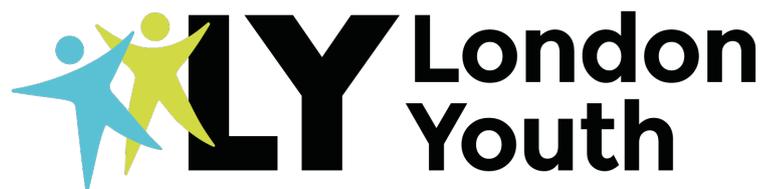


London Youth

Good for Girls

Year 2 Evaluation Report November 2022



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Introduction

London Youth received funding from DCMS through the Tampon Tax Fund to deliver the Good for Girls project. This Fund is specifically for disadvantaged women and girls using the funds generated from VAT on sanitary products.

Good for Girls is an opportunity to directly improve the mental health of young women. The project is delivered by London Youth in partnership with member organisations. The project was a new approach for London Youth; both in terms of the focus on mental health and wellbeing, but also in terms of its delivery, with the programme incorporating elements of sports, mental health and youth action which has resulted in a cross-programme team approach to programme management.

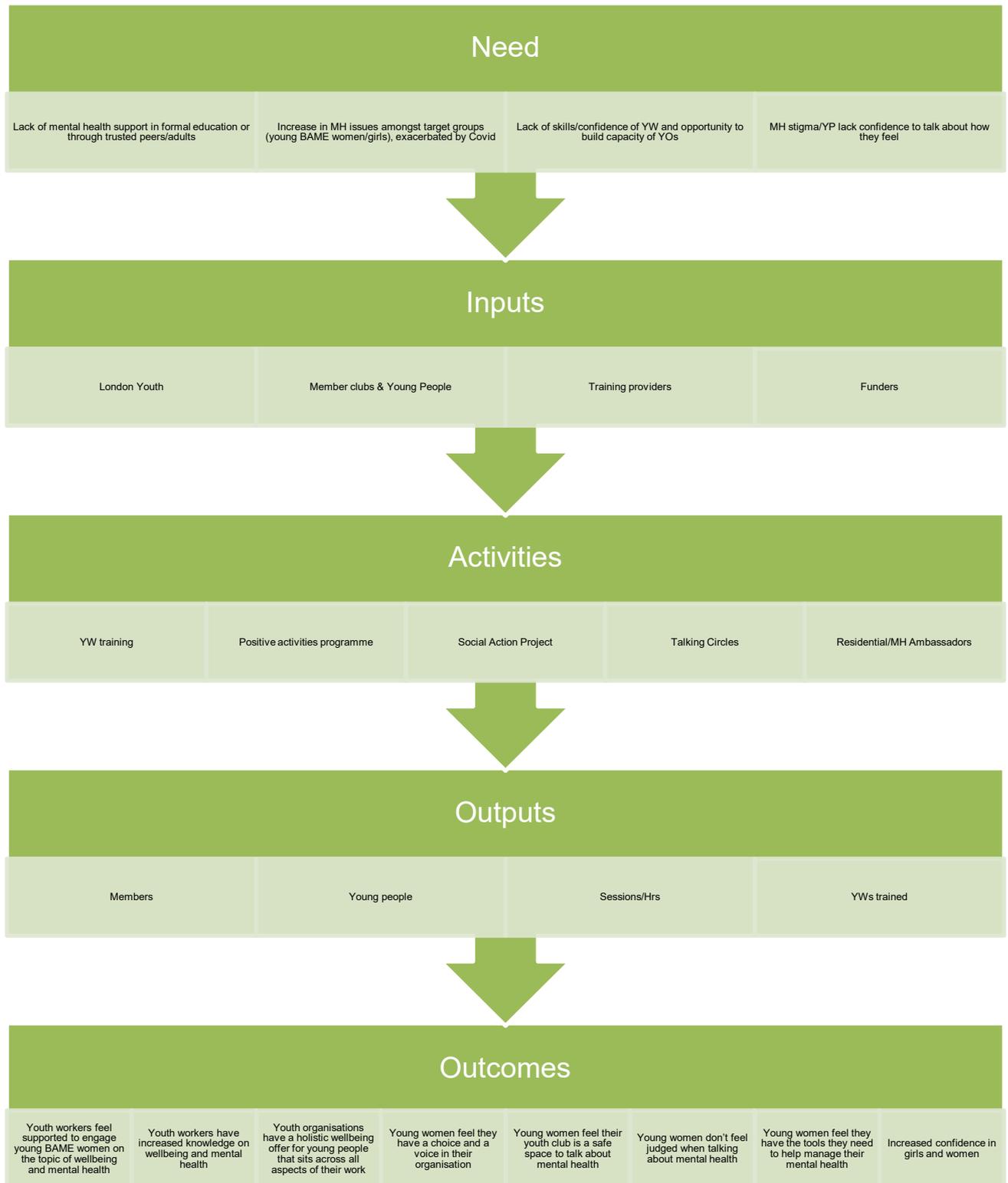
Shephard & Moyes Ltd was appointed to evaluate the programme over the two years of funding. This is our second annual evaluation report and focuses on capturing learning to help inform future mental health focused programmes at London Youth.

Evaluating Good for Girls

To evaluate Good for Girls, we combine self-evaluation support with independent evaluation to achieve the following objectives:

- Test the concept and explore what works and what doesn't
- Understand what was achieved through the training for youth workers and how this has helped influence and improve delivery at member organisations
- Understand how the different strands of the programme work together to deliver the outcomes
- Understand how well London Youth works across-programmes, and what could be improved
- Better understand the needs of the target group and the extent to which the programme meets their needs through using art or sport as the 'hook' to engagement

We developed an evaluation framework in early 2021 following a workshop with staff from London Youth. The purpose of the workshop was to explore with staff the desired outcomes for the project and consider what evaluation tools may be appropriate. The evaluation framework resulted in a logic model for the project (diagram below), which was used to develop research questions, which guide our evaluation.



Our approach to evaluating the Good for Girls programme is shown in the diagram below.



For this second annual evaluation report we have collated and analysed data collected by members and London Youth. We have supplemented this with conversations with youth workers and training providers through one-to-one interviews. This report includes:

- Reach and participation/engagement data, taken from registration forms and registers
- Delivery data, taken from Upshot reports, conversations with youth workers and young people and learning captured by the team
- Impact data taken from young people’s surveys, youth worker surveys, organisational capacity tool, case studies produced by members and conversations with youth workers and young people

The report provides an overview of what has been achieved over the year, who has been engaged in the programme (members and young people), what has been delivered and the impact of the programme on young people, youth workers and youth organisations.

About Good for Girls

The Good for Girls programme aims to support young women and girls to access relevant, holistic early intervention mental health support in trusted community spaces. This includes support and guidance from trained youth professionals, and opportunities to develop relationships, skills, and tools to maintain positive mental health. The intention is that young women will get support earlier, meaning fewer require referral to specialist services.

The programme focuses on supporting young women of colour, aged 10-14. Over the course of the programme, the young women took part in weekly activities of sports and/or arts in their youth organisation. This promotes positive mental health and challenge stigma; through discussing emotional wellbeing and issues they care about. Finally, they take leadership roles to promote wellbeing in their communities through a social action project.

Alongside this, each year the cohort of 30+ youth workers receive a programme of high-quality training to become Wellbeing Leads and embed positive mental health practices into their delivery.

The diagram below summarises the timeline for the programme.



Programme design/structure

Based on learning from year 1 of the programme, the main changes made in year 2 were:

- The bulk of the training, more than half, now takes place before delivery starts
- Opportunities to meet in person has helped to create a strong network of youth workers
- Changes to the training programme, with the trauma session held near the start, previously optional sessions being made compulsory and the addition of a cultural competency session delivered by a member organisation
- Social action pitches are now in person rather than virtually and the pitch day programme has changed to build in time for planning as well as delivery of the pitch
- More information provided prior to the programme starting
- Two separate inductions; one for youth organisation leads and one for youth workers delivering the programme has helped manage expectations from the start and provided more time to provide specific advice and share learning from year 1
- A full residential was delivered, with a more structured approach to the wellbeing ambassadors role

The main benefit to the start of year 2 compared to year 1 was having more time to reflect, prepare and consult youth organisations on how to improve the delivery model for the second cohort. The creation of the development group has helped inform the revised training programme and involved youth workers in conversations about how the programme should be delivered. The team have remained consistent since year 1 which has enabled the learning and all recommendations from the first year's evaluation to be actioned.

The changes to the training programme have resulted in increased attendance, with youth workers being able to dedicate their time to the training rather than having to juggle this alongside delivery. The team have noticed a drop in attendance at the training sessions since delivery started; in future even more of the training could be delivered prior to delivery to further increase attendance rates.

This increased focus on training prior to delivery, combined with the opportunities to meet in person has helped create a strong community amongst the youth workers delivering the programme; they have created their own WhatsApp group and regularly share advice and communicate with each other. The group has also been beneficial for the team at London Youth, as a way of capturing learning and insight into the programme.

This has to some extent been an unplanned benefit of the programme; learning for future programmes suggests that time (and therefore resources) spent facilitating and supporting the creation of communities of practice could be highly beneficial in other programmes, particularly those that include experienced and less experienced youth organisations. There may also be the opportunity to extend the networking to young people as well as youth workers.

Reach

This section of the report considers how youth organisations and young people were engaged in the programme, who is taking part and the extent to which the programme is reaching the target audiences. It is drawn from registration data collected by members and conversations with youth workers and young people.

Engaging youth organisations

Demand for the programme has remained strong in year 2, with all 30 organisations recruited. 7 of these delivered in year 1 and 23 are new.

“When it started in year 1, we hadn’t been together much [because of the pandemic], so it was just an opportunity to get together. And it’s just easier for us to get girls on board to do things. It just worked, the focus on wellbeing was right at that time, the groups were small and contained and parents were happy for them to take part. We wanted to continue in year 2, because we’d tried girls’ groups before, but they hadn’t really stuck. But this time it was working and doing something good. We wanted to carry on. Even though there has been a change over of young people in year 2, it’s still doing the same magic with the girls” (youth worker)

Cohort 2 has seen a good mix of smaller and larger organisations, as well as a good mix of organisations that focus on sport, art or both. This was achieved through a deliberate scoping and targeted approach exercise. It also demonstrates that the programme can be delivered by a range of organisations. Some organisations joined London Youth specifically to join the Good for Girls programme, and word of mouth from cohort 1 organisations helped to generate demand.

There were no significant changes to the recruitment or application process, however learning from year 1 delivery helped to refine the process. The programme was open to all members, without any specific targeting, and around 10 who delivered in year 1 applied again. It has been beneficial to have some existing organisations on cohort 2 as they have been able to share learning and good practice from their delivery. This has been particularly helpful when sharing the concept of Talking Circles; the ability to describe how they work in practice and the subsequent benefits to the young people to new organisations has been particularly helpful. However, Good for Girls was designed to support organisations new to delivering mental health and wellbeing support, so there needed to be a strong case for existing organisations to be included in cohort 2.

Youth organisation capacity

One of the main aims of Good for Girls is to increase the capacity of youth organisations to deliver mental health support to young people. In order to better understand the starting points of the organisations and youth workers involved in delivering the project, we developed two tools;

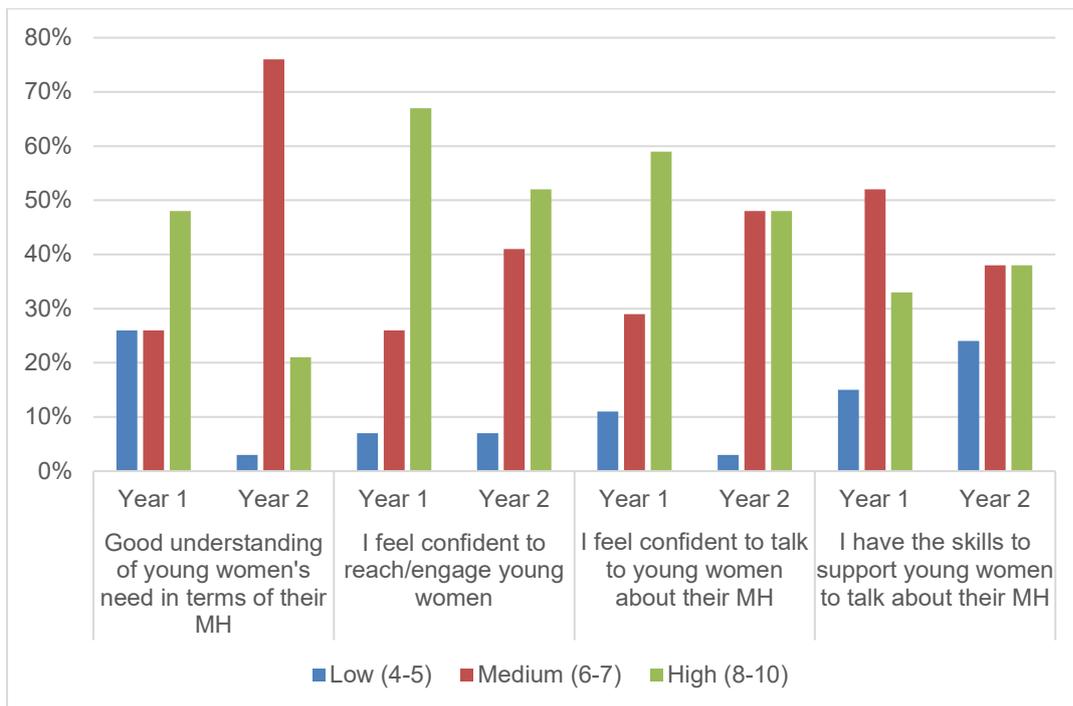
- Youth worker survey; to better understand individual youth workers' levels of skills and confidence before taking part in the programme
- Youth organisation capacity tool; to better understand the needs of the whole organisation

Prior to starting on the Good for Girls programme, the lead person from each member organisation, and the youth workers who would benefit from the mental health training were asked to complete these short baseline surveys. The same surveys were to be completed again at the end of the year, to determine the extent to which Good for Girls has helped increase capacity; the results of these are included in the impact chapter later in the report.

The diagram below shows the results of the organisational capacity baseline tool and compares year 1 and year 2 responses. The lead youth workers were asked to select one statement for each of the five topics which best described where they were prior to Good for Girls starting. It shows that there are significant differences in the average 'before' positions of the funded organisations, with potential to increase capacity against all criteria. It also shows that the inclusion of organisations who delivered the programme in year 1 has not led to any significant changes to the capacity of organisations or youth workers prior to delivery starting.

Topic	1	2	3	4	5
Purpose and role	We do not think we need to define our role in terms of delivering MH/wellbeing support to young people	We have not yet started to think about our role in terms of delivering mental health/wellbeing support to young people	We have started to think about our role in terms of what MH/wellbeing support we should or should not deliver but this is not yet clearly defined	We have a good understanding of our role internally, but this is not necessarily understood by all our staff, volunteers or young people	We have a clearly defined role in terms of delivering mental health or wellbeing support to our young people and this is understood by all our staff, volunteers and young people
Year 1	0%	0%	26%	48%	26%
Year 2	0%	3%	27%	47%	23%
Delivery	We do not deliver any mental health/ wellbeing support to our young people	We support and encourage young people to talk about their mental health/wellbeing but this is not a structured part of our delivery programme	Our delivery helps to improve young people's mental health or wellbeing, <u>or</u> helps to encourage young people to talk about their mental health, but indirectly as a consequence of what we do, rather than being the focus	We deliver some programmes which have a clear focus on young people's mental health/wellbeing, but this isn't embedded in all our delivery	The majority of our programmes have a clear focus on young people's mental health/ wellbeing
Year 1	0%	11%	37%	26%	26%
Year 2	0%	17%	40%	17%	27%
Skills	Our staff team are not skilled to support young people with their mental health/ wellbeing and this is not part of their role	Our staff have some skills at supporting young people with their MH/ wellbeing, but this is not their core role	Our staff are skilled at supporting young people with their MH/ wellbeing, but could benefit from additional training and support to improve what we do	Our staff and volunteer team are highly skilled at supporting young people with their MH/ wellbeing, but we lack the resources to provide ongoing CPD	Our staff and volunteer team are highly skilled at supporting young people with their MH/ wellbeing and we provide ongoing CPD
Year 1	4%	22%	48%	19%	7%
Year 2	0%	37%	53%	10%	0%
Signposting and networks	We do not know where to signpost our young people to for support with their mental health/ wellbeing	We have some links with other organisations that provide mental health/ wellbeing support but these are limited	We have links with other organisations that deliver mental health/wellbeing support but no clear referral pathways in place	We have clear referral pathways with a small number of other support services but could benefit from a greater range	We have strong networks and clear referral pathways with a broad range of other support services and these are understood and followed by our staff and volunteers
Year 1	7%	41%	11%	37%	4%
Year 2	0%	40%	13%	40%	7%
Co-production	We do not involve our young people in deciding what we deliver	We consult young people on activities they like/do not like which helps to shape what we deliver	We work in partnership with our young people to jointly decide what to deliver	Young people are involved in decision making around what our organisation delivers	Our programmes are entirely led/ delivered by young people
Year 1	0%	33%	7%	44%	15%
Year 2	0%	47%	33%	17%	0%

The chart below shows the results of the baseline survey completed by youth workers and compares the results from year 2 to year 1. Many youth workers in cohort 2 have been specifically recruited to deliver the programme, and for some this is the first programme they have delivered. The results show a slight decrease in youth workers' self-reported confidence and skills to deliver prior to receiving the training, compared to year 1, which reflects the fact that while in cohort 1 youth workers tended to be more experienced, this was not the case in cohort 2. It is also worth noting that organisations that delivered the programme in both years were asked to send different youth workers on the training, in order to ensure more people could benefit.



The average scores (with 1 being low and 10 being high) in the table below also demonstrate this, showing that there is potential to improve youth worker skills across all categories.

	Average – year 1	Average – year 2
I have a good understanding of young women’s needs in terms of their mental health	7.15	6.97
I feel confident to reach/engage young women	7.85	7.41
I feel confident talking to young women about their mental health	7.89	7.66
I have the skills to support young women to talk about their mental health	7.19	6.90

Engaging young people

Overall, a total of 620 young people were engaged in year 2 of the project, a slight increase from 600 in year 1.

There are two main models of young people’s engagement across the programme; either targeted or open recruitment. Members using a targeted approach have created a range of referral routes into the project, including schools, parents, social workers, CAMHS, family support teams etc. For these members they are specifically targeting young people who are experiencing particular challenges at school, or have mental health challenges. The project is ‘sold’ to schools (and in some cases, young people) as a mental health support project.

The open model focuses more on using the sport or art activities as the 'hook', introducing the mental health support aspect gradually once young people get comfortable. Some are working with young people they have not engaged before, whereas others have created the group from within the existing youth organisation's membership.

Methods that have worked well to promote the project to young people include:

- Eye catching flyers
- Free things – bags, water bottles, t-shirts etc
- Trips – the residential was a big draw for some young people
- Carrying out consultation with young people before the project started
- Outreach events
- Meetings with parents beforehand to discuss any concerns – particularly helpful for projects delivering in schools as there can be a disconnect between the youth worker and parents
- Word of mouth

Regardless of the model used, young people are choosing to join primarily to take part in activities that give them the opportunity to socialise with friends or make new friends. Conversations with young people have shown that taking part in the social action project is a big motivator for taking part; with many young people seeing the project as an opportunity to help others. And although some groups gradually introduce the concept of mental health rather than explicitly promote the group as such, all young people understand that the purpose of the group is to support mental health and wellbeing.

“I wanted to join as it's fun to work together with people I didn't really know, and learn about wellbeing.” (young person)

“I wanted to get involved as they told us we'd have the opportunity to change things through this project” (young person)

“It was the social action part, how we can spread awareness to the community about different issues” (young person)

“I wanted to make new friends and learn new hobbies” (young person)

Young people profile

Registration forms collected by members provide useful data on the demographic profile of young people, helping to understand who is involved in the programme and what groups of young women and girls are being reached.

Gender

Gender identity and inclusion continues to be a topic of conversation for youth organisations and London Youth. It is London Youth's policy to not exclude anyone based on their gender identity, however the purpose of Good for Girls is to provide safe spaces for women and girls to talk about their mental health. This could potentially result in a conflict, however the

majority of youth organisations are keen to be inclusive and as such there has been a small proportion of young people who identify as trans or non-binary taking part in cohort 2. London Youth have always been clear to members that they can call the group whatever they choose, however London Youth also recognise the need to be clear in their messaging about programmes, to ensure that organisations understand who programmes are targeted at and why.

In order to continue this important conversation, and to address some of the challenges around gender identity in some cultures, there is the potential to include gender identity training in the programme.

We explored with some young people who took part in the programme the value they placed on the group being for girls/non-binary young people. The majority felt it was important that girls/non-binary young people had a safe space to share their thoughts and feelings relating to their mental health. However, some felt it did not really matter to them.

“We can talk about issues that girls face” (young person)

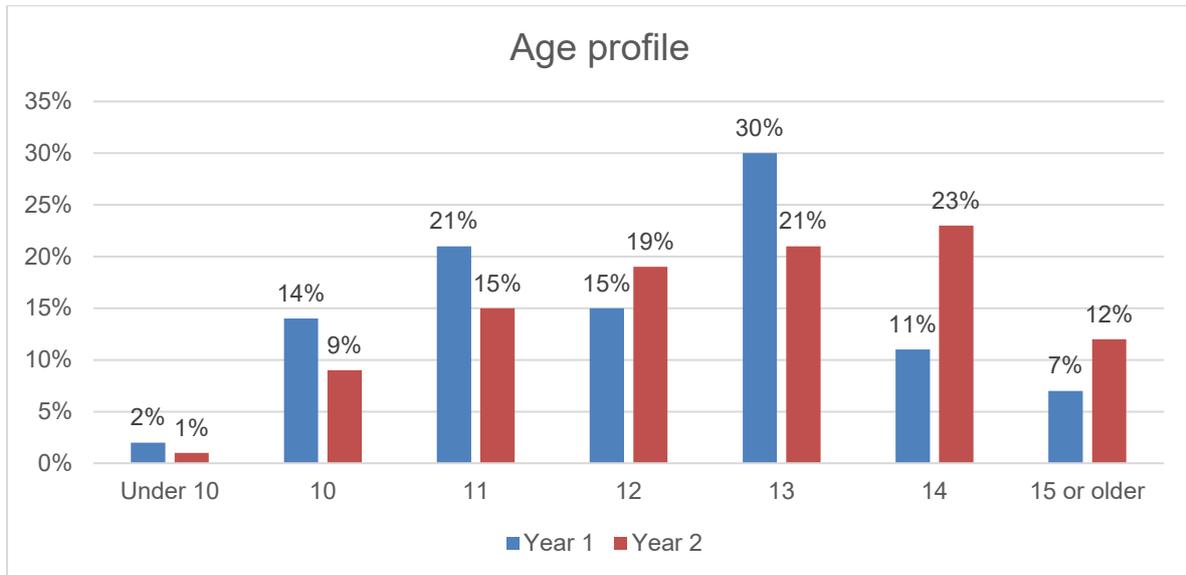
“It’s easier to talk about how you feel just with other girls” (young person)

“I feel like there are already lots of clubs for boys, but not much for girls” (young person)

“I don’t really mind, I would be happy if boys joined as well” (young person)

Age

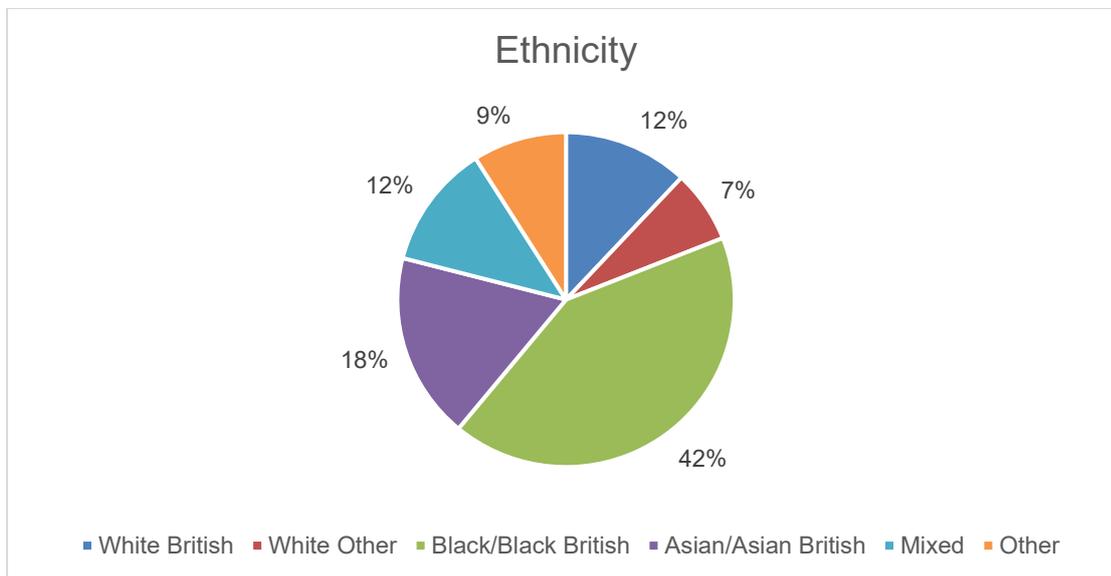
The chart below shows the breakdown of the age* of young people supported by Good for Girls. It shows that 87% of young people engaged in year 2 were within the target age range of 10-14. It also shows that the age profile in year 2 was slightly older than in year 1; in year 1 37% were aged 10 or under to 11, compared to 25% in year 2. Whereas 48% were aged 13 or older in year 1, compared to 56% in year 2. Many organisations have chosen to support either younger age groups, or older age groups, as the issues that 10 year olds are experiencing are different to 14 year olds. Many have also deliberately chosen to target young people who have just started secondary school, in recognition of the need for support during this transition period.



* Note age has been calculated as age at 1st September 2022, so the age the young person was at the end of the programme year.

Ethnicity

The chart below shows the ethnicity of participants across the programme, showing that overall 81% were from non-white communities, a similar proportion to year 1 (83%). Nearly half (42%) were Black/Black British.



Disability

Overall, 15% of young people engaged had a disability or life-limiting health condition (including mental health). This is a significant increase from 7% in year 1, due to more targeting of members who support SEND young people.

Socio-economic status

Overall, 54% of young people live in the top 30% most deprived communities in England, using postcode data and mapping this to the Index of Multiple Deprivation. This is the same percentage as year 1, showing that the programme continues to reach disadvantaged communities.

Overall, the demographic data collected for young people shows that the programme continues to successfully reach young people from the target groups; namely young women and girls of colour and/or who live in lower socio-economic communities, who are aged 10-14.

Young people's needs and barriers

Conversations with youth workers and young people have explored the specific issues that young women and girls have with regard to their mental health and wellbeing. The main issues identified that are affecting young girls' wellbeing included:

- Body shaming and body dysmorphia
- Bullying
- Dealing with conflict
- Issues at school
- Issues with boys
- Friendship groups/peer pressure etc
- The lack of social opportunities and isolation as a result of the pandemic
- Lack of positive opportunities and 'space' to think and feel
- Traumatic life experiences
- Caring responsibilities
- Parental pressures or issues at home, and not feeling comfortable to share problems with their family
- Societal issues, such as climate change, LGBT+ rights etc

"I would ask them how their day and week have been and they would always offload about difficulties in friendships and problems at school and when I would ask if they had spoken to anyone they always said they hadn't and some of them said they wouldn't talk about these things with their families" (youth worker)

Delivery

This section of the report considers what has been delivered, what has worked well and the challenges faced by London Youth and member organisations since the start of the programme.

Youth Worker training

As a result of the changes made to the training delivery in year 2, 12 training sessions have been delivered to date, providing 35 hours of support. There have been 43 attendances, compared to 34 in year 1, demonstrating the increase in attendance by delivering the training prior to delivery starting. There has been an average attendance of 89%, with sessions seeing on average 13.4 of the 15 participants, which is extremely high levels of engagement.

Learning from delivering this intensive training programme for Good for Girls is:

- The importance of having good quality training providers
- Having dedicated and specific training for just Good for Girls youth workers, with trainers that reflect the diversity of the programme (rather than generic training for all members)
- Providing two sessions for youth workers to select
- Having a mix of morning and afternoon sessions
- Do not deliver training after 3pm
- London Youth to be responsible for all the administration; e.g. setting up Zoom links, hosting and recording sessions)
- Sending calendar invites (rather than just Zoom links in an email) means people are more likely to attend

The results from the youth worker surveys (n=35) showed that overall, the training was extremely well-received and a valuable element of the programme:

- 97% of youth workers agreed that the training and support from London Youth met their needs
- 86% agreed that the training and support from the external training providers met their needs
- 86% agreed that the amount of training and support available was sufficient
- 91% agreed that they were able to apply what they learnt in the training to the delivery of the Good for Girls programme
- 91% agreed that the training and support has helped improve what they deliver

In particular, youth workers valued the resources provided, the peer-support and community of practice created, and the inclusion of the importance of supporting youth workers' mental health.

“We benefited from having the confidence to create the programme. It gave us a blueprint to develop from and let us understand that this is individual to each organisation.”

“To have the training community of youth workers, I was able to learn from others. The training was comprehensive, I will carry the MHFA book and haptivate work as a guide as I continue to work with young people. The talking circle mixed with the activity was the key ingredient. I felt more confident, self compassion, and empathy to hold space young people’s mental health.”

“The training was really helpful but also the peer sharing, this was a powerful part. It was important to learn about how to facilitate activities which support their mental health and was helpful to discuss practitioners well-being as within this work we often don’t prioritise our self-care.”

“What I found most beneficial from the training and support from London Youth is that the training and further education and knowledge was all put in at the start of application so that my organisation knew that this would be taking up the working hours. Which I think is so beneficial as often this is the kind of thing that can be left to be done in people’s own time which is very time-consuming, and meant that quality and continuous professional development as a youth practitioner delivering the project was put as a priority by London Youth. This is also something that I do enjoy doing in my personal reading and my own personal development so having schedule time for it was just a dream.

The training and support from meeting youth workers and other like-minded people in the field having come from an environment where I had always worked alone and often having progressive ways of working and often not so progressive environments benefited my mental health and confidence. This gave me a lot more confidence in addressing issues in various elements of the project when they arose and just having a wider support system. Making relationships with other youth workers genuinely was like having our own sister circle alongside the ones that we provided for the young people”

Youth workers also appreciated the in-person training opportunities, and there was a preference that going forward, more training be delivered in-person. The opportunities for peer support and learning that create a strong sense of community are felt to be easier achieved in-person than remotely.

Suggestions to improve the training included more flexibility and choice over what sessions they could attend (particularly for those who had delivered in cohort 1 or are more experienced), and more upfront training before delivery starts, to enable what they have learnt to be applied in the early stages of the programme.

“I felt the training throughout the project was hard to apply in regards to planning... due to the start time of the sessions with the young people and when the training came up. However I learnt so much that I will continue to use...” (youth worker)

“I think the commitment to a training a month or sometimes two a month was too much, particularly as many of our colleagues are part-time and they have other commitments and programmes to run.” (youth worker)

Youth workers also appreciated the support from the London Youth team, in terms of their flexibility, accessibility and communication. They also appreciated the email reminders for reporting deadlines, links to tools and resources provided and the WhatsApp group. Going forwards, youth workers would like more opportunities to connect with each other and share learning.

Young people’s sessions

A total of 851 sessions were delivered over the year, an increase of 29% from 662 in year 1:

- 85% of sessions combined a positive activity (sport or art) with a talking circle
- 15% sessions were just a positive activity (sport or art)
- Less than 1% of sessions were just talking circles

On average each youth organisation delivered 24 sessions each, the same as year 1, ranging from a minimum of 14 sessions to a maximum of 70. Overall there were 8,077 attendances, with young people attending an average of 13 sessions each.

Positive activities

A range of positive activities were delivered, including:

Art	Sport/Physical activity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Drama ● Cooking ● Crafts ● Painting/drawing ● Clay modelling ● Creative writing & poetry ● Journalling ● Making cards ● Street art/murals ● Slime making! ● Bath bomb making ● Poster making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Games and team games – running, jumping, throwing, skipping etc ● Basketball ● Football ● Dodgeball ● Play ● Boxing ● Dance ● Walks ● Assault/obstacle courses ● Table tennis ● Yoga ● Roller skating

“At first some of the girls were apprehensive about the idea of playing sports but when we let them choose the sport they wanted they were excited. Sports had a

positive effect on all the girls, even the girls that don't consider themselves sporty was able to support each other as a part of a team." (youth worker)

"Boxing really helped me with my confidence and focus on making realistic decisions. Improved my agility, speed, quickness, balance, hand-eye coordination. I enjoyed training, learning and mastering techniques which is more like a mental strategy. Once you get the right technique it feels like you can accomplish anything in life." (young person)

"We begin almost every session with an art activity which creates a calming and safe atmosphere. Youth workers and young people are able to catch up with each other and talk about topics concerning the young people. Young people also expressed their talents and creativity through cooking sessions, such as cherry cobbler making and pancake making. These activities have build that sense of community with our young people." (youth worker)

Talking circles

Talking circles have continued to be an extremely effective tool, with many youth workers starting to incorporate the concept into other programmes. Although how they are delivered can vary, the principle of building in time at the start of a session for a roundtable discussion about how young people are feeling has worked well. Using tools like emoji cards, or simply asking them to write things down without having to share has also helped young people to express what they are feeling without putting them under too much pressure.

"Young people made emoji cards, to show how they are feeling at different points of the day. Most of our young people find it hard to talk about how they are feeling, this activity helped them to show how they are." (youth worker)

"At first it was hard talking about how I feel in the group. But after some time it got easier. And it's good." (young person)

"I like the talking circle as I can talk about stuff I couldn't talk to teachers about. Because I feel like teachers are strict and might tell your mum or shout at you." (young person)

“Conversations in talking circles and reflection have facilitated expressions of thoughts and feelings where these were previously not forthcoming (with some young people). Individuals took the opportunity to write about themselves, to share their communications rather than speak openly. Each week, it is apparent that there are more self-expressions initiated by participants and those that were previously more silent come forwards more readily as a norm.” (youth worker)

“One of the poster-making sessions we held talked about Body Dysmorphia and we had no idea that the girls felt very strongly about their body image and therefore it impacted them deeply.

One of the girls in particular opened up about issues she was experiencing and the negative thoughts she had about how she felt about herself and her body. During our Talking session she mentioned that she had been struggling for a very long time with that issue and in her own words she said “I hate my body”. We immediately started to create a safe space for her and took the time to listen to her concerns very closely. She admitted that part of the reason why she felt this way was because of social media and how the girls always look perfect online. She expressed that she felt really embarrassed and silly to think like that but the whole group was being very supportive towards her and they were all understanding of her feelings so she did not feel alone. The following week, during our talking circle we decided to focus on body positivity exercises. One of those exercises consisted of sitting in a circle and one by one, going around and saying one nice thing about each girl. We instantly saw the positive impact that had on all the girls and how it boosted their confidence”

Social action projects

As a result of the relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions in 2021/22 the pitch events for the social action element of the project were able to be delivered in-person. The pitch events were extremely successful, having a mix of games and fun activities, workshop sessions to help young people plan their social action project and culminated in their pitch to a panel of experts. Young people take these pitch events extremely seriously, and many are obviously nervous before their presentation. But with the support of their youth workers and London Youth staff, all were able to deliver excellent pitches and well thought out social action projects.

“I really enjoyed all the games and it’s been good to get into groups and work together on our projects” (young person)

“I’m looking forward to it [the pitch], but I’m also a bit nervous. I am a bit shy, but I think I’ll be able to do it ok” (young person)

“I really enjoyed today, it was a bit nerve wracking but I did enjoy it” (young person)

The groups delivered a range of different social action projects, all having a focus on mental health or wellbeing. Year 2 social action projects generally had a much clearer connection to mental health and wellbeing, and young people had clearly spent time thinking about the issues experienced in their communities, and what they could do to address them.

Projects included:

- Self-care days/packages
- Campaigns and events; e.g. body positive campaign, LGBTQ+ rights awareness, gender inequality
- Creating mental health awareness tools
- Pop up stalls
- Community meals
- Performances, e.g. singing/dancing events involving teaching younger children
- Podcasts and films

“The social action plan is care packages for homeless women in the Brixton area, these packages consist of items such as water, sanitary towels, tissues, a hand towel, mouthwash and other essential items. The impact is that the homeless women feel cared for and a part of the community. Young people gained a better respect and understanding for homeless women, it also helped them feel good as they got to help others, giving out the parcels brought a lot of smiles to faces. It also helped us to link with other organisations to get the boxes out to more people.” (youth worker)

“The social action project was about gender equality and about how they feel boys get to do different things in regards to sport and also at home. This tied into the short films that the girls made. The social action project was 5 different challenges that the young people had to do, one was a netball challenge, one football, one was relay races with dressing up included because they talked about how girls and boys should be able to wear whatever clothes they choose, clothes are genderless, a roller-skating challenge and fruit kebab making. The plan was for the young people to split into teams of mixed gender and compete together.

The impact on the group was giving them the power to organise their own event and create something for everyone to enjoy and have a fun day. The short films were impactful to the younger children who come and we had a little discussion about the films and some of them spoke about how they had an assembly at school about gender equality. We also spoke about how to keep themselves safe online. The young people got to do some activities that got them moving and exercising in a fun way that they were all able to do. We had some roller skating teachers come in and do a roller skating workshop for all the children in small groups which they loved. Unfortunately, we had a terrible rainstorm and the event got cut short but overall the day was a success and around 40 children/young people and parents/carers attended.”

“The social action project really is the highlight: the fact that they are actually able to do something and are also getting funding to make that happen is really new to them” (youth worker)

The social action projects give the groups something to focus on, responsibility to plan and deliver their own project idea, and also provided a mechanism to showcase what they have learnt about mental health and wellbeing with other young people, their families and/or the wider community. The social action projects are also a way to retain engagement in the project, as young people have a goal to work towards.

Residential/Celebration event

In year 2, the residential had a greater focus on the Wellbeing Ambassador role. The training delivering was taken in-house and was based on learning about stressors, what stress does to the brain and body, stress containers, engaging the soothe system and positive coping mechanisms, active listening and peer support through conversation. It had a specific focus on techniques that young people could take back to their youth clubs. Through this, London Youth have created a Wellbeing Ambassador Residential model that can be adapted to other programmes or groups.

In addition to the training, activities through the residential were selected to focus on wellbeing, for example paddleboard yoga, bird box making and team building exercises. Young people also left the residential with written resources and a yoga mat.

Feedback from the residentials was overwhelmingly positive, with young people appreciating the opportunities to step out of their comfort zones and meet new young people from other London Boroughs.



“On the residential I absolutely loved the activities and interacting with the other GFG girls and bonding with them (that I’m still friends with to this day) as well as bonding with the instructors, my youth worker and my partner who came on the trip” (young person)

“To be honest, I only joined the group as I wanted to go on the residential. It was fun. We did a lot of stuff and there was time to relax in between. We did climbing walls and leap of faith which was cool. I liked meeting new people and I made a new friend.”

“The residential was really fun. I met a lot of new people. It also helped me, because I usually struggle to make friends. I have really bad social anxiety. But I’ve made new friends and we do a group chat. I also conquered a lot of my fears, about heights and things like that. Now I’m doing a trapeze thing, I’ve got into that, so it’s really helped with that fear. I got a certificate about being a Wellbeing Ambassador”

“I really enjoyed the residential. I just had a bunch of fun, made a ton of new friends. They weren’t necessarily the same as me, but we had the same interests. And we did the Wellbeing Ambassador training as well. It went well, I learnt that mental health isn’t the same for everyone and how to help others. Next year I want to do sessions with the new Good for Girls group or do sessions at the youth club.”

The biggest challenge for youth workers was selecting young people to attend the residential – the criteria to select two young people only was felt to be too prescriptive, particularly when some youth organisations didn't attend. Although they appreciated the need to limit numbers so as many different groups could attend as possible, it was suggested that there could be a reserve list of additional young people who would like to attend if there were places. Youth workers also experienced other logistical challenges around transport and supporting young people to attend the residential. These suggestions will be taken on board in future funding applications.

Development group

The Development Group was established from youth workers who delivered in cohort 1, as a way of supporting delivery in cohort 2. A small number of youth organisations were given a small grant uplift, so that in addition to delivering the programme, they could also participate in regular meetings to help inform the programme design and delivery. The group created a wellbeing programme toolkit that includes practical advice, tools and templates that any youth organisation can use to deliver similar programmes in future. As well as providing a space where youth workers could reflect on their delivery and support each other, the toolkit is an important legacy of the Good for Girls programme, as it captures the key learning from on the ground delivery that will be used to support future programme design.

The final toolkit can be found here: <https://londonyouth.org/exercises/>

The group took an iterative approach to the toolkit creation, with no real expectations set at the outset. Members of the group were able to use their experience and learning to shape the toolkit. Rather than being specific to delivering 'Good for Girls', the toolkit is more generic, and provides resources for a 6-week wellbeing programme to be delivered with any group of young people. It includes a programme plan, activity sheets and examples, videos that focus on the 5 Ways to Wellbeing and hints and tips on how to deliver. It also provides advice on self-care for youth workers.

"I think what we've ended up with will be a great resource." (youth worker)

Members of the Development Group appreciated the time to share experiences and learn with others.

"It was nice to be with likeminded people. I feel like you don't get that many chances as youth workers to be with other people that aren't from your organisation. I really liked that we were from different boroughs and delivering different projects, because there's completely different ideas or ways of doing things or hearing about what's happening in other parts of London. It was always a full day, and we always got a free lunch, and I felt like we got loads done each week" (youth worker)

Although capacity is always an issue for small organisations, the additional grant to pay for their time both enabled the group to meet, but was also empowering; rather than youth

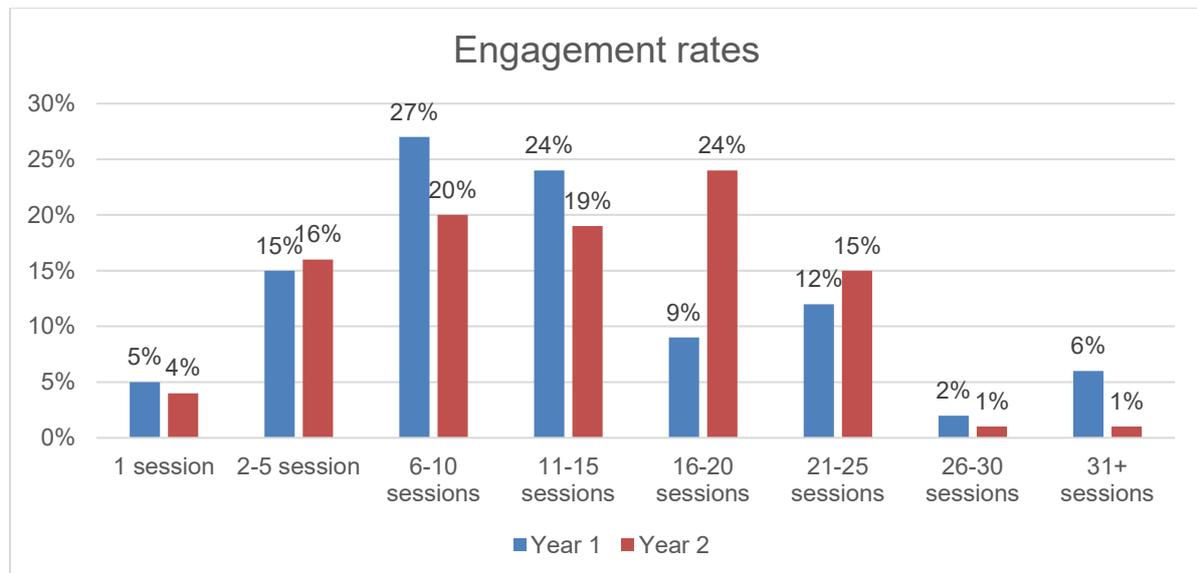
workers being ‘consulted’ (unpaid) and asked to contribute to a toolkit created by London Youth, the group led on and owned the end product.

“We worked as a team, that was really nice. Just having that input made you feel like you belong, and they value your opinion” (youth worker)

“I feel like having the contribution of actual youth workers who are on the ground doing this work is imperative because we know what goes on it is always good to have input into it. Because at the end of the day, we’re the ones that are delivering it.” (youth worker)

Engagement rates

The chart below shows the engagement rates across the programme, and compares year 1 and year 2 data. It shows that in year 2, nearly two-thirds of young people (60%) attended more than 10 sessions, slightly higher than 53% in year 1. And 41% attended more than 15 sessions in year 2, compared to 29% in year 1.



These are high levels of retention, and learning from youth workers suggests that setting up a dedicated girls group helped to keep young people engaged through the life of the programme, combined with the responsibility for delivering the social action project. The challenges experienced in year 1 of the project around delivering online due to Covid-19 restrictions did not affect year 2, which is probably why retention rates are slightly higher in year 2.

Impact

This chapter considers what difference the programme has made to young people, youth workers and youth organisations. It shows *what* outcomes have been achieved, taken from young people and youth worker surveys, along with insights into *how* youth organisations have achieved these outcomes, taken from conversations with youth workers and young people, along with reports produced.

Young people's outcomes

A total of 219 surveys were completed by young people taking part in the programme; a good response rate of 35% (and higher than 27% achieved in year 1). To achieve the commonly accepted standard for a representative sample then 238 surveys would be needed, however the sample achieved still provides a confidence interval of 5.33 with a confidence level of 95%. Given the challenges of administering surveys with young people this result is excellent, and provides useful data to understand the impact of the programme.

Satisfaction

Overall satisfaction rates with Good for Girls was extremely high, with 96% of young people enjoying taking part. Young people also felt involved in the design and delivery of the programme, with 85% feeling they had a choice over what they did or didn't do, and 88% felt their views and feelings were listened to.

Young people liked:

- Opportunities to talk about their feelings
- Meeting new people and socialising with friends
- 'Fun' activities
- Learning techniques to help their wellbeing (e.g. mindfulness, yoga)
- Opportunities to be creative
- Cooking and eating

"I enjoyed talking to others and having conversations about topics I normally wouldn't talk about." (young person)

"The thing I enjoyed the most in this group was like just having fun and being with my friends and made our friendships closer as we were together during this project"
(young person)

"Being able to learn about new ways of coping with mental health issues and understanding the root of the problem in a way to try and get over it" (young person)

Creating safe spaces

Overall, 83% of young people felt comfortable talking about their mental health in their organisation, which demonstrates how the programme has helped create safe spaces within youth organisations for young people to talk about how they feel.

“I felt safe and comfortable and I don’t feel judged” (young person)

We explored with youth workers how they were able to create these safe spaces:

- Setting groundrules at the start and creating a group agreement
- Being respectful, empathetic and caring about them as individuals
- Building in the talking circles at the start of a session, before the activity, to give young people time to share their feelings
- Appreciating that building trust takes time, and there’s a need to introduce new concepts gradually; which can be a challenge for youth workers who do not have a pre-existing relationship with the young people
- Giving young people a choice and a voice – listening and acting on what they want to focus on, ensuring sessions are relevant and being flexible and prepared to change things if they are not working
- Being a consistent and familiar presence; having the same youth workers and volunteers each week and build in the same structure for each session so young people know what to expect
- Supporting young people out of their comfort zones, and normalise sharing thoughts and feelings around mental health
- Building in games as ice breakers
- Ensuring there is time built in before and after the sessions for the youth worker/facilitator to prepare, reflect and care for themselves
- Language, tone and behaviour is key; being ‘on their side’ and using and sharing your own experiences
- Involve parents and teachers
- Consider the environment you are working in – make sure people who are not members of the group cannot interrupt or disturb them, consider lighting, noise, comfort etc
- Building in follow up support and after-care where needed

“A lot of the girls said that Good For Girls has given them a safe place to discuss anything that may be stressful or worrying especially because sometimes they felt like they did not have a voice” (youth worker)

Case study: Generate

Generate worked in partnership with an SEN school in Enfield, delivering sessions during the school day for young people identified by teachers as being in need of support. Conversations with the young people demonstrated the need for a dedicated group in the school day, to enable the young people to get to know each other better, take part in art projects, learn self-care techniques like mindfulness and breathing exercises and talk about their feelings. They told us why they wanted to take part, and why groups like Good for Girls are important to them:

"I joined because I wanted to meet other girls who are special. I feel like us females, we rarely get to know each other a lot as we are in different years, so we don't have the time in school to chat, get to know each other and feel like myself."

"As a woman we rarely get those opportunities, just to have time for ourselves and be us. But boys are also struggling as well, we need to be there for them as well and make sure they are appreciated as well."

The young people told us what they enjoyed and why:

"I enjoyed the art most, because it takes your mind off all your stress. I'm in year 10 and it's really busy. Art gets my mind off stressfulness. I enjoyed all of it."

"It's nice to help other girls, and enjoy being a girl and doing different activities and not being shut down just because you are a girl. Some girls feel like they aren't worthy."

"At first I was a bit nervous [of the talking circle], but then we all got used to each other. It's helpful as some people keep their feelings inside, so it's good to let it all out."

They also shared what they have learnt, and how they have benefited as a result of taking part:

"I've learnt that we are all different, but we can have each other's backs and take care of each other"

"I have heard of self-care before, but having your favourite people around you and having a chat and a laugh... It's important for me because you get to know what's happening and you can support each other."

"It has helped me – I feel more grateful."

"We learnt about taking care of our mental health and our wellbeing. I've tried baking and walking, and it's helped me."

The group were also motivated by the social action event, and were keen to support each other and their teachers with their mental health through a self-care day. Receiving the funding from London Youth was a significant achievement for the group, and they were really proud to receive the video feedback that the London Youth team provided following their pitch presentation.

"We had a brainstorm and from lockdown people have been having tough times and struggle with their mental health and we wanted to help them. We are doing massage, smoothies, bath bombs. A self-care day"

"The event is going to be a bit scary, as I'll be a bit shy. But I hope I will stop getting nervous. I want to be confident and not be so nervous."

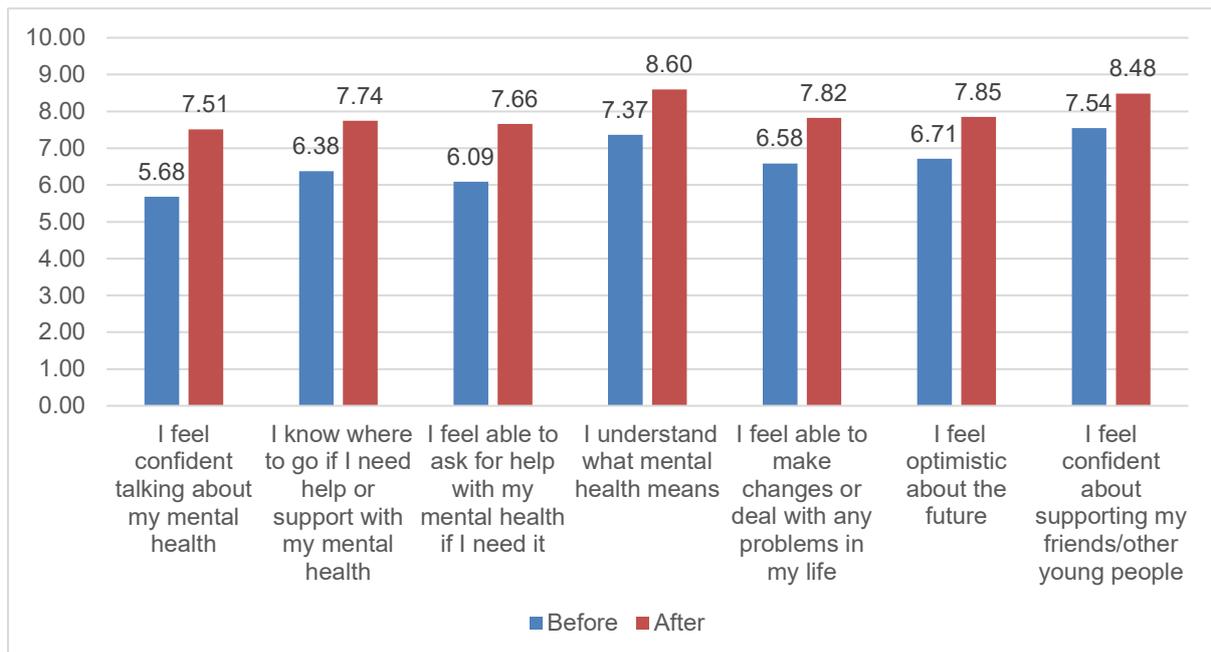
"The event is going to make our teachers happy, which is good. It's hopefully going to make them more relaxed and less shouty!"

Impact on mental health

The chart below shows how young people’s thoughts and feelings related to their mental health have changed as a result of taking part in Good for Girls. The statements were rated on a scale of 1-10, with young people being asked to reflect on how they felt before taking part and how they feel now, as a result of taking part. It shows that the biggest change has been in young people’s confidence levels, followed by the ability to ask for help with their mental health if they need it.

Overall:

- 63% feel more confident about talking about their mental health
- 56% have a greater understanding of where to go if they need help or support with their mental health
- 59% feel better able to ask for help with their mental health if they need it
- 47% have a better understanding of what mental health means
- 54% feel better able to make changes or deal with any problems in their life
- 52% feel more optimistic about the future
- 39% feel more confident about supporting their friends/other young people



“One young person was very shy at first and did not talk much. She would keep herself to herself. However over the course of our sessions, she has made friends with other young people in the programme, and now understands how to navigate friendships by being honest and open. Before the programme she had disclosed that it was difficult for her to make friends, and her friendships were not fulfilling and true.

She also struggled a lot with public speaking, and contributing to the group. Now she finds it easier to communicate and to be in touch with her feelings.” (youth worker)

“It helped me understand that I can seek help if I need it.” (young person)

“Learning to talk about how I feel as a black girl”(young person)

“Helped me to help myself to make better choices and help my pals” (young person)

“It has helped more than I could ever try and describe, has made me more comfortable with my emotions and my mental health and how to deal with stuff” (young person)

As a result in taking part in Good for Girls, the impact on young people’s mental health or wellbeing was:

- 44% reported it has improved a lot
- 37% reported that it has improved a little
- 18% reported that it hasn’t improved, but it hasn’t got worse
- 1% reported that it has got worse

“It has helped me understand my health better and that there are people out there to help me. It helped me be more confident and be happier.” (young person)

“It has taking a big part in my mental health. I felt like when I went to yoga I didn’t have to worry about my anxiety and my eating disorder. I feel like I could really open up about it. I also felt like I didn’t have to lie to myself about who I was. I have just learnt to except myself and how nobody is perfect.” (young person)

“Helped me to be less scared when sharing my thoughts” (young person)

“It’s made me feel good about myself” (young person)

“It has made me feel less lonely.” (young person)

“It has helped me become a better person, I feel like a new me” (young person)

Conversations with youth workers also identified what they felt to be the impact of the project on the young people they support. We used the 5 Ways to Wellbeing to explore what had been achieved, with youth workers feeling that Good for Girls has:

- Provided more opportunities for young people to be **more active** and take part in sports/physical activities they have not tried before. Some young people were inactive before taking part and the project has helped encourage them to have a more active lifestyle.

- Young people have **learnt more** about where to go if they need support with their mental health, they know more about how to take care of themselves and the project has raised awareness of the importance of self-care.
- Helped young people to **connect to** each other, through positive activities and the social action project design and delivery. Youth workers have noticed that young people are opening up more and initially shy young people are now more confident, and the teambuilding activities have helped develop communication and interpersonal skills.
- Providing opportunities for young people to **give back**, through the social action project and peer support in the talking circles. Helping others has been hugely motivating for young people, as well as helping to improve their own wellbeing.
- Helped young people to be **more present** and developed skills around self-reflection and mindfulness.

***“It helped me become more active and able to understand about others feelings”
(young person)***

“I now know what to do when I’m angry” (young person)

“I am more confident in knowing how to tackle issues and also I am more confident in being able to support my friends” (young person)

“It has boosted my confidence and my communication skills.” (young person)

Case study: Oasis Academy

The Oasis Academy project was delivered during the school day, with young people who were identified as not engaging in after school or extra-curricular activities. They took part in a range of sporting activities, and helped plan and deliver a fashion show aimed at building body-confidence.

The young people told us what they enjoyed:

"I enjoyed the boxing, sailing and kayaking. It was a bit scary the first time, but it was fun too"

"I enjoyed being with people and talking. And having the snacks."

"I've enjoyed that we've got to do stuff. It's just being here, having time for ourselves and talking to people. I don't really feel like I have time for myself. We know that [youth worker] is here for us and it's confidential. As first it wasn't easy and then you start getting used to it, and then it's ok. Sometimes it's helpful"

They were also able to share how taking part in Good for Girls has benefited them:

"It helped me gain confidence and believe in myself a lot more. And it's helped calm my anxiety. Sometimes I have bad days and it's important to learn how to cool down. I've learnt some new techniques, like counting to 10, regulating my breathing, or thinking about running which I enjoy. It helps me calm down when I'm feeling stressed"

"I've learnt how to not let people get into my head"

"It's stress relieving and helps to be able to talk to different people, so it's not just your friends you go to for support. It's been really nice"

"I've learnt a lot about mental health. It's good to have the time out. Lessons and school can get a lot sometimes and it's nice to get out of that for a while. I've really enjoyed all the different activities. I hope it continues next year and other people will be able to benefit from it. I've also joined the youth club, because I was doing Good for Girls and I'm a Wellbeing Ambassador now as well."

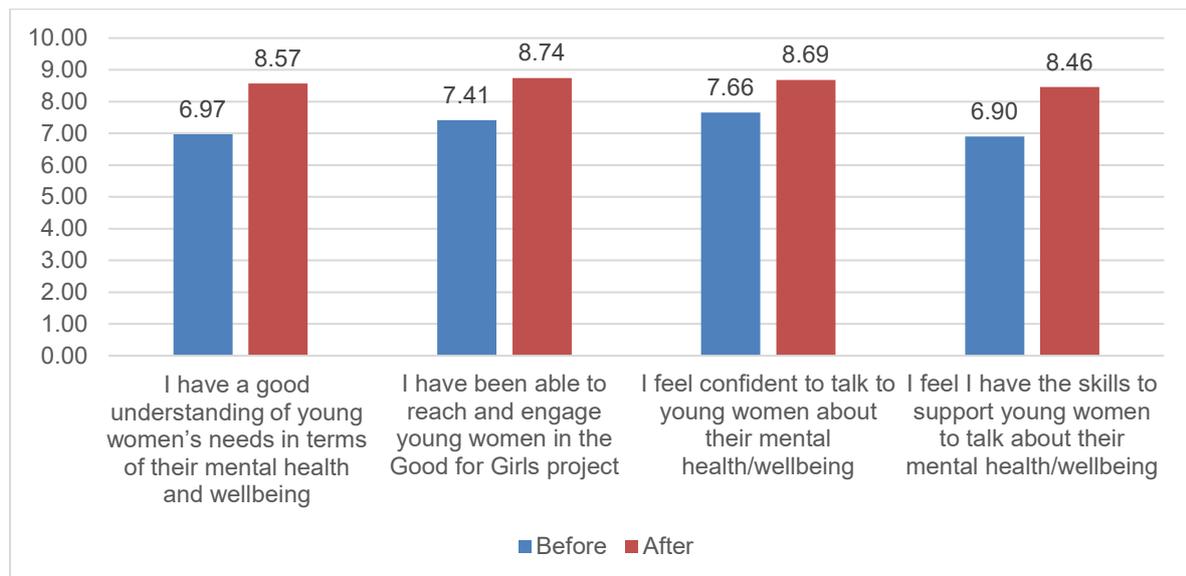
"It's really calming to be here. It's a nice distraction, a place to be, and talk to someone. Sometimes you can get overwhelmed with stuff, and you don't always know how to cope with it. It's important that people get time and space to just breathe"

They were also excited about the upcoming fashion show they were preparing for;

"I hope the fashion show will help people to feel happy in their own skin. It's so hard, especially with social media. People feel like they need a bigger bum, bigger breasts, to meet some kind of ideal standard. But you can be yourself."

Impact on youth workers

The chart below shows how the programme has built the skills and confidence of youth workers to deliver focused support around mental health and wellbeing. Despite the relatively high baseline scores, it shows that all areas have improved as a result, with the biggest impact being an increase in understanding of young women’s needs around mental health support.



Youth workers were able to report how they have individually benefited from the training and support provided through Good for Girls, in terms of their knowledge, skills and confidence.

“I benefited from the training because it upskilled my communication, enabling me to better communicate with the young people.” (youth worker)

“I gained confidence to talk about the biological functioning of the brain and how our body and nervous system respond. I learnt about certain skills and techniques that help to calm and de-escalate conversations and detect the physical symptoms of fight flight and fawn.” (youth worker)

“I’m way more confident and social” (youth worker)

“The training helped me gain the knowledge, understanding and allowed me to equip myself in order to deliver a safe space for our young girls. It also boosted my confidence in managing the programme.” (youth worker)

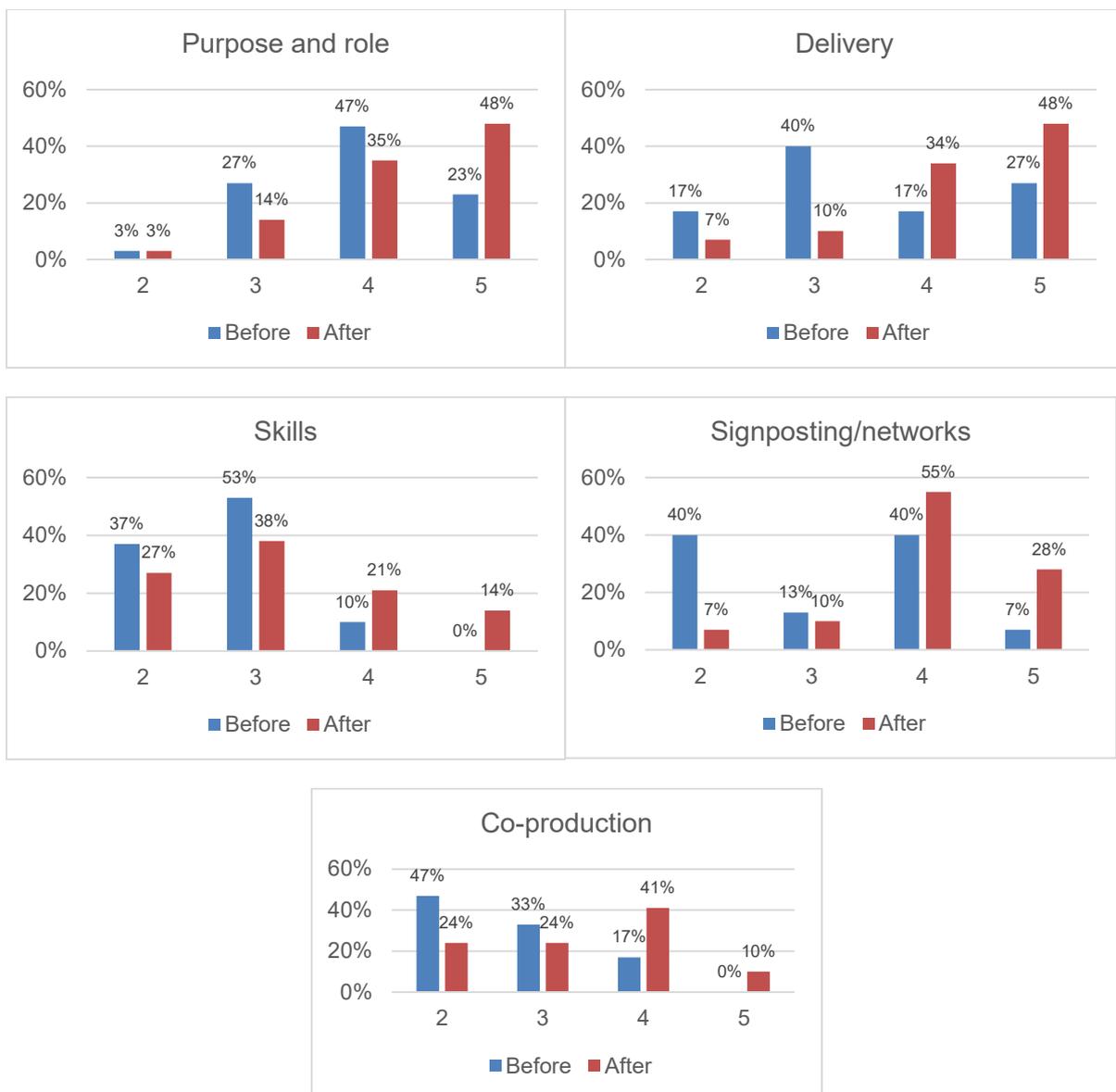
There is also evidence that the programme has helped the youth workers with understanding and managing their own wellbeing.

“I have learnt a lot in terms of keeping my own mental health in a good place in order to be a good example for the young people.” (youth worker)

“I really enjoy running this project. As a human being, it has help me carry on with my personal journey and help me understand behaviours that I could observe, change my perception and own behaviours through listening and shared experience” (youth worker)

Impact on youth organisations

The youth organisation capacity tool considered how the programme has helped to improve the wider organisation’s approach to supporting young people’s mental health and wellbeing. The charts below show that across all five areas, average scores have increased, with a greater proportion of youth organisations rating themselves at 4 or 5 out of 5 than before the programme started. The biggest impact has been in terms of testing new delivery models, and creation of networks and referral pathways.



Overall, as a result of Good for Girls:

- 97% of youth organisations agree that they have improved their youth offer to young women/girls
- 97% agree that they have improved their wellbeing offer to all young people
- 90% agree that their staff are more skilled and confident about providing mental health support
- 97% have a better understanding of what mental health support young people need and their role in providing this
- 97% feel able to embed what they have learnt in Good for Girls across other areas of delivery
- 83% have developed more links/referral pathways to support young people when needed

“We have learnt how to better deal with young people’s mental health in more indirect ways. We have implemented new techniques from the training such as discussion points and doing more art based things during youth club. We have learnt how to more directly talk to young people about mental health and our volunteers have seen how they can better advocate for the participants wellbeing” (youth worker)

Youth organisations were able to detail how the programme has helped them improve their mental health offer to young people, including:

- Developing better partnerships with schools
- Building in talking circles around other programme delivery
- Embedding ‘girls only’ groups
- Improving understanding of mental health and wellbeing
- Help understand the wellbeing benefits of other programmes
- Build the skills and capacity of staff
- Consider how to apply the learning to other groups, in particular ‘boys’ groups
- More intentionality around mental health and wellbeing

“Taking part in Good for Girls has improved our understanding of MH/well-being in the younger community and how to approach the topic in a group setting.” (youth worker)

“Activities we do now have a focus and intention to give the young people emotional language. Mainly our sessions offer an open place for expression and with the added talking circle it create a space to be seen and heard by their peers” (youth worker)

“We are able to embed mental health and wellbeing in most of our programmes. We are able to sign post our young people to other organizations to receive additional service not able to access our services.” (youth worker)

All youth organisations are keen to continue delivering elements of the Good for Girls programme; either through specific funded programmes or just as part of their core delivery. Many are in the process of seeking further funding to continue delivery. Some youth organisations are also keen to use the model created in Good for Girls in boys' or mixed gender groups.

Being a member of the Development Group was also beneficial for youth workers; both those that took part, and others who will use the toolkit.

“Most of my team are junior, unqualified or very newly qualified. And I can signpost them to the session plans. Following a programme that’s been written, being able to pick it up and there’s all the plans. From that you can start developing your own confidence and ways of working” (youth worker)

“It’s about mental health and wellbeing in a non-scary way. It’s a good grounding and I think people will like it.” (youth worker)

Having a toolkit that’s written by youth workers, for youth workers, means the resources are accessible and practical.

“When I was studying to be a youth worker, I’d read the textbooks, but I wouldn’t always understand what it meant. But then looking at the toolkit, I realised that was what I was reading, but I didn’t really understand. It’s come first-hand from youth workers, who know how to deliver” (youth worker)

Members of the group have also found taking part useful for their own personal development and wellbeing:

“It gave me new ideas. I’ve only been in youth work for 2 to 3 years now, so for me it really helped give me loads of new ideas.” (youth worker)

“I had such a personally hard year, and being part of the development group was my favourite thing. I really wasn’t enjoying work as I had so much personal stuff going on. But the development group made me feel really valued. When you are in youth work it’s easy to feel taken advantage of, because you are always giving. But it really made me feel valued and validated that I did know my stuff. And it was great to learn new things.” (youth worker)

Case study: The Sulgrave

The Sulgrave Good for Girls project focused on art activities, including film making on topics relating to self-love and social action, creating bath bombs and artwork for their social action event. Their social action project was an event to educate people on the topic of LGBTQIA+ history, including all the key facts about different flags, genders, and sexualities. We met the group a few days before the event, when they were creating flags to represent different genders and sexualities.

"I wanted to take part because it's not like school. And I feel like it's a good thing to say that you've done when you are older. I really enjoyed making the films. I find the check ins as we are all girls the same age and we relate to each other a lot more than talking to parents. And although [youth worker] is an adult, she's a lot more relatable than talking to my mum or a teacher. I think our event will be fun, as we've enjoyed doing it and I hope others will enjoy it too – it's nice that it wasn't just about us doing fun things, we can share our joy with other people."

"I've enjoyed the art, because it's really relaxing after school. The check-ins are good, because we can get advice on our problems. I feel comfortable sharing how I feel and it's very helpful. I think it's expanded my knowledge, I didn't know much about LGBTQ – we didn't learn much about it at primary school, so it's good to learn about it now. I think people will learn from our event and it will expand their knowledge about the topic, and feel more comfortable talking about it."

"Once we are at secondary school you stop doing art, which is sad, so it's nice to be able to do it here"

"It's kind of like school, but it's not – you can share your opinions and be more comfortable to talk about stuff. And you get to do fun stuff, you can relax and chat and not have to worry about getting in trouble for talking. We definitely have a choice, we always include our ideas and this whole project included all our ideas. The filming was the best bit, because I was the main character! I really like acting. We all came up with the idea, and one of us wrote the script, some of us acted and others directed. Here you can express your feelings and it's safe here. It's not like that at school."

"I've enjoyed it. Because I'm a person who struggles with social interaction, so it's helped me with that."

"I think our event will educate people. Not a lot is being done in our community about LGBTQIA so I think it's important."

Conclusions

The Good for Girls programme has successfully built on the successes and learning from year 1, with year 2 seeing an increase in the number of young people supported and sessions delivered. Demand for taking part in the programme was high, and the mix of more and less experienced youth organisations in year 2 has resulted in youth workers learning from each other as well as past experience. A total of 620 young people were supported through the year, and the programme has successfully reached young people from the target groups, namely young women and girls of colour and/or who live in lower socio-economic communities, aged 10-14.

As a result of taking part, young people feel **more confident** talking about their mental health, they have a **greater understanding** of where to go if they need help, they feel better able to ask for help if they need it, and they feel **better equipped** to deal with problems or make changes to their lives. And overall, 81% say their mental health has improved as a result of taking part.

Particular highlights of year 2 include:

- The changes made to the **training programme**, including starting the training earlier, more in-person opportunities and changes to the structure to reflect what people found most valuable in year 1. As a result, the training has seen an increase in attendance from year 1, high levels of engagement and extremely high levels of satisfaction
- The inclusion of the **Development Group**, which has provided an opportunity for youth workers to share their experience of delivering the programme and empowered them to create a toolkit to support youth workers to deliver future wellbeing programmes
- Being able to deliver **pitch events** in-person again; the inclusion of games, workshops to help the groups develop their social action projects and the opportunity to present their projects to a panel of experts was extremely well-received

In year 2 of the project, it has also been clear that there are two broad methods of delivering Good for Girls; in schools as a targeted programme for young people identified as in need of support with their mental health, or in a more traditional open-access youth club environment, where the positive activities and social action projects are used as a 'hook' to engage young people in thinking about their mental health. Both models have been successful, but each have different strengths and challenges.

School based work results in a stable, fixed group of young people, a much more obvious focus on mental health from the start, and the young people benefit from having time and space for themselves as part of the busy school day. However, the main challenge with school-based working is the slight lack of control youth workers may have; in terms of who attends (often lacking important connections with parents), timing and length of sessions, the environment in which sessions are run, school rules that prevent young people from

attending events outside of school, and in some cases clashes in timetabling that results in young people not being able to attend.

More traditional open access sessions work well because youth workers can control the environment, and young people can have a much greater say in what they do and when they do it. Although the group is promoted with a mental health or wellbeing focus, some youth workers have found that they need to introduce concepts like Talking Circles or self-care techniques gradually, as the young people prefer to focus on the art or sports activities. It is also harder to maintain engagement in an open-access setting, as attendance is entirely optional.

Both models have significant value, and going forwards the learning from the two quite different approaches could be used to differentiate or target wellbeing programmes delivered by London Youth.

Learning captured from the two-years of delivering Good for Girls demonstrates the strengths of the programme:

- The programme **structure**; setting out expectations from the start around running weekly sessions and providing a structure for these sessions around combining sport or art activities with talking circles
- The ability to **reach** the target groups by supporting small, grassroots youth organisations with strong connections into communities, and often existing relationships with the young people they are supporting
- High levels of **engagement and retention** through the connections created, shared experiences and responsibility for delivering the social action project
- The ability of youth workers to create **safe spaces** for young people to connect, share how they feel and work together towards shared goals.
- Much of the learning around how to create safe spaces is based on the principles of **good quality youth work**, however the programme has developed **additional skills** and learning around how to facilitate conversations about mental health and tackle issues young people are experiencing
- The outcomes achieved from the programme support the **5 Ways to Wellbeing**; young people are *connecting* with each other, *learning* about themselves and mental health/self-care techniques, they have space to be mindful and *take notice* of the way they feel, they are *physically active* (as well as opportunities to be creative) and they are *giving back* through the social action projects and role as Wellbeing Ambassadors
- The investment in **professional and personal development** of youth workers; the training has improved skills, built the capacity of organisations to deliver good quality mental health support and created strong communities of practice and peer support networks. The training and peer support has also helped youth workers to consider and support their own mental health, which is becoming increasingly important as a way of preventing burnout.

In addition to the impact on the young people who took part in the programme, arguably the biggest impact of Good for Girls has been the capacity built in youth organisations to deliver wellbeing programmes in future. Youth workers are more confident, have the skills and knowledge to deliver high quality support and the legacy of the wellbeing toolkit produced by the Development Group will enable delivery to be embedded within youth organisations. Most are keen to continue delivering support of this nature to their young people, through either continuing the 'girls groups', building in techniques like the talking circles to their other programmes, or creating new groups that follow the principles of Good for Girls. Some are keen to test the approach with boys, and this may be something that London Youth wish to pilot in future.