the intervention. These are examples of some of the contradictions:

> *[Have things changed at all (at school), in the last couple of months?] Not really, it's just the same. [Have you recently found yourself frequently in trouble at school for acting out or fighting?] No. Got much better. I'm going to all my lessons. - Josh*

> *[So you don't feel that much has changed at home?] No… Me and my sister used to argue like everyday but like since the past six months we've calmed down. – Hannah.*

[Has your approach to solving problems changed since the programme?] Not really… [Tell me how you avoid arguments or conflicts with them (family members).] Just walk off. [Have you always done that?] No not always. [So what has changed?] I'm doing that more now. – Ben.

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This literature review has been marked and examined separately from the examination of this thesis. It is included as a separate document, for the purpose of completeness and to give coherence to the whole thesis.

Literature Review
Child witnesses of domestic abuse – relationship attitudes and intervention programmes

Domestic violence and abuse can be defined as 'systematic patterned behaviour designed, consciously or subconsciously, to control and dominate a partner/ former partner' (ADVA, 2001). Domestic violence is a large and widespread problem. It is estimated that one in four women experience domestic abuse at some stage during their lives (British Medical Association, 1998). Where domestic violence occurs, a hidden population of children exist who witness such abuse (Hughes, 1992; Abrahams, 1994). For the purpose of this review 'domestic violence and abuse' shall be referred to as 'domestic abuse'.

Personal interest

I am interested in conducting research into this area due to a range of experiences working with young people, both in and out of the care system, some of whom were residing with their mother in women's refuges. It was brought to my attention that the majority of these children had witnessed domestic abuse at some point in their lives, and this appeared to be having an effect on their social and emotional wellbeing, often presenting in the form of disruptive and destructive behaviours. I was surprised to find that many had not had the opportunity to disclose the details of such experiences. They had not had the opportunity to learn and make sense of what they had witnessed. They had not been provided with the opportunity to learn new skills, to enable them to form more positive relationships themselves. From these experiences, I went on to investigate the prevalence

of what I had experienced, and the provision available for these young people. I found that violence and abusive relationships permeate the lives of many young people, through the violence in their families, their communities and their schools.

Relevance of literature review

Where domestic abuse occurs, children or young people are likely to have been in the same or next room in 90% of cases (Hughes, 1992), although many (73%) directly witness violent assaults (Abrahams, 1994). Abusive relationships amongst secondary school students are a disturbingly common phenomenon (O'Keefe, 1997). There is an acute gap in provision for children and young people who experience domestic abuse (The Countryside Agency, 2002). Despite increasingly strong evidence linking domestic abuse with detrimental impacts on children and young people, there have been comparatively few developments in the UK concerning specific intervention strategies (Hester et al., 2000). There has been relatively little work testing the effectiveness of intervention programmes designed to reduce teenage relationship violence (Jaffe et al., 1986; Peled & Edleson, 1992).

Outline

This review seeks to explore the literature into the effects of domestic abuse on children and young people. I aim to identify areas where further research is needed. This review will include both knowledge-based elements, where previous work will be described and key theories explored, along with argumentational elements describing what I have found questionable with previous research, and how such issues may addressed when considering my research. The structure of this literature review will be an initial exploration at the historical development of research into the effects of domestic abuse on children, the impact of experiencing domestic abuse in childhood on adolescent relationships, followed by a historical exploration of research into provision and group intervention for such young people. I shall endeavour to explore the types of questions being asked, and the main arguments in the research literature. This will lead to a more detailed look at theoretical frameworks and how these have developed over time. Following

this, I will highlight the methodological assumptions made, and the epistemological stances taken in the reviewed research. I will also evaluate the data collection techniques used, how ethical issues have been addressed, and the general reliability and validity of the research in this area.

Much of the research into child witnesses of domestic abuse was conducted in the 1980s. I feel it is important to acknowledge this fact when analysing the data. In addition to this, I consider some of the research cited to have methodological flaws, biases and a lack of clarity. I could have chosen to focus this literature review on more recent research which I consider contain none or fewer of the problems mentioned above. However I believe that it is vital to explore the history of research in this area, to study the questions that were being asked, and to explore the answers put forward. I believe that much can be learnt from understanding the methodological approaches taken by others, the problems encountered and the measures taken to resolve these issues.

Process

This literature search has been achieved by accessing research on the topic of child witnesses of domestic abuse using electronic databases, such as the University library catalogue. I also used search engines such as EBSCO, JSTOR, and PsycArticles, which led me to the location of electronic and/or hard copies of the required articles. Key search phrases included variations of the words 'domestic violence abuse', 'child', 'witnesses', 'attitudes', 'intervention' and 'prevention'. A number of articles from journals such as 'Violence and Victims' and 'Journal of Interpersonal Violence' were found using the methods described above, and obtained through the University's inter-library loan service from The British Library, London. Other materials, such as conference papers and reports were obtained via searching the World Wide Web, using the key word search phases given above.

Initially, searching these sources provided me with hundreds of 'hits'. I narrowed down my search for articles by altering my search criteria, therefore making my searches more specific. I selected a number of core research papers to individually comment on, which have had a major

influence in the area of domestic abuse and child witnesses. The references cited in these key papers led me to find other important and relevant research papers.

1. A historical account

In the 1980s, family violence emerged as one of the major social problems of the time (Jaffe et al., 1986). It was at this time when research began to appear which explored the prevalence, causes and consequences of domestic abuse (Gelles & Cornell, 1990; Hotaling et al., 1988; Mullender, & Morley, 1994; Straus et al., 1980). Despite progress in research and programme development with survivors of domestic abuse (Walker, 1979) and their abusers (Ganley & Harris, 1981), in the 1980's very little attention had been directed towards the children who had witnessed such abuse.

In the late 1980s, systematic research on children and young people who had experienced domestic abuse, through witnessing it, was a relatively new area of study. When research did begin to emerge, the focus tended to be on establishing the size of the problem (Carlson, 1984), the ages of children most likely to have witnessed domestic abuse (Fantuzzo et al., 1997) the subsequent impact on the child witness (Carlson, 1991; Jaffe, Wilson & Wolfe, 1986) and gender differences (Hughes & Barad, 1983; Porter & O'Leary, 1980; Rosenbaum & O'Leary, 1981; Wolfe, Jaffe, Wilson & Zak, 1985; Lutzker, 1980; Patterson, 1982; Walker, 1983; Wolfe, 1985). Links between marital conflict witnessed by children and the resulting consequence, in terms of behavioural difficulties, were also beginning to be made.

1.1 Domestic Abuse and Children

In the 1980's, Wolfe, Jaffe, Wilson and Zak (1985) carried out a survey to explore whether there was a relationship between children who had witnessed domestic abuse and resulting behaviour problems plus diminished social competence. This piece of research focused on identifying gender differences and establishing prevalence estimates. These researchers were asking whether child adjustment problems were greatest among children who had recently witnessed domestic abuse, or whether these findings could

be explained by other factors. The results indicated that child adjustment problems were associated with witnessing domestic abuse as a child. However some children were found to be resilient to the effects that living with abuse, with 26% of the children in their sample remaining perfectly well despite living with abuse. It is interesting to note that at this time domestic abuse was conceptualised as physical violence, rather than also encompassing verbal, emotional, sexual and economic abuse.

I consider this piece of research to have a number of limitations which are linked to the purely scientific methodological stance adopted. I feel that there is the possibility of bias in reporting, and restrictions with the standardised checklists that were used. The researchers hinted that perhaps a different methodological stance was needed when researching into the effects of exposure to domestic abuse on children. However, as this literature review will reveal, this methodological stance continued to be the dominant approach taken for many years.

1.2 Attitudes

In 1986, it first became evident that researchers began asking questions about promoting *attitude change* in child witnesses of domestic abuse (Jaffe, Wilson & Wolfe, 1986; Carlson, 1984). Fantuzzo and Lindquist (1989) conducted a literature review to research into the effects on children of observing domestic abuse. An analysis of literature revealed that only a few researchers were beginning to consider how the *attitudes* of children who had witnessed domestic abuse had been affected. They found that children who had been exposed to violence condoned violence to resolve relationship conflict more readily than controls. The child's learned patterns of social behaviour could be observed in the attitudes that they held, which Carlson (1984) argued served to promote family conflict.

To summarise the results from early studies in the 1980s, witnessing domestic abuse as a child was found to be linked to a greater frequency of externalising and internalising child behaviour difficulties, such as low self-esteem in girls (Amato, 1986), reduced social competence (Davis & Carlson, 1987; Goodman & Rosenburg, 1987; Wolfe et al., 1985), and

aggression and behaviour difficulties in both girls and boys (Davis & Carlson, 1987; Jaffe et al., 1986). These early studies focused on pre-adolescent children, primarily using retrospective accounts, with very few researchers focusing on attitudes.

1.3 Adolescent relationships

Up until the late 1980's/1990's, adolescents had been virtually ignored in the research literature, with only a few studies examining the impact of family violence on adolescent dating relationships. For example, in 1982 Emery conducted a review of the literature available at the time on the relation between marital turmoil and behaviour problems in children. He made no mention in his review of research into the effects on teenage behaviour.

This lack of research is a surprising finding, as adolescence is the first time when peer relationships become as important, or more important, than family relationships, as reported by adolescents themselves (Lempers & Clark-Lempers, 1992). Thus, during adolescence, the impact of experiencing domestic abuse in childhood may go beyond the borders of the family and the individual, and affect the development of intimate relationships (Smith & Williams, 1992). Christopoulos et al. (1989) and Wolfe et al. (1986) suggest that the effects of witnessing domestic abuse are likely to be more indirect than direct, and that the impact may be deferred until long after witnessing the abuse. The adverse effects of witnessing abuse may therefore manifest delayed reactions during adolescence (Wolfe et al., 1988).

Wekerle and Wolfe (1998) conducted a study of several hundred adolescents and found that witnessing or experiencing family violence was the best predictor of adolescent male abusive behaviour in a close relationship with a girl. Cantrell, MacIntyre, Sharkey, and Thompson (1995) also found that exposure to domestic abuse in childhood was a significant predictor of involvement in an abusive dating relationship in late adolescence.

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More recently Levendosky, Huth-Bocks and Semel (2002) examined the impact of domestic abuse on both adolescent mental health and functioning within intimate relationships, and found contrasting findings to those of Wekerle and Wolfe (1998). They found that adolescents who had experienced either domestic abuse or child abuse were no more likely to be involved in abusive dating relationships, with the exception that they were more likely to be victimised. These results suggest that there is limited direct impact of witnessing domestic abuse on adolescent dating relationships. However this research did reveal that experience of domestic abuse had a negative impact on attachment styles, which could suggest that violent relationship experiences have been internalised. This means the impact of family violence on attachment styles may not be expressed behaviourally during adolescence, but it is possible that it will be expressed in more serious, long-term intimate relationships in adulthood. Attachment theory will be explored later on.

Levendosky et al.'s (2002) results suggest that adolescents appear to be less vulnerable than younger children to the impact of domestic abuse. However the researchers consider that it is possible that the impact of witnessing domestic abuse is either delayed or not detected by the quantitative measures used in their study. High school students themselves support preventative intervention with younger students (Jaffe & Reitzel, 1990). Therefore, should intervention programmes focus on children or adolescents? From reading around this issue, I believe that there is scope for both, although currently there is a greater need for programmes targeting adolescents, as such programmes are particularly scarce.

2. Provision and group intervention

As the research focus shifted in the late 1980's/1990's to exploring the impact of family violence on adolescent dating relationships, research studies concerned with developing appropriate intervention programmes also emerged. Before such time, research and interventions aimed at lowering the risk to children of witnessing domestic abuse, had not been given high priority although a few did exist (Jaffe et al., 1986; Emery, 1982). This may in part be due to society's reluctance to acknowledge the

prevalence of domestic abuse and its many survivors (Jaffe et al., 1986) and also the lack of clear direction for identifying and assisting children at risk, as parental behaviour was typically the major concern. Therefore the majority of programmes focused on adults rather than children (Alessi & Hearn, 1984). Today, there continues to be an acute gap in provision for children and young people who experience domestic abuse, as reported by The Countryside Agency (2002). There has been relatively little work testing the effectiveness of such programmes (Jaffe, Sudermann, Reitzel & Killip, 1992; Lavoie, Vezina, Piche & Boivin, 1995), however, results from research which is available is encouraging.

Child focused dating violence prevention programmes have been found to lead to a significant change in high-school students' *attitudes* following such an intervention (Jaffe, Sudermann, Reitzel & Killip, 1992; Lavoie, Vezina, Piche & Boivin, 1995). Avery-Leaf, Cascardi, O'Leary and Cano (1997) carried out research to explore high school students' *attitude change* following a dating violence prevention programme. They suggested that primary prevention and early intervention efforts were likely to have the most success with high school students. The purpose of Avery-leaf et al.'s (1997) research was to emphasise the importance of directing preventive efforts to both males and females.

Avery-Leaf et al.'s (1997) stance could be described as positivist. They explicitly state that dating violence prevention programmes must be tailored to empirical findings (a deductive approach), and that programme evaluations must use psychometrically sound outcome instruments. Quantitative methods were used to gather data from each participant prior to and following the intervention. They identify that attempts to provide a more sensitive, context-specific attitude measure proved largely unsuccessful, which leads me to question why the researchers did not choose to integrate any qualitative data collection techniques. The researchers recommend that information gathered about other relationship difficulties, such as verbal aggression, may yield more comprehensive measurements of change. When conducting my research, I shall endeavour to explore a wide range of relationship difficulties, including verbal

aggression. The literature also leads me to believe that there is a niche for qualitative research in this area.

Buckley, Holt and Whelan (2007) conducted a study to explore the impact of domestic abuse on children, to identify their needs and recommend appropriate interventions. Data was collected from service providers, mothers, and children themselves. The paper titled 'Listen to Me! Children's Experience of Domestic Violence' presented findings from a novel perspective. Qualitative data was collected from a small sample of 22 children and young people, through focus groups. The researchers found that witnessing domestic abuse combined with individual characteristics led to different impacts on children. From this they inferred that children required a range of different but specific interventions. The researchers concluded that the participation of children and young people, with fresh memories of growing up in an abusive environment, undoubtedly contributed most significantly to this piece of research. Although Buckley, Holt and Whelan (2007) recognise the potential pitfall of using focus groups, they decided to use them on the basis that they would offer a safer peer environment. As research has found that child witnesses of domestic abuse may attempt to conceal what is happening for fear of embarrassment (Huth-Bocks et al., 2001; Alexander et al., 2005), confounded by the fact that such individuals are often very troubled and displaying disruptive behaviours (Davis & Carlson, 1987; Jaffe et al., 1986), I would question the use of focus groups for collecting information of this sensitive nature myself, and would prefer to conduct individual interviews.

I feel it is worthy of note that many of the studies seeking to evaluate interventions do not include comparison or control groups. The literature suggests that researchers have had limited success in documenting expected difficulties in children who have witnessed domestic abuse, especially when control or contrast groups have been used (e.g. Christopoulos et al., 1987; Carlson, 1990). If I am to take an interpretivist methodological approach to investigate relationship attitudes and the efficacy of an intervention programme, the use of control groups would be obsolete.

3. Theoretical frameworks

3.1 A Cycle of Violence?

Does witnessing domestic abuse as a child, result in abusive adult relationships? In other words, is there a cycle of violence? It should be noted that this phrase uses the term 'violence' to encompass other forms of abuse. Early research based on retrospective accounts of male abusers indicated that the vast majority had witnessed similar behaviour on the part of their father (Herman, 1986; Rosenbaum & O'Leary, 1981; Straus et al., 1980, Fergusson and Horwood, 1998). There is a lot of literature which addresses the cycle of violence in some way, however most of what is written has no empirical basis (Mullender & Morley, 1994), and even fewer empirically based studies have used non-clinical samples to test this theoretical debate (Cantrell et al., 1995). The research available provides conflicting findings on the cycle of violence, and such research has methodological flaws, such as a lack of control groups, correlational designs and retrospective data collection (Mullender & Morley, 1994).

One example is Cantrell, MacIntyre, Sharkey & Thompson (1995), who focused their research on the link between witnessing domestic abuse as a child with violent peer relationships in adolescents aged between 18-20 years old. Based on a sample of 255 participates (although it is not explained how this sample was selected), they found support for the cycle of violence hypothesis, that a history of witnessing parental abuse was predictive of abuse in peer relationships or older adolescents. However, Levendosky et al. (2002) found that adolescents who had experienced domestic abuse were no more likely to be involved in abusive dating relationships. One explanation for this finding is that adolescent dating relationships have different qualities to adult relationships. They may not have enough of the qualities of an attachment bond to be strongly influenced by attachment styles in the way that adult relationships are (Hazen & Shaver, 1987). In conclusion, it can be said that although experiencing violence in childhood may increase the risk of becoming a violent adult, the process is neither direct nor certain (Kaufman & Zigler, 1987).

3.2 Attachment and Separation

Over a decade ago, Bowlby (1988) claimed domestic abuse occurred due to the distorted versions of attachment behaviours, developed in childhood and reactivated in adult partnerships. Such distorted versions of attachment behaviours were transmitted across the lifespan through *internal working models*. Although there is evidence for a link between adults' reports of their early attachments to parents, and their attachment styles as adults in romantic relationships (Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991), there has been very little research specifically examining the effects of domestic abuse on attachment. One study was that by Worley, Walsh and Lewis (2004) who investigated the parenting experiences of male perpetrators of domestic abuse. All of these men had experienced rejection, neglect and an absence of emotional care, as well as being traumatized through witnessing domestic abuse from an early age. They concluded that the men had developed *internal working models* of themselves as unworthy or incapable of getting emotional care, attention or protection.

The results from Levendosky, Huth-Bocks & Semel's (2002) study suggests that dating violence during middle adolescence is not influenced by internalised models of relationships. They concluded that the impact of witnessing domestic abuse as a child may not be expressed behaviourally during adolescence, but it is possible that it will be expressed in the more serious, long-term intimate relationships in adulthood. Due to the lack of research in this area, at this point in time one can only speculate that internal working models *may* become constructed along perpetrator-victim dimensions, and adolescents *may* choose dating partners whose behaviours fit with their internal working models.

Emery (1982) considers Bowlby's *maternal deprivation hypothesis* [where the loss of a figure to whom one is attached, produces an indistinctive fear response] as a potential explanation. However evidence suggests that witnessing domestic abuse rather than parental separation is the more salient factor (Jacobson, 1978). Could it be that emotional deprivation (Goldstein, Freud & Solnit, 1973) may be the central cause? Some researchers have found that parents from homes where there is domestic abuse were more

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negative with their children (Bugental, Love & Kaswan, 1972; Lobitz & Johnson, 1975). However, Emery & O'Leary (1982) found that domestic abuse had little direct effect on children's feelings of being loved. It is therefore unlikely that deprivation from a parent's love is the main explanation for behaviour difficulties resulting from witnessing domestic abuse.

3.3 Social Learning Theory

Another explanation for the increased level of externalising behaviours found in children who have witnessed domestic abuse may lie in social learning theory. This theory proposes that aggressive behaviour is likely to result when children are exposed to aggressive models (Bandura, 1973). This theory suggests that as parents are powerful models for behaviour, a child who witnesses abuse between his or her parents will be likely to imitate such behaviours within current and future relationships (Carlson, 1984; Jacobson & Martin, 1976; Cantrell et al., 1995). Therefore according to this theory, witnessing domestic abuse as opposed to separation from a parent would be expected to be related more strongly to child behaviour difficulties. Adolescents from families with domestic abuse would have difficulty forming healthy intimate relationships with peers due to the models they experience in their families.

However, Carlson (1990) conducted research which produced results challenging this explanation. She found only a modest effect of witnessing domestic abuse with respect to the approval and use of violence toward dating partners in adolescence, suggesting that modelling is not the only explanation. In addition to this, modelling does not explain the existence of the greater frequency of *internalising* child behaviour difficulties, linked to witnessing domestic abuse as a child (Amato, 1986; Davis & Carlson, 1987; Goodman & Rosenburg, 1987; Wolfe et al., 1985).

3.4 Stress Theory

The effects of witnessing domestic abuse on children may be conceptualised as a stressor to which children and adults are differentially exposed (Emery, 1982). *Learned helplessness* could develop by witnessing domestic abuse

whilst remaining relatively powerless to prevent such abuse (Seligman, 1975). A *diathesis-stress model* provides another explanation. This model proposes that behaviour is a result of biological and genetic factors, combined with life experiences. An individual's underlying genetic vulnerability (diathesis) interacts with the environment and life events (stressors) to trigger certain responses. The greater the underlying vulnerability, the less stress is needed to trigger the response (Ingram & Luxton, 1995).

Although the diathesis-stress model was initially introduced as a means to explain some of the causes of schizophrenia (Zubin & Spring, 1977), more recently the model has been broadened to include psychological factors that make a person susceptible to developing social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (Monroe & Simons, 1991). This theory can be used to explain potential gender differences in children who witness domestic abuse. As previously mentioned, considerable evidence exists to suggest that domestic abuse has a differing effect on males and females. Research suggests that boys are predisposed toward under-control, resulting in externalising behaviours (Davis & Carlson, 1987; Jaffe et al., 1986), and girls towards over-control, leading to internalising problems (Amato, 1986). Therefore the diathesis-stress model may explain the findings of research which suggests sex-differences exist.

3.5 Cultural Spillover Theory
The Cultural Spillover Theory (Straus, 1991) was developed from the Social Learning Theory. It proposes that abuse that is legitimised in one area of life will engender violence in other contexts. Therefore, if a child witnesses domestic abuse, they will learn that these behaviours are a legitimate way to resolve conflicts in general. A child will learn these behaviours through the process of modelling, will then integrate them into his or her own repertoire of behaviours, and then apply them in other contexts or relationships. This hypothesis has been empirically supported by Baron, Straus & Jaffee (1989) and Cantrell, MacIntyre, Sharkey & Thompson (1995).

3.6 Feminist Analysis of Family Violence

The feminist analysis of family violence hypothesis points out that throughout history, women have been viewed as 'appropriate victims' of abuse, and that the control of women by men has been a central value in legal and religious views of the family system (Dobash & Dobash, 1979). Empirical support for this theory has come from studies which have focused on underlying attitudes about sex roles, power and control (Finn, 1986; Flynn, 1999). Finn (1986) found sex role attitudes to be the most powerful predictor of domestic abuse, in a sample of college students.

Currently no single hypothesis can fully explain the mechanism by which witnessing domestic abuse as a child may transpire to future behaviour and possibly relationship difficulties. However each hypothesis has its merit. Attachment bonds between children and their primary caregivers are likely to be disrupted by domestic abuse. Parents in abusive relationships are likely to be poorer models. The resulting learnt behaviours may be applied to other contexts. It is also likely to be the case that witnessing domestic abuse puts considerably more stress on children than those from non-abusive homes. These processes may operate collectively in affecting children who witness domestic abuse, although in any given instance, one influence may prevail. It is important to have an awareness of these different theories when devising research questions and interpreting results.

4. Methodology

4.1 Epistemological stance

As previously mentioned, much of the research in this area was conducted in the 1980s. The methodological stance adopted by the majority of researchers indicate that this was an era when scientific, standardised and psychometric measures were considered to be the desired approach to take when conducting research in this area, as a means of ultimately predicting future behaviour (Carlson, 1990; Avery-leaf et al., 1997; Wolfe et al., 1985; Cantrell et al., 1995; Levendosky et al., 2002; Jones, 1987). However, it is interesting that many researchers did not appear to use deductive approaches. In terms of a theoretical basis, the majority of domestic abuse research has not been guided by any underlying theoretical framework,

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resulting in what Sugarman and Hotaling (1989) have referred to as "a phenomenon that is searching for a theory" (p.28).

An interesting example is that of Carlson (1990). From a phenomenological standpoint, Carlson (1990) chose to focus her research on adolescent *perceptions* rather than follow the trend of measuring more objective, observable behaviour, such as what actually occurs between partners. This demonstrates a shift in thinking. Carlson (1990) identified the self-report measures used as having good face validity, but felt it to be a limitation that these measures lacked 'strong psychometric properties'. She also highlighted that the respondents came from a 'non-representative, clinical sample' and therefore the results could not be 'generalised beyond similar clinical samples'. This suggests to me that the researcher was not yet convinced by the advantages of using a more interpretivist stance to researching into adolescent perceptions, but was rather evaluating a more interpretivist methodology against scientific criteria.

As previously discussed, I believe that Avery-Leaf et al. (1997) took a positivist epistemological stance when evaluating the efficacy of a dating violence prevention programme on attitudes justifying aggression. The researchers admitted that this empirical approach resulted in a largely unsuccessful attempt to provide a sensitive, context-specific measure of attitude change. Other researchers who adopted a similar stance also recognised that this approach may not have been sufficiently sensitive to yield significant results (Jones, 1987). However many researchers continued to take a similar stance when investigating attitude change, using restrictive standardised measurement tools (i.e. Jaffe, Suderman, Reitzel & Killip, 1992; Avery-Leaf, Cascardi, O'Leary & Cano, 1997; Jones, 1987; Lavoie et al., 1995; Levy, 1984; Jones, 1987). In 1995, Lavoie, Vezina, Piche & Boivin were the first researchers to conduct a study using a specific scale for measuring adolescent attitudes when evaluating an intervention programme. It is interesting that in the 1990's researchers were still seeking to develop standardised instruments to measure attitude change.

This leads me to question why the researchers took this epistemological stance when investigating attitude change. In the research reviewed it can sometimes appear that a scientific stance, where researchers employ standardised measures, equals rigorous, credible research. For example Avery-Leaf et al. (1997) highlights the importance of scientific rigor in research, and uses scientific methodology to investigate attitude change. However in their report they reference personal communication and unpublished observations, and fail to explain how they collected teachers' views about the students. This would make replicating the study difficult, and may lead some to question the credibility of the research itself. Perhaps the approach taken was due to the predominant mode of thinking at the time, and the school of thought from which the researchers came, which blinded them to other possibilities.

Jaffe, Wilson & Wolfe (1986) and Carlson (1990) took a different approach to measuring attitude change by conducting structured interviews. These researchers found this to be an effective method of data collection. So why have other researchers not employed this method of data collection as opposed to using questionnaires and checklists? As the majority of research in this area has been concerned with collecting data from large samples, I feel it is likely that this dominant method of data collection has been chosen for practical reasons.

It is now recognised that there is a need to integrate multiple approaches to domestic abuse research, including quantitative research together with qualitative methods (Stover, 2005). However only a few of such studies have transpired. Understanding the relationship attitudes of adolescents, by taking a qualitative approach, may provide further clues to understand the origins of domestic abuse in adult relationships, as well as a greater understanding of the process through which this happens.

4.2 Ethical Issues
This is clearly a sensitive area of study, where obtaining ethical consent may be difficult; as well ensuring participants are protected from any psychological harm. Therefore I feel it is interesting to note how previous

researchers have gone about obtaining ethical consent. By reviewing the literature, I have found that the majority of researchers sought ethical consent from both the school-aged participants involved in the study and their parents (i.e. Avery-Leaf et al., 1997; Buckley, Holt & Whelan, 2007; O'Keefe, 1997). Most of the research studies report that participants were guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality, unless they indicated unreported child abuse or neglect during the interviews, in which case they were informed that this would have to be reported to the appropriate authorities (i.e. Carlson, 1990).

Worley, Walsh & Lewis (2004) go into more detail, explaining that 'all participants were provided with an information sheet about the study and asked to give their permission to be approached by the researcher and for their interview to be tape-recorded' (pp. 38). A fairly recent study (Avery-Leaf et al.1997) obtained consent by means of an opt out form – where returned forms signed by a parent and student would indicate refusal to participate. Some researchers however, failed to report how ethical consent was obtained (i.e. Lavoie et al., 1995; Wolfe, Jaffe, Wilson and Zak, 1985). Very few researchers reported that the participants were debriefed following the study and offered relevant information and available resources if required, with the exception of O'Keefe (1997).

From reviewing the literature, when I conduct my research I shall use similar methods for obtaining ethical consent – I shall seek to obtain ethical consent from both the children involved in the research and their parents. If a low number of consent forms are returned to me, I shall seek approval from my organisation to employ an opt out method to obtain ethical consent. All participants will be debriefed following data collection.

4.3 Sample Studied

When considering the literature in line with the epistemological stance adopted, I deem a common methodological issue to be biased sampling - usually from a 'clinical' population. Although studying small clinical samples allows for the intense study of characteristics within such a population, there are drawbacks of studying clinical populations, namely

that the results cannot be generalised to other populations. Carlson (1990) and Avery-Leaf et al. (1997) highlight that despite the drawbacks associated with studying clinical populations, such a sample allows for the intensive study of youth with behaviour difficulties, many of which come from homes where these is domestic abuse.

Carlson (1990) conducted a study to explore the impact of domestic abuse on adolescents. She found the most common reason for referrals to participate in this study was family conflict (18%), homelessness (15%), problem behaviours (12%) and school problems (10%). This may have implications for my research, which intends to study a similar population of adolescents having witnessed domestic abuse. This research implies that referrals are likely to be received for similar reasons, and the target population that I wish to study may be skewed by the referrals received. If schools are to be the primary referrer, could it be that I will primarily receive referrals for individuals displaying behaviour difficulties? Even though research has shown that while child witnesses of domestic abuse are nearly three times as likely to be involved in physical aggression at school (Dauvergne & Johnson, 2001), many attempt to conceal what is happening for fear of being teased or bullied (Buckley, Holt & Whelan, 2007) and internalise their problems (Amato, 1986).

4.4 Reliability, Validity and Biases

Many studies in this field have been based on participant self-report data, collected by questionnaires and checklists (i.e. Cantrell et al., 1995; Carlson, 1990; Levendosky et al., 2002; O'Keefe, 1997). These quantitative measures often lack reliability and validity. Participants may misinterpret the questions posed. However it is possible to counteract this if the researcher can be available whilst the participants are completing the questionnaires to answer any questions, as in O'Keefe's (1997) study. There may be memory distortion if participants are asked to recall retrospective events. There may even be deliberate response distortion.

Response bias is also an issue which needs consideration. Carlson (1990) suggests that boys may under-report their violence towards females, because

they are aware of its unacceptability. Early research relied upon parental reports of behaviour difficulties in their children. These reports may also have been affected by response bias. Parental reports can reflect more about the parent than about the child (Griest, Wells & Forehand, 1979; Wolfe et al., 1985). Therefore other researchers have sought information from young people *and* parents (Jaffe et al., 1986), or young people and their partners (Avery-Leaf, 1997). In terms of validity, the measures used may not accurately reflect the variables being studied. All of these issues are likely to affect estimates of the magnitude of the association between the variables being studied.

As much of the research in this area is based on standardised self-report measures, there is little scope for the participants to offer any information other than that being specifically requested by the standardised questionnaires and scales used. One exception was the data collection method used in Jaffe et al.'s (1992) study. They used a questionnaire to collect their data, but did include a question which allowed students to freely give their views. But were participants able to express their views through the medium of writing? I feel it would have been more appropriate and inclusive to enable participants to provide their views verbally.

Was there enough collaboration between researchers and practitioners, as to which methods would be most appropriate for these young people? A potential rift between researchers and practitioners, which may exist in many fields of study, has been highlighted by researchers as particularly pronounced in the domestic abuse field (Gondolf, 1997). Where collaborations have taken place between researchers and practitioners, research has found this to make the research more grounded, relevant and applicable (Jacobson, 1994; Yllo, 1988). When conducting my research, I hope to work alongside programme facilitators and to take into consideration their perspectives and views.

Summary
From conducting this literature review, I propose that there is a need for up-to-date research which explores the issue of domestic abuse which

encompasses verbal and emotional abuse, as opposed to the previously restrictive interpretation as referring to violence alone. I believe the time has come for an interpretivist approach to the study of the attitudes of those who have witnessed domestic abuse, particularly those of adolescents. There is also the need for continued evaluation of intervention programmes targeting adolescents who have witnessed domestic abuse, using a mixed methods approach to obtain the views of the participants. I feel that inductive and deductive reasoning is necessary to make sense of the results obtained, to obtain a better insight into the processes involved when children and young people witness domestic abuse. Much can be learnt from the methodological issues with previous research. I will draw upon previous methods for handling ethical issues, and will carefully consider how best to elicit views through the medium of interviews, whilst working collaboratively with school staff and practitioners.

Research Proposal

I propose that there is a need for an illuminative piece of qualitative research into 'exploring the relationships attitudes of young people who have witnessed domestic abuse', from an interpretivist stance, through semi-structured interviews. The purpose of this study is to better understand the distorted beliefs and attitudes held by those young people who have witnessed domestic abuse. I intend to explore the views and attitudes regarding the purpose of relationships and how conflict is resolved, of a select group of young people referred to a domestic abuse intervention programme.

I also propose the need for research which 'evaluates an intervention programme for adolescents who have witnessed domestic abuse', using a mixed-methods approach, combining both qualitative and quantitative data, based on the views of the young people themselves. The aim of this study is to inform the development of further intervention programmes for adolescents. I intend to investigate whether there is a significant difference in the degree of targeted behaviours/skills between baseline and follow-up measures with participants on a previously unevaluated intervention programme.

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