

## Contextual Safeguarding - promising responses and interventions

Here are some examples of safeguarding responses and interventions that could be used as part of a Contextual Safeguarding approach. Unlike the responses on the Responses and Interventions Catalogue, these approaches have not been tested in partnerships with the research team.

**Restorative Justice:** Restorative justice interventions are used by mental health professionals, social and youth justice services to resolve conflict. A restorative intervention can take many forms, including: victim offender conference or mediation; community conferences involving community members affected by a crime, or indirect communication via a facilitator. Restorative approaches can also be used in schools to prevent or alleviate problems such as bullying, classroom disruption, truancy, antisocial behaviour and disputes between students, families and members of staff. See the Restorative Justice Council's website for more information: <https://restorativejustice.org.uk/what-restorative-justice>

**Shifting Boundaries programme in schools:** This programme was developed in the United States to reduce dating violence and sexual harassment between young people using a curriculum programme and school-based intervention. The curriculum and activists are all available for free online: <http://www.preventconnect.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Shifting-Boundaries-w-Copyrigh-at-Lib-of-congresst.pdf>

**Multi-Family Group Therapy:** A clinical intervention that brings together families who are facing similar difficulties or who share experiences. Families are invited to come together as a group to think about their common experiences, most often based upon a strengths focused model and drawing on narrative approaches in a therapeutic context. Usually work is completed both with the whole family and with the parents and children separately but concurrently. It has been successfully implemented in a context within which young people are facing extra-familial risk, which is, in part, associated with a level of family dysfunction. Find out more on the [Multi-family group therapy website](#).

**Achieving Change Together (ACT):** A strength and relationship-based model co-designed with young people to find alternatives to high cost and secure accommodation for young people experiencing, or at risk of, exploitation. [Read more about the project here.](#)

### **Community activism**

Community activism involves youth workers working alongside young people to identify and then organise around addressing the injustices in their community. The ethos of this approach is in building young people's power and ability to act to bring about greater equality and justice. Examples include a campaign to decolonise the school curriculum, or an initiative to address the lack of affordable housing in an area. Find out more from [The Advocacy Academy](#)

### **Bystander / Upstander Interventions**

Bystander or Upstander Interventions can be used to address gendered violence, sexual harassment, abuse and bullying in schools. Bystander interventions use peer education models to prevent and address cultures of violence and harm in schools.

Staff are trained to support senior students to become mentors. Mentors then deliver sessions to other students in the school and encourage them to look out for each other and positively influence the attitudes and behaviours of their peers. Bystander intervention programmes are more likely to be effective if they are part of a whole-school approach to addressing underlying cultures of harm and building safety.

For a bystander intervention to be used as part of a Contextual Safeguarding response, it is important that all efforts are made to avoid placing the responsibility for addressing a harmful culture on students. Rather, school staff should also be involved in critically engaging with and addressing harmful and discriminatory norms through the way that the policies, language, behaviour and the curriculum are development.

One example of a bystander intervention is the 'Mentors in Violence Prevention Programme (MVP). Cultivating Minds UK offers training in MVP approaches. The MVP was piloted across schools in Scotland. [Find out more here.](#)