



Tender Education & Arts
Promoting Healthy Relationships in
Schools

Susie McDonald, Chief Executive

Promoting Healthy Relationships



- Tender aims to encourage boys and girls to develop healthy relationships based on respect, trust and equality and to be active citizens in creating communities that do not tolerate violence against women and children
- We do this through open, creative, drama-based workshops that explore the healthy and unhealthy aspects of relationships, empowering students to consider their attitudes and behaviour in a mature and safety-conscious way
- Young people aged 16-24 (Home Office) are at greatest risk of experiencing violence in their relationships and therefore it is vital that they are equipped with the skills to identify, avoid and escape abuse through engaging, age appropriate, schools based prevention programmes



The Need

“The Next Generation of Domestic Violence is waiting in the wings”

Keir Starmer



- One in three teenage girls has experienced sexual violence from their boyfriend (NSPCC; 2009)
- Sexual bullying and harassment are routine in UK schools. Almost one in three 16-18 year-old girls have experienced ‘groping’ or other unwanted sexual touching at school (YouGov; 2011)
- **44%** of young people have themselves experienced one or more of the following behaviours in a relationship: being yelled at, humiliated, hit, kicked, slapped, pressured into having sex, pressured into getting married, threatened or checked-up on regularly (Tender; 2011)



Lack of knowledge/where to turn



- Over **75%** of those experiencing abusive behaviours did not seek support from anyone and less than **5%** of young people experiencing abuse sought help from a professional (Tender; 2011)
- Only **60%** would feel able to help a friend in an unhealthy relationship and of those who would only **20%** would tell someone, and **20%** of that a professional
- There is a severe lack of awareness and confidence amongst teachers to address sexual bullying and relationship violence. (Ocampo; 2007)
- Teachers fear "opening a can of worms"



Stereotypes & normalising of abuse in relationships



- Disadvantaged teenagers often view intimate partner violence as a normal, if unwanted, aspect of relationships. Girls often view control as an integral part of intimate relationships whilst being victims of physical partner violence (2011 NSPCC)
- Almost half (**43%**) of teenage girls believe that it is acceptable for a boyfriend to be aggressive towards his partner (NSPCC, 2005)
- **35%** of young men/**18%** of teenage girls believe it is acceptable to have sex without making sure it is what the women want (Tender; 2011)

New methods; old taboos



- Incidents of 'sexting', 'slag sites', cyber-bullying and the distribution of pornography via mobile phones have been widely revealed during Tender's workshops (Tender; 2011)
- 'Sexting' is often coercive and linked to harassment
(NSPCC; 2012)
- **25.4%** of Tender's survey respondents had received jokes or threats about sexual assault on their mobile phones, Facebook or Twitter





IMPACT



Young People

- **84%** feel more knowledgeable about where to seek support
- **70%** feel able to help a friend involved in an abusive relationship
- **93%** have better understanding of what constitutes a healthy/unhealthy relationship

Teachers

- **97%** feel that their young people have increased knowledge about violence in relationships
- **78%** have noticed a subsequent change in the behaviour and attitudes of young people



IMPACT



Teachers

“This young man had a history of assault and intimidation towards girlfriends and ex-girlfriends. The staff member said this was a significant change in attitude that they had not seen before.”

“A thoughtful, mutually respectful, honest discussion around this sensitive topic increased emotional literacy around the topic.”

“I feel reassured by how empathetic the boys were in their response and therefore feel more confident in tackling the topic in future.”

“I now feel that I could offer support and guide pupils to the right people. I was surprised at the high level of abuse in the different age groups.”



Impact



Young People

“The youths are the future of the population, respect is the foundation to becoming a better person” (male, age 15)

“I am feeling a lot more sure of myself and what kind of person I am” (female, age 10)

“If a girl says no I now know not to try to persuade them - no means no.” (17 year old young ex-offender)

“It gave me the strength and the will to leave” (female, age 15)

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“If you really love
someone, you’ll do
anything to avoid hurting
them”

(female 15)

