

An evidenced based approach to preventative CSE education



DARTINGTON
SERVICE
DESIGN LAB

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In an important report written by Jessica Eaton, 'Can I tell you what it feels like? Exploring the harm caused by CSE films' the author argues that the widely used prevention films, *"had never been through ethical approval, never been tested and never been evaluated."*

Ariel Trust's SafeSkills project sets out to develop CSE prevention education resources based on ethical approval, extensive consultation, independent testing and evaluation. This evidence based approach builds upon positive outcomes that have been delivered in other areas of prevention education and has been designed to build resilience and deliver positive behavioural change.

This report is a snapshot taken during a cyclical approach to the testing and development of a prevention educational resource called SafeSkills. It does not contain unequivocal evidence of long term, sustained behavioural change but it does contain early evidence suggesting that positive behaviour change is achievable. It sets out to make a positive contribution to the discussion about how best to deliver prevention education in schools and to identify ways in which positive outcomes can be delivered within an ethical and independent evaluation framework.

Key Findings

- Teachers observe that young people involved in the SafeSkills programme more openly discuss their risk-taking behaviour.
- More open discussion of risk-taking behaviour makes it possible for teachers to conduct more accurate risk assessment with children;
- More accurate risk assessment allows teachers to respond directly to risks identified by children during this process;
- Children's participation in the risk assessment process led to a number of positive behaviour changes from the young people e.g. removing contacts from online gaming and social media platforms, discussing online safety with their parents and in one case a direct disclosure to a family member about grooming;
- Quantitative data indicates an increase in children's knowledge and awareness of inappropriate adult behaviour of approximately 7% pre and post-test across schools;
- Participation did not lead to a decrease in trust of others;
- Teachers report excellent engagement from children in SafeSkills lessons;
- There was no observed change in children's confidence to act as bystanders.

The key elements of SafeSkills that deliver these impacts

The development and roll out of the SafeSkills resource is underpinned by a number of core elements that are fundamental to its ability to deliver behaviour change:-

- A focus on skills-development, that reflects wider academic evidence in relation to prevention education;
- Improved communication between children and their teachers to identify and assess risk-taking behaviour;
- A co-creation process that puts the experiences and feelings of young people, including victims of CSE, at the centre of the development process, in order to ensure positive communication between children and teachers;
- Extensive engagement with teachers to ensure the resource can support the curriculum and therefore be delivered in a mainstream education setting;
- A programme of teacher training to support the delivery of the programme and to ensure the content is delivered with fidelity;
- A programme of nine lessons of content that provides opportunity for the practicing and reinforcing of pro-social communication strategies;
- A commitment to the ethical integrity of the approach, which has included the methodology being subject to review by two ethics committees;
- A commitment to the continued routine monitoring and evaluation of SafeSkills implementation and outcome movement.

Next Steps

SafeSkills has been developed through a cyclical process of testing and evaluation. The evidence collected shows SafeSkills is a promising intervention with children and teachers reporting positive behaviour change. Further development cycles are needed to improve its impacts and to demonstrate that they can be replicated and sustained.

Proposals for the next phases of cyclical development include:-

- Share good practice across all schools, especially listening to children about their risk taking behaviour to conduct more accurate risk assessments and responses to identified risks
- Improve observed effects by increasing integration with a whole school approach involving parents as well as children and teachers so that knowledge and skills learnt are reinforced.

- Develop a quantitative measure of children's openness and/or willingness to disclose risk to either their teacher or parents.
- Use the initial set of SafeSkills monitoring data to examine the programme content relating to areas that have shown little or no improvement (e.g. bystander defending behaviour).
- Increase the opportunities for children to practice bystander defending behaviour by linking similar skill-based, behaviour change programmes together. Children could receive multiple opportunities to practice skills during their time in school. For example, CyberSense (online safety and bullying) and FaceUp (dating violence in young people) sit either side of SafeSkills target age and teach similar skills.
- Do not reinvent the wheel. Issues fall in and out of favour but the skills being applied to each set of risks are similar. Not every new topic area requires a new programme. On Merseyside Child Criminal Exploitation CCE is a priority and the skills developed during the SafeSkills programme are transferable.
- Integrate online data collection and analysis into programme implementation.
- Allow schools and commissioners access to SafeSkills progress during delivery.
- Iterate the data collected based on qualitative feedback so that it is investigated quantitatively in the next round of delivery.

Ariel is committed to the cyclical approach to development, testing and improvement of resources that is outlined in this report and is keen to implement the actions outlined above and to make SafeSkills the most effective programme that it can be. However, as a small organisation, Ariel cannot deliver this without the support of a range of partners and they are keen to identify organisations who can work with them in support of this objective.

THE AIMS OF SAFESKILLS

In the logic model that was drawn up based on a review of existing literature two intermediate outcomes were identified.

1 Improve norms about what is unacceptable behaviour

SafeSkills aims to create a space in which children talk openly about their risk taking behaviour, especially online risks. Teachers are then able to listen carefully to children's experience and engage them in a process of risk assessment. Managed peer to peer discussions about real risk taking behaviour are designed to improve norms about what is unacceptable behaviour, particularly questioning the unacceptable behaviour of others and exploring how to manage associated risks. These discussions have often focused on online risk taking especially behaviour associated with on line grooming.

2 Increase resilience to grooming

Having identified risky situations SafeSkills asks children to use role play in order to practice communication skills that can be used to actively manage these situations. The skills practiced include:

- Asking questions to test the motivations and intentions of others
- Asking for help
- Communication skills that might be used by a bystander to intervene

3 Increased likelihood of bystander intervention

SafeSkills focuses on the important role of bystanders and aims to increase the likelihood of bystanders taking action to protect and support their peers.

QUALITATIVE EVIDENCE OF POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR CHANGE

Working with children from 8 to 12 years old SafeSkills aims to promote and develop positive behaviour that children can use to identify and resist grooming. Studies have concluded that awareness raising alone does not change behaviour and that developing and practicing skills is the most effective approach. Foshee & Langwick (2004) - *“programmes focusing exclusively on attitudinal or educational components will likely not be effective in changing behaviour as such the skills building component... is a crucial component of the chain of events that can lead to positive outcomes”*. Therefore SafeSkills asks pupils to rehearse three skill sets designed to lead to positive behaviour change:

- Questioning the motivations and intentions of others
- Asking for help
- Bystander defending behaviour

Behaviour change is something that is hard to measure through quantitative analysis because such behaviours can only be measured when they are exhibited in response to a situation of risk. There is a lack of existing measurement tools available to capture this within a universal setting. Interviews and focus groups with teachers and young people have therefore been used to capture indications of behaviour change and these have revealed positive examples in each of the schools that took part in this trial.

Evidence of children actively asking for help

A primary school in Sefton, Merseyside delivered the SafeSkills programme with two Year 6 classes in January 2018, ten sessions were delivered in total. One session focused on practicing the skills to ask for help. During the lesson one young man, a looked after child who can be hard to engage, was actively participating in the session including asking lots of questions.

That evening that young person went home and asked to speak to his grandmother. He disclosed that he thought his mum's boyfriend was grooming him and that he was making him watch porn. The matter has been referred to the police and is now subject to an active prosecution.

The schools have clearly indicated that they believe this disclosure was directly linked to the SafeSkills programme and particularly the asking for help role plays practiced earlier in the same day.

Evidence of children actively deleting inappropriate social media contacts

A number of schools reported changes in young people's risk-taking behaviour, particularly young people deleting 'friends' from their online profiles because they were unknown to them. During the sessions in which children practice questioning the motivations of others at St Matthews Primary School, children talked about getting online requests from people they didn't know asking, "Invite me to the party" and one young person referred to a "fella who always tries to join our group". After the SafeSkills 'motivations and intentions' sessions 20% of young people reported deleting people from their online profiles.

A change to children's assessment of the risk associated with adding unknown contacts to online games was also observed at St Michael's Primary School:

"At start of the session most thought risky behaviour was OK e.g. adding people they don't know as 'friends'. Through peer debate and discussion this view was shifted. It was the peer lead nature of the activity that was important."

Evidence of children actively using appropriate language to demonstrate understanding of grooming

One group of children from King David Primary School began to use language to describe grooming in more mature ways than other children of a similar age. After completing the SafeSkills programme a Year 6 group took part in an external workshop about CSE run by Catch-22. One of the workshop leaders, Richard Grindley, reported:

"The children from King David who had been through the SafeSkills project were much more aware and much more articulate about online grooming than any other similar age group".

The school confirmed that this high level of knowledge and confidence in discussing issues could only be as a result of the SafeSkills programme, as it was the only initiative that they had delivered.

Evidence of children openly discussing risk taking behaviour with adults in order to conduct risk assessment

In all of the schools involved in this trial, teachers reported that children were more open about their existing risk taking behaviour, especially the risks they take on line. For example one teacher reported:

"All staff felt that the children may not have previously disclosed the information they shared within the 'SafeSkills' sessions. For example, many of the children spoke openly about their online habits and worryingly, 29 of the 57 (51%) of the children in Y5 admitted to befriending an unknown person online (often through online gaming), with little or no understanding of the hidden agendas that these people may have".

**Maria Needham Pastoral Lead & Safeguarding Officer,
Newton-le-Willows Primary School**

As well as talking openly about their risk taking behaviour with teachers in a classroom, some children went home and discussed this with their parents, Maria Needham went on to say,

"The school are also aware of a number of children who have spoken to their parents and those parents have come in to school wanting to discuss the issues further".

Evidence of teachers understanding risk taking behaviour more clearly, conducting more accurate risk assessment and acting upon these

Because SafeSkills has helped provide a space in which children have talked openly about online risk-taking teachers have been able to listen more carefully and conduct more accurate risk assessments in relation to individual children. Some teachers report feeling that they know their pupils better and often that they are surprised by the risk-taking behaviour disclosed by young people who they hadn't previously considered at risk.

"SafeSkills has made me less judgemental as a teacher, it allows me to listen more and to be better able to prevent risks rather than tell them they shouldn't do things"

"As a result of some of the discussions within the SafeSkills lessons teachers have made internal referrals in relation to specific young people to the schools safeguarding team and Safeguarding alerts have been sent to parents."

Maria Needham, Newton-le-Willows Primary School

Evidence of parents communicating more directly and children

In addition to changes in the behaviour of children and teachers some schools reported changes in parent's behaviour:

"As a result of the SafeSkills programme a number of parents have approached the school to ask for information and support".

Maria Needham, Newton-le-Willows Primary School

Communication outside of school between parents and children was also reported

"One third of children reported speaking to their parents about the issues that had been raised during the SafeSkills programme"

Hayley Grier, St Matthews Primary School

Although this evidence of behavioural change is based on qualitative observations there is consistent reporting across participating schools about young people's increased openness in discussing their risk-taking behaviour and schools responding in proactive ways to safeguard young people where appropriate.

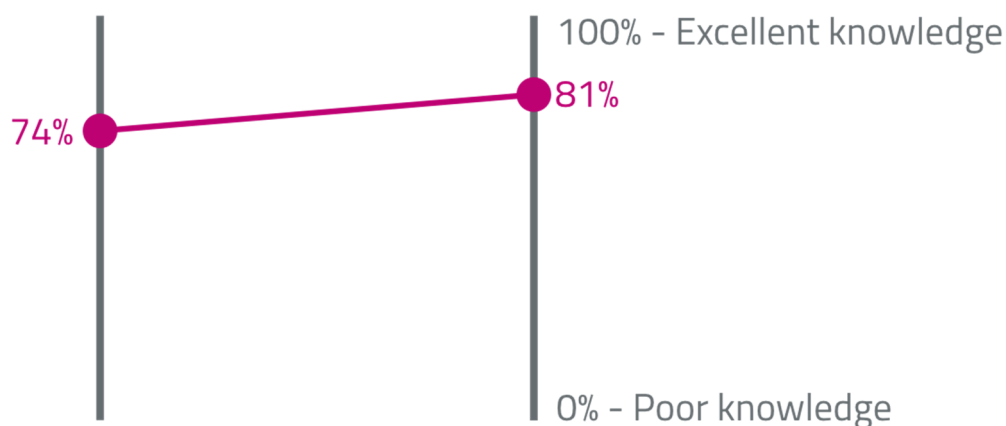
QUANTITATIVE EVIDENCE COLLECTED TO SUPPORT OBSERVATIONS

Evidence of improved knowledge about grooming

In addition to the collection of qualitative data this evaluation period involved the collection of some quantitative data in 7 schools delivering SafeSkills with 352 children having completed the programme and completed post-test data from 309.

Outcome data shows some promising signs. Children's knowledge and awareness scores improved by an average of 7% pre to post test. Whilst the start point is relatively high (74%), this is roughly comparable with other studies conducted with this age group (Tutty, 1995).

This is a statistically significant change in young people's knowledge about grooming. However, we were not able to include a follow-up and do not know whether the change is sustained long term.



Evidence shows that SafeSkills is an intervention that schools can implement with fidelity and that engages children

Implementation has been good. Five of seven schools submitted a full set of implementation data. All schools with implementation data delivered the full set of 10 lessons, either weekly, or over a condensed period. The average time spent delivering the programme was 6.6 hours in total. This is slightly lower than the hour per lesson required, at 48 mins per lesson, and probably reflects that many schools do not have hour long slots in their daily timetables. Schools where the full 10 hours were delivered, implemented SafeSkills in deliberately lengthened lessons, either 2 hour, half day, or full day sessions. This is likely to be a common occurrence and SafeSkills lessons could be condensed to fit with likely Primary school timetables. Teachers delivered most of the programme as intended (83%), although given the slightly reduced time available some of this content may well have been shortened to fit with delivery times. Teachers have reported that children were very engaged and interested in the content and exercises (4.7 out of 5). Both implementation fidelity and engagement are vital and without which outcome movement would not be expected. SafeSkills can be delivered within schools and be highly engaging to children making it a valuable method of content delivery.

Lessons Delivered



Materials Delivered



Evidence of child engagement

Child Engagement in class



No observed change in bystander behaviour scores

There has been no observed change in bystander behaviour scores, indicating that children may not be confident using new skills or may not have fully learnt the new skills. This highlights an area to investigate further.

The teacher evaluation questionnaire did provide positive feedback on how this module was received, with 100% of teachers reporting that classes were engaged in the activities.

"The materials for part 3 of Safe Skills were really well received by our children and we felt as staff that empowering the bystander is one of the most important messages for children aged 9 and 10"

"Especially the empowering the bystander section. It has also helped the children to communicate their worries and anxieties as well as providing them with some skills they previously may not have had".

There is a clear need for further development and testing in relation to this module focused on two areas:-

- Reviewing and strengthening the content
- Identifying more sophisticated evaluation measures

Trust

General trust has not changed, indicating that children do not seem to have been made overly fearful of others due to the content of SafeSkills. This was a possible unintended consequence foreseen from the outset. It was thought that a detailed programme on risk may make children overly distrustful and fearful of all others. Trust was not particularly low at the start of delivery either (e.g. children did not start distrustful or fearful of all others)

AN EVIDENCE BASED APPROACH BASED ON ETHICAL APPROVAL, INDEPENDENT TESTING AND EVALUATION

SafeSkills has been developed through a process of research and continuous evaluation, which has involved ethical approval. This section describes the different stages in this process and the way that these processes have shaped the development of this intervention.

Ariel Trust was part of an initial group of 25 organisations working with children and young people funded under the Realising Ambition project (2011) by the Big Lottery Fund. The first part of this project was to examine the logic model that Ariel Trust was using to design and develop preventative educational resources and to assess this against the current evidence base in order to help implement changes based on the findings.

A review of existing evidence

Two phases of literature review have been conducted and these suggest that if we only aim to help children to **understand, identify** and **raise awareness** of CSE then we are not doing enough to change children's risk-taking behaviour. *"A range of research agrees that primarily non – interactive strategies, or those based on knowledge alone are not effective."* (UNODC, 2004; Jones et al., 2014b; Thomas et al. 2015). There is a clear need for a strategic approach to the development of educational strategies that move beyond this to influence behaviour change. There is also clear evidence that sets out what more we need to do.

Ariel's skills-focused approach to preventative education builds on academic evidence gathered through randomised controlled trials and independent evaluation of similar programmes in the USA; *"focusing exclusively on attitudinal or educational components will likely not be effective in changing behaviour, as such the skills building component of Safe Dates is a crucial component"* (Foshee & Langwick, 2004).

There is also growing evidence within a UK setting that highlights *"the importance of active skills-based learning – defined as 'anything that involves students in doing things and thinking about what they are doing' (Herbert and Lohrmann, 2011). Opportunities to practise skills are identified as important by a number of reports (UNODC, 2004; Jones, 2010; Thomas et al., 2015)".* **Key Principals of effective prevention education, PSHE Association 2016.**

A review of the best available literature does suggest that there are certain characteristics that increase the likely effectiveness of prevention activities (Axford et al,

2018). These are largely drawn from small scale evaluations looking at prevention across a range of issues, such as bullying victimisation and intimate partner violence.

Firstly, children should be involved in the process of co-designing the materials used **(Bovarnick and Scott, 2016; Kingston University, 2009)**.

Secondly, prevention should not simply be about awareness raising but involve skill building activities such as role-plays, group discussion and modelling **(Topping and Barron, 2009; Kingston University, 2009; PSHE Association, 2016; Finkelhor, 2009; Zeuthen & Hagelskjaer, 2013)**.

Thirdly, that a routine system of evaluation focusing on child reported outcomes beyond knowledge and awareness should be in place **(Kingston University, 2009; Eaton, 2018)**. Fourth, that prevention should not focus solely on the child - programmes should seek to engage the whole school and wider community **(Bovarnick and Scott, 2016; Axford et al, 2018)**.

Lastly, the programmes sessions should be spread across several months to enable children to come back to topics raised and practice new skills multiple times **(Bovarnick and Scott, 2016)**. To do so programmes should be at least 7 hours in length.

Two phases of ethical review

Ariel Trust's approach to prevention education has been twice subjected to formal ethical review processes. The first process related to 'Face Up', a resource using the same skills development process in relation to issues of controlling behaviour in teenage relationships. The second review related directly to the SafeSkills programme. In both cases there were no issues raised regarding the appropriateness of the content for its intended audiences.

The first review, of 'Face Up', was conducted as part of a pilot randomised controlled trial of the programme by independent evaluators from Dartington Social Research Unit. The approach, content of the programme and the evaluation methodology were reviewed in detail by an academic ethics panel associated with the Dartington Social Research Unit and no concerns were raised as to the content of the programme or its delivery. A similar review process was used in relation to SafeSkills as part of the Evaluation Fund project, which was funded and reviewed by the CSA Centre.

An intervention co-created with children and young people

The literature review identified the involvement of children in the design process as a critical factor and extensive co-creation and consultation processes have been used in the development of SafeSkills. This includes co-creation of creative content with young people and extensive testing of this content with children to ensure the finished programme meets their needs. Ariel believes that, although time intensive, these elements are critical to achieving the high levels of engagement that have been seen both from schools and from the young people who have used the resource.

The content of the 'SafeSkills' programme is structured around six scenarios that are presented as short animations. The scripts for these scenarios were developed through a co-creation process involving young people who had experience sexual exploitation. These young people were identified by staff from Liverpool City Council's Targeted Services for Young People, the team responsible for supporting young victims.

Ariel worked with these young people using creative workshops to establish safe spaces where the young people felt comfortable discussing their experiences. This process allowed these young people to talk about how the grooming process began in their experience; they talked about grooming that had taken place in parks, how this moved on to invitations to houses and discussed the risks they were taking and how these might have been managed in more positive ways. These discussions lead to the development of the scripts that became integral to the final resource and they are used in the animated video clips in the resources.

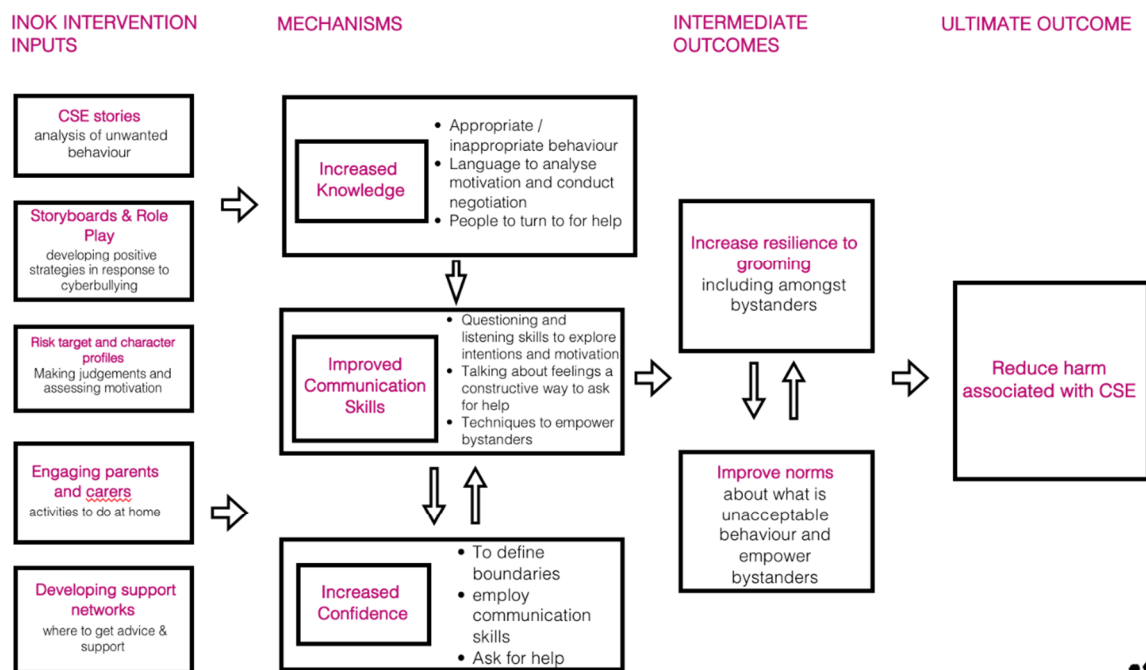
Professionals at Ariel Trust then developed storyboards, interactive activities and role play scenarios based on the scripts. These were further tested and developed through pilots involving young people from the target audience for the resource, 10-12 year olds.

This co-creation approach ensures that the scenarios included in the programme resources are realistic and relevant to young people. It also supports the increase of self-esteem amongst the young people involved in the co-creation work, allowing them to feel a sense of achievement through helping others.

A logic model that focuses on skill development not just awareness raising

The SafeSkills logic model is built on the principles that were identified in the literature review.

Figure 1: SafeSkills Logic Model



SafeSkills combines awareness and knowledge building with active skill acquisition to reduce the overall risk of child sexual exploitation. The programme seeks to build resilience to grooming and improved understanding of acceptable behaviour. Increased knowledge is built using real world stories that highlight risky situations. Children dissect these in groups to analyse unwanted and unacceptable behaviour and identify others intentions and motivations and therefore the risk they may, or may not, pose to them.

Storyboards and interactive role-plays help children to build positive strategies for avoiding risk and empowering them to be more able bystanders. Communication skills are built through these activities and provide children with the language to challenge unwanted behaviour and seek help from appropriate adults. Building knowledge and communication skills should increase children's confidence to support each other and seek help.

SafeSkills assumes that increased knowledge and skill acquisition will lead to a change in real world behaviour and that these behaviours reduce the risk of child abuse, grooming and exploitation.

Possible unintended consequences include decreased trust in adults, reawakening trauma in children having experienced abuse and an increase in disclosures (to teachers or parents).

An ongoing system of evaluation focusing on child reported outcomes beyond knowledge and awareness

During the Realising Ambition project, Ariel's programme was one of three selected to be evaluated using a randomised control trial design (RCT). The pilot RCT ran for a year, across five schools and involved approximately 1,100 students. Its primary purpose was to test whether a full scale RCT would (a) fit with Ariel's programmes (b) that large scale data collection was possible in this setting and (c) be acceptable to schools using the materials. Whilst the RCT was conducted on only one of Ariel's programmes, a programme focused on controlling behaviour in teenage relationships, the learning from it is applicable to all programmes including SafeSkills and a number of the lessons learnt below have informed the development of the SafeSkills programme e.g. targeting a primary school audience where the curriculum allows greater flexibility.

Insights from the RCT

Ariel's programmes are not fixed entities. Randomised control trials are still the gold standard of evaluation. However, a programme that is being constantly tailored is not the ideal candidate for a trial. Continuous evaluation through routine data collection may be more appropriate.

- Randomisation is not acceptable to many schools. Schools are not particularly happy being in a control group, not receiving the programme but having to collect data anyway. High control group drop-out and poor data completion was observed during the RCT.
- Delivering the programme in secondary schools, where there is no protected PSHE time, makes 10-hour weekly lessons almost impossible for schools to deliver. As a result, there was low fidelity to the lesson structure or plans and low programme completion.
- Data collection needs to be pragmatic and focused. Schools are not used to collecting data in the way required for many evaluations. Schools cannot fit an extra lesson in to allow children time to complete long outcome data surveys. Data

collection must fit at the beginning of the first lesson delivered and the end of the last session if it is going to be completed by the majority.

- Role-plays, a vital part of the programme and logic model, were one of the least implemented parts of the programme by teachers. Two reasons for this became apparent through teacher interviews. Firstly, teachers were not comfortable delivering this segment and reported it was outside of their skillset. Secondly, 13 and 14-year olds were reluctant to engage in role-plays in front of their peers.

A new phases of evaluation funded by the centre of expertise for CSA

Ariel's latest evaluation work, funded through the Centre of expertise on child sexual abuse, is focused around the SafeSkills programme. Based around the insights from the earlier pilot RCT, the stages below summarise the works stages.

Review the available outcome measures and developing new data surveys

There are few evaluated prevention programmes that target child sexual abuse, exploitation or grooming. As such, there are few measures available that are suitable for a programme working in this setting. For example, there is no measure of a child's current or future risk of grooming outside of tools developed and used in one-to-one clinical settings with victims. Measures needed to meet three criteria to be considered for inclusion:

- I. Standardised and validated – they must have been used on similar populations and been tested for their ability to measure the construct of interest;
- II. Ability to detect change – they have been used as a pre and post measurement (at least) in an evaluation setting and been shown to be sensitive to change.
- III. Pragmatic – they must be appropriate to primary school aged children and be of a suitable length.

Given the SafeSkills logic model, the first area requiring robust measurement is knowledge and awareness of inappropriate adult and peer behaviour. The Children's Knowledge of Abuse Questionnaire Revised (CKAQ-R) was designed to evaluate elementary school-aged children's learning of the key child abuse concepts taught in US schools (Tutty, 1995). It is one of the only published instruments designed to test children's knowledge of abuse prevention concepts that has substantial evidence of reliability on a wide age-range of children (8 to 14-year olds). One half of the scale consists of questions about inappropriate touching by adults that was considered to be outside the bounds of SafeSkills. The other half of the scale covers general inappropriate behaviour which constitutes grooming, which fits well with the aims and content of SafeSkills.

SafeSkills strength is the focus on skill acquisition and, in particular, teaching children to be good bystanders. If these elements of the programme are working as intended than an increase in reported confidence to act as a bystander should be seen. Research from bullying prevention has been drawn upon to provide a measure of a child's perceived ability and confidence to act as a bystander. The Bystander Defender Behaviour measure has been used widely in the evaluation of bullying programmes delivered in the school setting (Pöyhönen et al, 2010; van der Ploeg et al 2017). Although the measure was designed around bullying behavior, small tweaks to the language make it suitable for other types of inappropriate behaviour as the underlying constructs measured are similar. This is not a perfect measure. Ideally, actual behaviours would be measured as this is the ultimate end goal of the programme. In the absence of this, intermediary outcomes such as skill acquisition must be measured instead.

Finally, to monitor potential unforeseen consequences, a measure of trust in others was sought. SafeSkills teaches children that not all interactions with adults are good and not all adults' motivations are well intended. A measure of trust is intended to perform two functions. First, act as a baseline measurement of whether SafeSkills is necessary. If children report very high distrust before delivery, it is less likely SafeSkills would provide additional benefits. Secondly, it would be a negative outcome if SafeSkills was to push children towards being inherently untrusting of all others. The measure should act as a test of this. Yamagishi and Yamagishi (1994) provide a short trust scale covering the individual's general believe in others.

No pragmatic measures of improved communication skills were identified. The new version of the child survey can be found in Appendix 1.

The collection of data using the new evaluation and monitoring approach

Ariel have engaged seven primary schools to take part in this trial over the previous six months. These seven schools have been trained to deliver the SafeSkills materials and have completed the delivery of the programme to at least one class within their school. Schools were eager to deliver the programme and have had little problem collecting data on outcomes and fidelity. All schools have completed before and after data collection. However, most schools still felt more able to complete paper copies of the data than use the online portal. Often children did not have individual access to a computer each for the SafeSkills sessions, making online data collection extremely difficult. There were no issues when the online portal was used. Preliminary results are shown in the next section.

Examples from the online portal are attached as Appendix 2 and an example of the report is at Appendix 3

The importance of fidelity and dose

The SafeSkills programme is a web-based resource for teachers but importantly it is supported by a short teacher training session. Attending the training has been a prerequisite for receiving access to the website where the programme resources are provided. This approach was used to ensure that teachers understand the theory lying behind the programme and to ensure they implement it with fidelity. Experience has shown that where this understanding is communicated teachers have sometimes just picked elements of a programme to deliver, including simply showing a film with limited follow up and discussion.

SafeSkills was launched in Merseyside in September 2016. Since then, Ariel has been delivering a programme of teacher training events across the region to engage schools in delivering the programme with fidelity. To date Ariel has trained at least one teacher from 184 of 428 (43%) of Merseyside's primary school and 27 teachers from SEN or secondary schools have also attended sessions. Web analytics show a high proportion of teachers then accessing the resource and many schools are now in their second year of delivery.

"This was the second time that the school had delivered the programme and we felt the programme was even more effective this time, based on our previous experience".

Maria Needham, Newton-le-Willows Primary School

Feedback from teacher training is attached as Appendix 4

Feedback from teachers shows that they have been implementing the SafeSkills programme in full but the literature review suggested that programmes sessions should be spread across several months to enable children to come back to topics raised and practice new skills multiple times. This is an area of the programme that will require improvement

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this report is describe how an evidence based approach can be used to develop effective, preventative CSE educational resources for schools. It suggests that a cyclical approach to testing and development can be used to identify positive ways to deliver changes in children's behaviour but also suggests gaps in the existing programme that need to be addressed during subsequent phases of development.

To what extent have positive changes in children's behaviour been delivered?

At the start of the design process a logic model set out a number intermediate outcomes, one of which was to **improve norms about what is unacceptable behaviour**. Quantitative evidence from the improved knowledge and understanding of what constitutes grooming and appropriate behaviour indicates that SafeSkills helps clarify what is and is not acceptable (7% gain pre-post).

The qualitative evidence set out above shows that this outcome has been delivered in important ways.

The teachers who took part in this trial all suggested that children talked openly about their risk taking behaviour during the SafeSkills intervention. This often contrasted with other interventions that had been delivered by the same teachers at an earlier date. The willingness of children to talk about their risk taking behaviour, especially on-line risks, meant that teachers were able to conduct more accurate risk assessments, often identifying children who had not previously been considered at risk.

Using the interactive resources included in the SafeSkills package teachers were able to involve children in the risk assessment process. This participative approach to risk assessment seems to have led to clear examples of behaviour change including the following:

- Children deleting inappropriate contacts from their social media networks
- Children talking openly with parents about their social media contacts
- Teachers making internal referrals the schools safeguarding team
- Teachers and parents communicating about emerging risks

These reported changes are those that would be associated with normative changes in a school community with children, teachers and parents assessing risk in a participative way and responding positively to the identified risks.

The second intermediate outcome identified in the logic model was to **increase resilience to grooming**. There is evidence to suggest progress in this area as well, one child took part in a workshop to practice asking for help, then went home and asked his grandmother for help because he was being treated inappropriately by his mother's partner, this lead directly to police action.

In addition there is quantitative evidence collected from all participating schools that children's knowledge about grooming increased. While the pupil's from King David Primary School were observed talking about grooming in more confident and more detailed ways than other children of a similar age.

The logic model described that we hoped to observe **changes in bystander behaviour** but these changes were not observed during this phase of testing. This is clearly a priority issue for the next phase of development. There are two potential reasons for the lack of observed change and at this point it is not clear which is relevant, or whether it is a combination of both.

The lack of measureable impact may be due to using an impact measure that is not a good fit with the programme. The aim was to use existing, validated measures for the evaluation and, as previously described, there are very few measures designed for programmes designed to prevent grooming and sexual exploitation. The bystander measure that was used contains language that does not fit well with the programme, for example two of the five questions refer to 'victims' and yet SafeSkills is very careful to focus on the early stages of grooming and to not portray young people as victims. Another two questions refer to 'pressuring', again this is not directly relevant because the grooming process relies more on building trust and manipulation rather than direct pressuring. For this reason it is possible the measure used is not accurately reflecting the impacts delivered.

However, it is important not to dismiss the lack of impact evidence by simply dismissing the measurement tool and a review of the content is also important as part of a cycle of improvement. Ariel plans to review the content of this module to identify areas for improvement. It is also important to consider whether one three lesson module is sufficient to deliver impacts and to consider ways in which schools might increase the 'dose' delivered. One option might be reinforcing the messages through other programmes, including programmes that Ariel already offers in relation to other themes.

SafeSkills is a highly engaging prevention resource, making it an ideal base to deliver evidence-based content to children. This makes adapting the material based on insights from rapid testing much more manageable as it is a resource that teachers want to use again and children will engage with.

Recommendations for action

SafeSkills has been developed through a cyclical process of testing and evaluation. The evidence collected shows SafeSkills is a promising intervention with children and teachers reporting positive behaviour change. Further development cycles are needed to improve its impacts and to demonstrate that they can be replicated and sustained.

Proposals for the next phases of cyclical development include:-

- Share good practice across all schools, especially listening to children about their risk taking behaviour to conduct more accurate risk assessments and responses to identified risks
- Improve observed effects by increasing integration with a whole school approach involving parents as well as children and teachers so that knowledge and skills learnt are reinforced.
- Develop a quantitative measure of children's openness and/or willingness to disclose risk to either their teacher or parents.
- Use the initial set of SafeSkills monitoring data to examine the programme content relating to areas that have shown little or no improvement (e.g. bystander defending behaviour).
- Increase the opportunities for children to practice bystander defending behaviour by linking similar skill-based, behaviour change programmes together. Children could receive multiple opportunities to practice skills during their time in school. For example, CyberSense (online safety and bullying) and FaceUp (dating violence in young people) sit either side of SafeSkills target age and teach similar skills.
- Do not reinvent the wheel. Issues fall in and out of favour but the skills being applied to each set of risks are similar. Not every new topic area requires a new programme. On Merseyside Child Criminal Exploitation CCE is a priority and the skills developed during the SafeSkills programme are transferable.
- Integrate online data collection and analysis into programme implementation.
- Allow schools and commissioners access to SafeSkills progress during delivery.

- Iterate the data collected based on qualitative feedback so that it is investigated quantitatively in the next round of delivery.

Ariel is committed to the cyclical approach to development, testing and improvement of resources that is outlined in this report and is keen to implement the actions outlined above and to make SafeSkills the most effective programme that it can be. However, as a small organisation, Ariel cannot deliver this without the support of a range of partners and they are keen to identify organisations who can work with them in support of this objective.

Appendix 1: Child Pre and Post Survey questions

Below, you will see a set of statements; please tell us whether you think each is usually: **true**, **false** or you **don't know** by ticking the appropriate box.

	TRUE	FALSE	DON'T KNOW
1. If you don't like how someone is treating you it's okay to say "no".	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Even someone you like can make you feel bad.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Sometimes it's ok to say "no" to grown-ups.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. You always have to keep secrets.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Strangers look like ordinary people.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. You can always tell who's a stranger – they look mean.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. If someone does something you don't like, you should never tell anyone.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. If a mean kid at school tells you to do something, you should do it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. If someone has made you feel bad, you should keep telling until someone believes you.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. It is okay to say "no" and move away if someone makes you feel uncomfortable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. If a grown-up tells you to do something you always have to do it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. If your friend says they won't be your friend anymore if you don't give them your last sweet, then you should give it to them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

For these next questions, think about a situation where someone you know is being bullied or pressured by others. Please tell us how **easy** or **hard** you'd find it to do each.

	VERY EASY	EASY	NEITHER EASY NOR HARD	HARD	VERY HARD
1. Trying to make others stop pressuring someone would be...					
2. Telling others to stop pressuring someone would be...					
3. Supporting or comforting the victim would be...					
4. Sometimes it's ok to say "no" to grown-ups.					
5. Encouraging the victim to tell a trusted adult would be...					

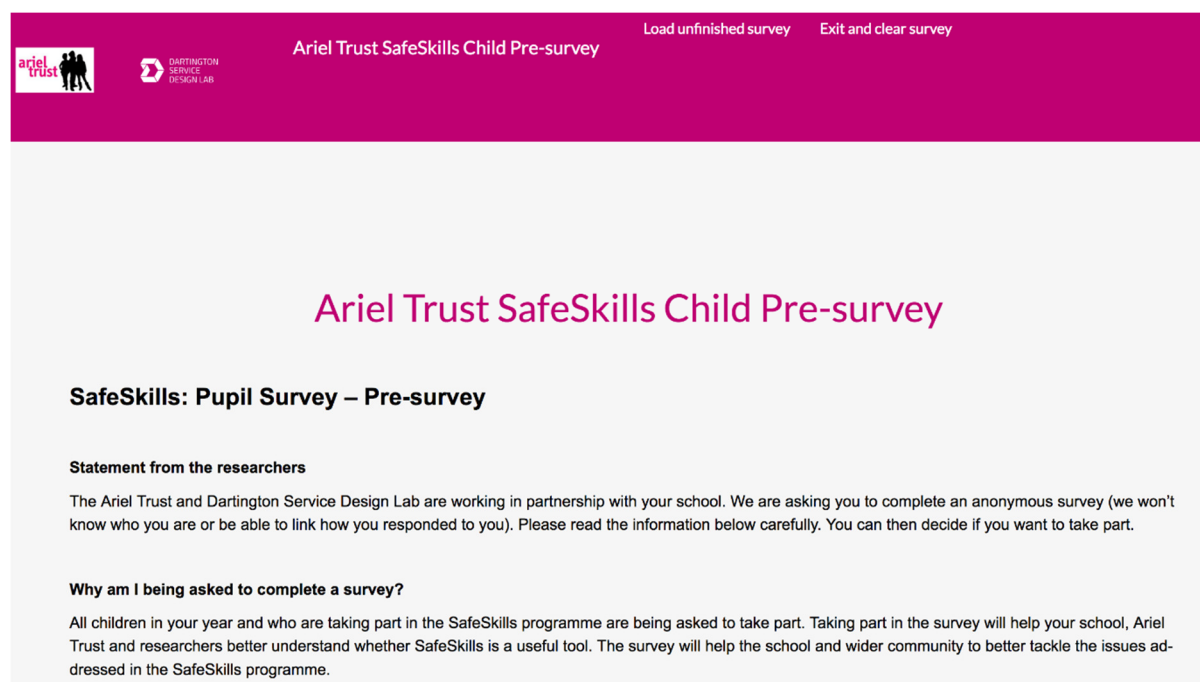
Now, please tell us your opinion on the following statements, and how strongly you feel for each one by telling us whether you **strongly agree**, **agree**, **neutral**, **disagree**, or **strongly disagree**.

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. Most people are basically honest.					
2. Most people are trustworthy.					
3. Most people are basically good and kind.					
4. Most people are trustful of others.					
5. I am trustful.					
6. Most people will be trusting if they are trusted by others.					

Appendix 2: Development of an online data collection system

The new pre and post child report surveys and teacher fidelity monitoring survey have been moved to an online data collection system integrated with Ariel's other online resources. Schools are simply given a link to the child and teacher data collection tools. Surveys are available in paper format too. This option remains important due to IT restrictions in some schools. The main advantage of collecting data online is that child data can be collected completely anonymously (there is no opportunity to enter identifiable information) and the resource need to collect and process the data is reduced (printing and data input time is reduced). Examples of the data tools are shown below.

Figure 2: SafeSkills Child Pre-survey data portal



Ariel Trust SafeSkills Child Pre-survey

Load unfinished survey Exit and clear survey

Ariel Trust SafeSkills Child Pre-survey

SafeSkills: Pupil Survey – Pre-survey

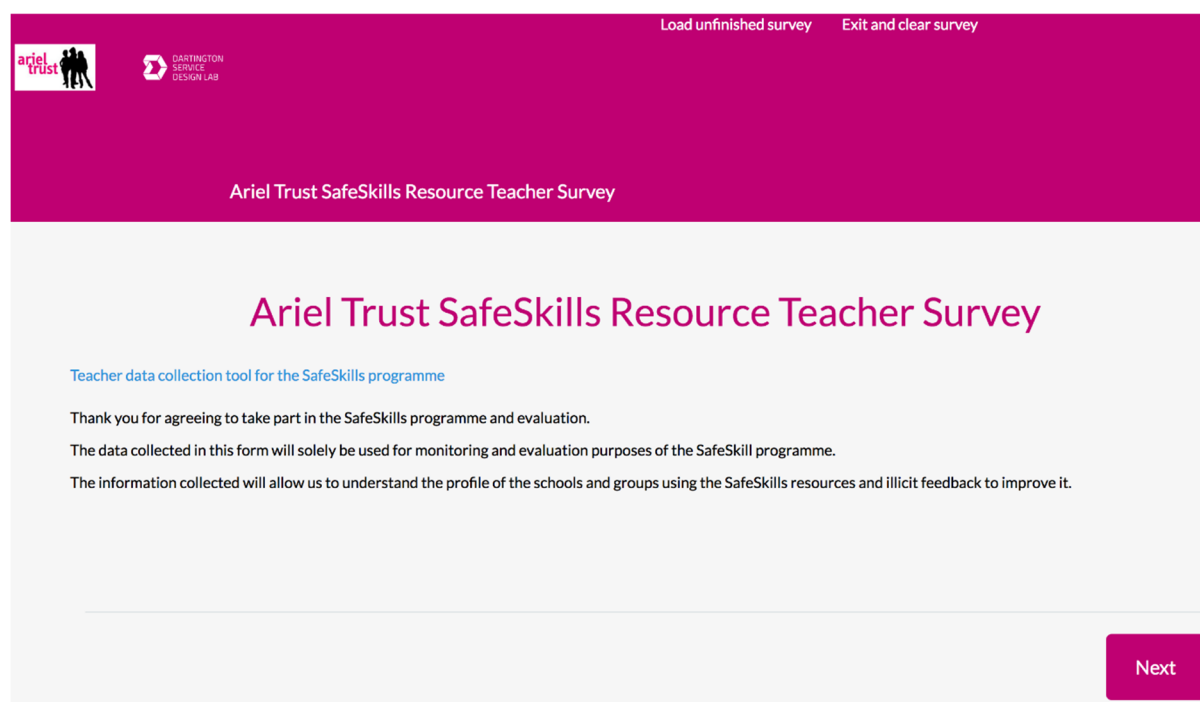
Statement from the researchers

The Ariel Trust and Dartington Service Design Lab are working in partnership with your school. We are asking you to complete an anonymous survey (we won't know who you are or be able to link how you responded to you). Please read the information below carefully. You can then decide if you want to take part.

Why am I being asked to complete a survey?

All children in your year and who are taking part in the SafeSkills programme are being asked to take part. Taking part in the survey will help your school, Ariel Trust and researchers better understand whether SafeSkills is a useful tool. The survey will help the school and wider community to better tackle the issues addressed in the SafeSkills programme.

Figure 3: SafeSkills Teacher fidelity monitoring data portal



Build capacity for continuous evaluation across Ariel programmes through data analysis and reporting

Analysis of data by Ariel has moved towards being routinised, freeing time to develop programme monitoring dashboards (see preliminary results) and disaggregate the data to provide schools with individual reports after delivery (shown in figure 4). Data analysed and presented in this way decreases the time between programme delivery and evaluation making data more useful to Ariel's continuing programme development. An immediate view of what appears to be going well, and what may require course correction, opens up the possibility of rapidly redesigning elements of SafeSkills before the next round of delivery. This rapid cycle approach will allow Ariel to test and refine SafeSkills with each new round of delivery in schools. Because each period of delivery and evaluation is short, SafeSkills does not have to remain unchanged for long periods of time as in an RCT. Such a flexible system allows for different delivery contexts to be tested against one another within Ariel to determine the best environment for programme delivery.

Rapid cycle testing is not intended to completely replace other forms of evaluation, but rather refine SafeSkills to the point of being ready for more traditional evaluation (e.g. is stable, consistently delivered and shows promise).

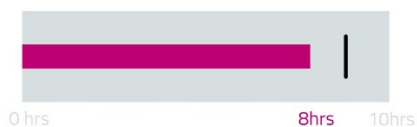
Appendix 3: Example individual school data report

SAFESKILLS: XXXXXXXXXXXX PRIMARY SCHOOL



1. Implementation

Lessons Delivered



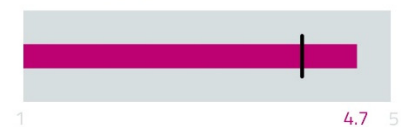
8 of 10 SafeSkills lessons were delivered. Each was 60 minutes long.

Materials Delivered



Teachers delivered 85% of the SafeSkills material across the lessons completed.

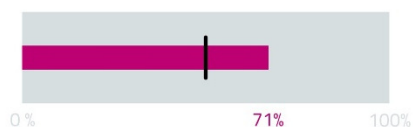
Child Engagement in class



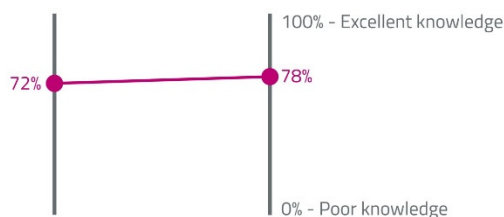
On average, children were **very interested** throughout the SafeSkills lessons.

2. Outcomes (56 children)

Knowledge & Awareness



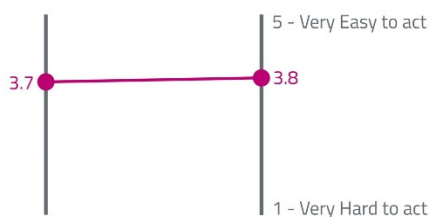
71% of children participating saw improvement in their knowledge & awareness of exploitation. The average improvement was small (6%).



Bystander defending behaviour



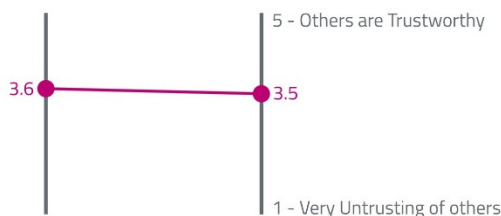
18% of children participating saw improvement in their confidence to act when confronted with risk. The average improvement was small (0.1).



General Trust



75% of children participating reported a drop in their general trust in others. The average drop was small (0.1).



Appendix 4: Feedback from teacher training sessions

1. Did you find the training useful?

100% of respondents found the training useful

'Training was extremely useful because it matches perfectly with the requirements to provide children with the opportunities to learn and practice how to keep safe.'

Holy Trinity Primary School, Liverpool

'Very useful – clear guidance and focus on empowerment through discussion and skill development.'

Yew Tree Community Primary, Knowsley

2. Do you think the SafeSkills resource will help you meet Ofsted requirements?

87% stated that the SafeSkills resource would help them meet the Ofsted requirements.

'Yes, most definitely – great information, based on research findings, that will enhance our pupils' skills.'

St Matthews C.P.S Liverpool

'Yes, it will enable children to identify risks in situations they come across and implement personal safety strategies.'

Sandbrook Primary, Wirral

3. Does SafeSkills help to support other school priorities?

73% felt that SafeSkills will help school to meet school priorities

'Yes, encompassed into whole school safeguarding policy.'

St Mary's Blackbrook, St Helen's

'Yes, personal safety as well as complimenting current school practices such as clean language and oral questioning to deepen wider world understanding.'

Sandbrook Primary, Wirral

4. Will you be using SafeSkills in school?

81% of respondents said that they will use SafeSkills with their pupils this academic year.

5. Would you like to be part of an evaluation and consultation process which will help future development of SafeSkills?

60% of respondents said they would be willing to support Ariel with evaluation of the resource to support the future development of SafeSkills. This involves data collection from the children and teachers.

General comments

'Thought provoking and very valuable to equip young people, parents, carers in dealing with these situations. Early intervention is a must.'

Teacher, St Margaret Mary's Junior School

'Useful way to discuss the issues raised. Resources look as though they could be used at whatever level of understanding the pupils are at. Potentially valuable resource to skill up children to resist and be aware of risks.'

Teacher, St Andrews Primary School

'Very interesting. Can see how it would engage a group of Yr6 children in discussion. If research indicates children need to practice skills then this format would be ideal.'

Sue Coombes, Merseyside Police

Appendix 5: BACKGROUND TO ARIEL TRUST

Using an evidence based approach Ariel Trust aims to develop highly effective CSE prevention tools. Working in partnership with Dartington Service Design Lab we are committed to a cyclical process of evaluation and improvement. This report sets out the results of the latest cycle of this testing, funded by the centre of Expertise for child sexual abuse and identifies the next steps of innovation and improvement.

Ariel Trust is an educational charity with a mission to 'improve the quality of education. We will develop models of best practice based on multimedia projects tackling social themes. At the heart of our work is an evidence-based approach designed to motivate and engage young people changing their attitudes, behaviour and levels of achievement'.

Ariel has been developing prevention education programmes responding to a range of social issues since 2007. The programmes take a skills-based approach, which is based on evidence from the United States. Studies have concluded that awareness raising alone does not change behaviour and that developing and practicing skills is the most effective approach. Foshee & Langwick (2004) - *"programmes focusing exclusively on attitudinal or educational components will likely not be effective in changing behaviour as such the skills building component... is a crucial component of the chain of events that can lead to positive outcomes"*.

The programme is supported and co-ordinated through a steering committee that identifies the priority themes that the software resources address. The steering group currently includes representative from Liverpool City Council (Children's Services, Community Cohesion, Health and Culture), Merseyside Police and Merseyside PCC Office, St Helens Public Health and Wirral MBC. In 2015 this group identified child sexual exploitation as an important issue facing young people in Merseyside, this was based on a growing number of referrals to the five local authorities (Liverpool, Sefton, Knowsley, St Helens and Wirral). The Public Health departments from the five areas came together to fund the development of the SafeSkills resource alongside support from a number of trusts & foundations. Merseyside Police, Police & Crime Commissioner and Liverpool Community Safety have also invested in the teacher training programme that supports the resource.