

# Supporting Partnerships for Violence Prevention

## Background

To effectively prevent violence among children and young people, a whole-system approach is required to create lasting change. The Wales Violence Prevention Unit (VPU) commission interventions that sit within a range of statutory services, generally localised to Cardiff and Swansea. Operating within Cardiff and Swansea are the SAFE (Safeguarding Adolescents from Exploitation) partnership (Cardiff) and the CMET (Contextual, Missing, Exploited and Trafficked) panel (Swansea), for which the VPU funds their coordinators. The SAFE

and CMET models bring together the statutory services with community support, to provide a whole-system approach to violence prevention, ensuring the needs of children and young people are met.

**To explore how the interventions and approaches across Cardiff and Swansea operate to identify and support individuals, the VPU commissioned Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU) to conduct two whole-system evaluations; one in Cardiff and one in Swansea.**

The CMET Panel is a multi-agency group, meeting on a fortnightly basis, which considers the contexts, themes, and trends for exploitation (rather than individual cases). Partners include Swansea Council, South Wales Police, Community Safety, Youth Justice Services, and third sector organisations. The panel provides, or facilitates, access to specialist support services in relation to vulnerabilities such as substance misuse, mental health, homelessness, and violence. It also provides targeted outreach activities in identified hotspot locations across Swansea.

The SAFE Partnership supports the development and implementation of a city-wide approach for contextual safeguarding in Cardiff, consisting of safeguarding mechanisms to respond to individual risks (such as extra-familial harm, exploitation, and violence among children and young people), in addition to hosting multi-agency safeguarding meetings with key partners. SAFE is an action-focused multi-agency partnership, which has run for two years and is targeted at professionals (e.g., youth services, schools, police and third sector agencies) working with children, young people and families. The primary focus of the SAFE Partnership is to prevent issues such as knife crime and criminal exploitation. The partnership also includes a high-risk panel process, in which any barriers to accessing support can be escalated for high-level managerial oversight.

## Methodology

LJMU adopted the new framework for evaluating complex interventions (Skivington et al., 2021). This framework suggests that the evaluation should consider the effectiveness of the whole system, what works in what circumstances, and how the system and interventions adapt to one another. To do this, the evaluation activities included:

- A rapid literature review
- Analysis of programme documentation
- Interview with key stakeholders
- Interview with service users
- The development of case studies

Both evaluations received full ethical approval from the Liverpool John Moores Research Ethics Committee.

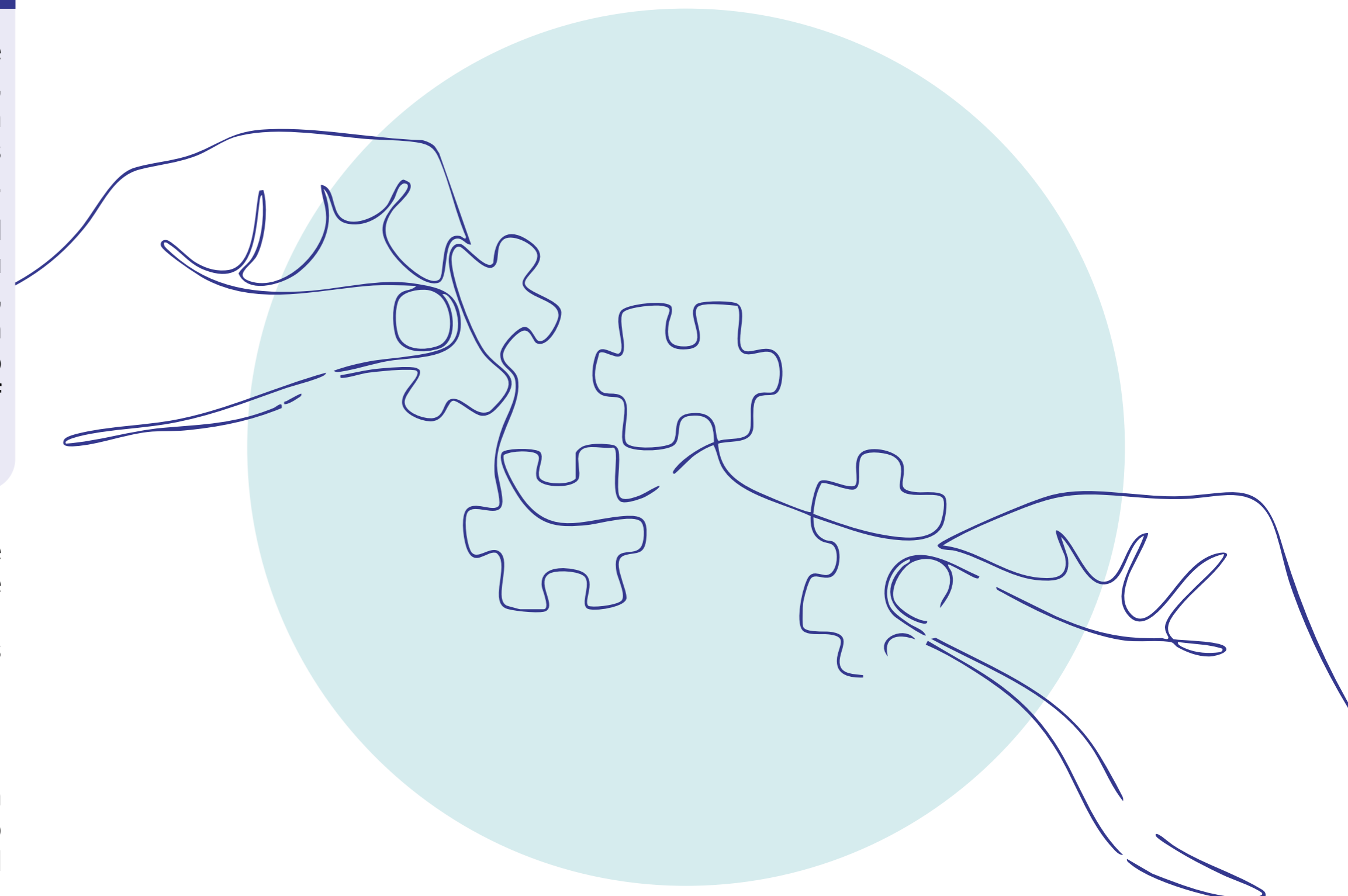
## Key Findings

**Overall, the evaluations found that the children and young people involved with the interventions had increased knowledge and awareness of risks, were better able to make informed choices, develop alternative coping strategies and had improved health and wellbeing. The children and young people felt reassured, safe, and listened to.** Other key findings across both evaluations demonstrated that:

1. Partnerships with the VPU were essential, as the VPU provided opportunity to share intelligence and data and brought stakeholders together to deliver a coordinated public health approach to violence prevention.
2. The VPU model recognises the importance of identifying and understanding the wider determinants of health that affect children, young people, families and communities across Cardiff and Swansea.
3. Relationships and communication between the VPU and stakeholders was described as positive, with the VPU described as having a flexible

approach when it came to understanding the needs of the support services.

4. The VPU model aims to understand the barriers faced by children, young people and their families when they try to engage with services and looks to overcome these barriers to ensure everyone has equal access to the support they need.
5. All staff delivering interventions use a strengths-based, and trauma-informed approach, which was seen as essential in building trust with the children and young people and supporting them to develop new skills.
6. The SAFE Partnership and CMET Panel were both viewed as important models for bringing partners together in a multiagency response to violence prevention.
7. **The evaluation findings indicate that the VPU model of commissioning and delivery contributes to the overarching aims of reducing violence and harm among children and young people.**



## Recommendations

1. Support education to contribute to violence prevention.
2. Continue to amplify the voices of children and young people, ensuring their voices are at the heart of every decision.
3. Secure long-term investment and funding to create stability in services and consistency of care.
4. Prioritise long term evaluations to measure the longer-term impacts of the VPU, including measuring the softer outcomes using qualitative data.
5. Recognise the importance of narrative data to capture the service users voice and avoid misinterpretation.
6. Develop future pathways and partnerships for prevention by plugging the gaps in service provision for mental health support and diversionary activities, including community spaces for children and young people.

## Resources



### Supporting Partnerships for Violence Prevention

This report summarises the findings from independent evaluations of two multi-agency violence prevention partnerships and associated interventions which take a whole-system, public health approach to violence prevention in South Wales.



### A Whole Systems Case Study: Cardiff



### A Whole Systems Case Study: Swansea

The Whole Systems Case Study reports explore how the violence prevention activities and interventions work together to identify at-risk individuals and mitigate the risk of further involvement in violence and crime. The reports include key findings and recommendations for partnership working across the system and for evidencing impact.



### Case Study Report: Cardiff



### Case Study Report: Swansea

The Case Study reports explore the violence prevention activities and interventions, how they were implemented and delivered and the difference the interventions have made for the children and young people they were designed to support.

**Website**  
[www.violencepreventionwales.co.uk](http://www.violencepreventionwales.co.uk)

[walesvpu](#)  
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 [Wales Violence Prevention Unit](#)

Skivington et al. (2021). A new framework for developing and evaluating complex interventions: update of Medical Research Council guidance. *BMJ* 2021;374:n2061. Available at: [A new framework for developing and evaluating complex interventions: update of Medical Research Council guidance \(bmj.com\)](https://www.bmj.com)