



Strategic Plan 2023-2026

Reducing the impacts of street violence by
empowering young people to be part of the solution







Introduction

Our new Strategic Plan 2023-2026, which has been co-created with all our stakeholders, will propel us in new and exciting directions so we reach even more young people affected by violence across the UK. This Strategic Plan sits alongside a workplan with quantifiable performance indicators being set on a yearly basis.

Our mission – to empower young people through training to keep safe, save lives and be part of the solution to street violence – will become even more vital. This is because disadvantage, inequality and poverty, key drivers of violence, are exacerbated by the current cost-of-living crisis and the lasting impacts of the pandemic.

We have handed over the foreword of this Strategic Plan to a group of young people from across the UK affected by street violence – so we can all understand better how they experience violence, what the causes of it are in their communities and what the solutions are.

We are all really looking forward to making this Strategic Plan 2023-2026 a reality, with the support of the young people we work with, our healthcare volunteers, our youth partners and our funders. Because together we are stronger in reducing the devastating impacts of street violence. Thank you so much to all our stakeholders, who are the absolute bedrock of all we do.

StreetDoctors staff team and Board of Trustees

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Foreword

This foreword has been written by a group of young people with lived experience of the context of street violence: Arina, David Kingsley, Latreece, Precious, Savannah Fuller and Yasmin. Graphics by Indre Rimselyte and illustrations by Charlie Teare.

Why street violence happens and how it affects us

Street violence has a big impact on us. We feel angry that nothing has changed over the years and we're also angry about the social inequality that continues to create the conditions for street violence.

We feel hurt too that young people like us are criminalised and labelled in the media, especially with narratives that racialise violence affecting young people.

Many young people feel forced to protect themselves by carrying weapons, and some young people feel like they have

to 'prove' themselves which can lead to violent behaviour. And we're worried too about some family situations that normalise violence.

"In some families we install fear, as culturally discipline and strong punishment are normal, so we grow up with that fear and then we act it out."

"My cousin was 21 when he was murdered. The roads are littered with 'that's where so-and-so died'. Where is the support for the friends of the young people who have passed away? My breakdown was the toil of emotions that I didn't deal with."

"Girls are carrying weapons too, for protection and they are carrying for others."

"It's about postcode wars that have literally been going on for so many years."

"Narcissism is a defence mechanism, it's a protection, it's a result of things that happen, and scars are war wounds."

"The animal instinct and the gang mentality when it comes to violence, it scares me. I don't want to raise my kids in London."

"It is not being seen or heard, it really hurts."



The way society responds makes it worse

We believe the media plays a big role in how we all perceive violence by stereotyping communities and glamorising or condoning violence through music, TV, and film.

Social media plays a role in this too, as it can platform violence and misogyny and it can lead to low self-esteem which makes us feel vulnerable.

Punishment as a solution means there is a lack of focus on what's caused people like us to resort to violence, and perpetrators are not viewed as victims when a lot of the time they are. Instead of helping tackle the causes, punishments like prison sentences can lead to further violence.

Because we are often stereotyped, there is a huge lack of mental health support for us, and a lack of support for our communities. There is also a massive lack of self-development options and support to help us grow and expand our horizons.

"When you are lost, there are so many negative influences on social media. TikTok etc can spiral you into depression as its about perfection. It's exploitative in nature."



"In school we don't get taught how to manage or regulate our emotions."

"It's hard to be different when you're living in a certain environment at home and in your community."

"Schools don't teach us about life. People who are smart in books aren't smart on the road. I am smart on the road. I have friends who are just in and out of prison – education did nothing for them."

"London is a warzone. We have PTSD survivors walking around with wounds to prove it. They are not getting the support they need, and they are boiling over."

"A teacher said recently 'pull down your hood as you look like a drug dealer'."

"Prison doesn't work at all, I know so many people who have just got institutionalised in there. They can't cope with life outside and they make lots of connections inside."

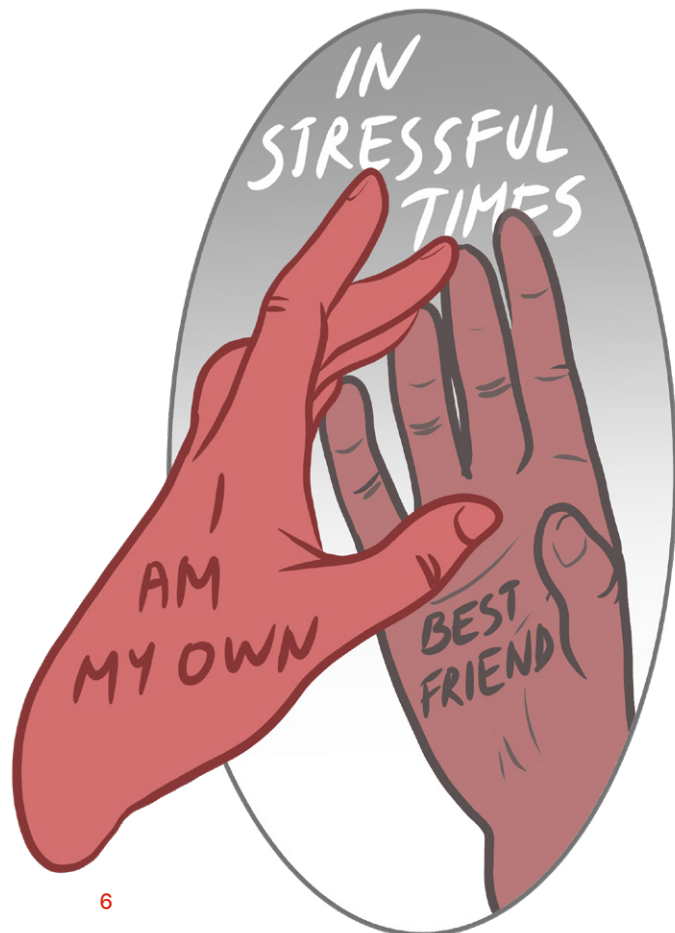
Violence is preventable

We need people that believe in us, people that encourage our potential and can be there for us as support networks. We need activities that support our development, like the skills-based training that StreetDoctors do, to help us become independent, confident in ourselves and able to make a difference; to be self-sufficient and “our own best friends”.

Having a fresh start and being away from our environments temporarily can also help young people like us think straight. Sometimes we just need a change of scenery and to catch our breath.

We also desperately need good mental health care to prevent violence happening in the first place.

“In stressful times I am my own best friend.”



And we want to live in a society where inequality isn't rampant, where there isn't a huge gap between the haves and have nots, because this is a catalyst for conflict, criminality and violence.

“How can it be that a few people own huge amounts of wealth and we own nothing. My mum works three jobs to keep me and my brother, I never see her and a lot of the time there is no food on the table.”

“I think the most significant issues are being neglected by parents and school.”

“The perpetrators of knife crime are victims too, what led them to perpetrate the crime?”

“We need to platform community intelligence.”

Interventions we need to reduce violence and make our lives better

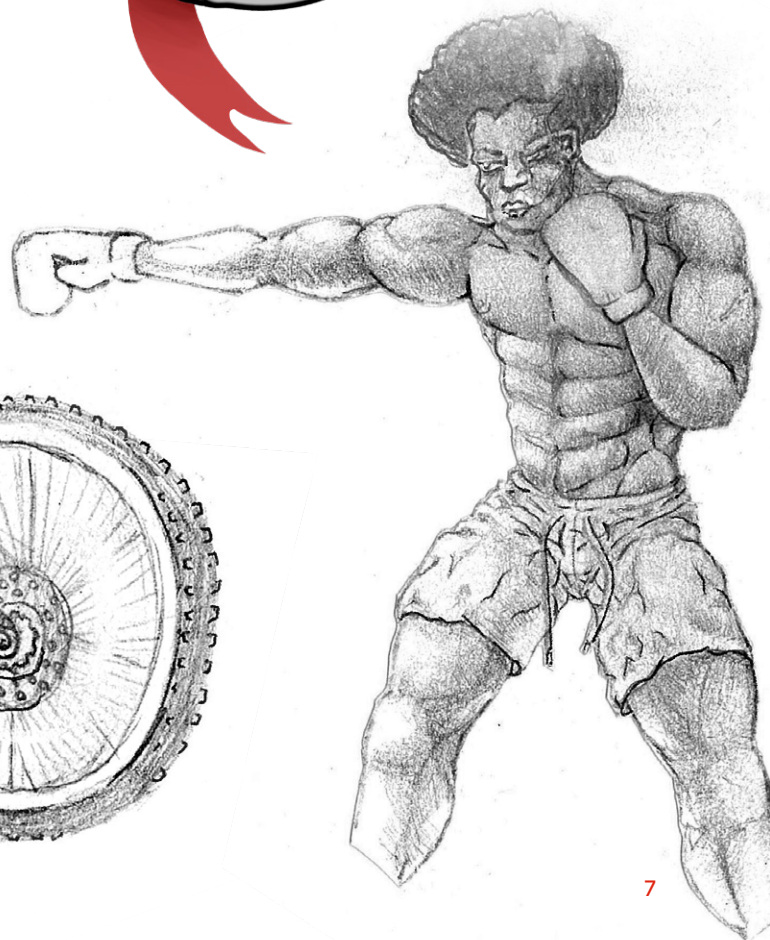
"We need more youth workers doing outreach work so they support those that need it the most, where and when they need it. We also need incentives for young people to go to youth clubs and we want to learn more skills there and educate ourselves."

"More needs to be done to support us with education and self-development. There should be mental health support in every school, which could involve therapeutic interventions, group therapy and regular check-ins with tutors that care about our wellbeing."

"We should be given training that is specific to the needs we all share, such as preventative and non-prescriptive workshops about knife crime and related issues."

"We need to see the Educational Maintenance Allowance brought back to England and given to every young person, enabling us to stay in education after 16 and care leavers need to be given better bursaries."

"We believe there should be rehabilitative options instead of prison."



StreetDoctors

Who we are and what we do

We are the champions of the peer education model of emergency first aid training for young people affected by street violence.

Our work empowers young people affected by violence to become lifesavers in their community.

We train young people to become street doctors, turning them from bystanders into active responders so they know what to do if someone has been stabbed or knocked out. Our UK-wide network of young healthcare student volunteers (student and professional doctors, nurses and paramedics) deliver our emergency first aid training, acting as credible messengers and role models.

We work alongside a range of youth partners including education providers, youth groups and criminal justice organisations to reach affected young people. Our training is fully interactive, non-judgemental and trauma-informed.

Through our training, young people:

1. receive peer-to-peer first responder training, learning how to prevent loss of life and gaining the confidence to step forward to protect others
2. learn about the medical and psychological consequences of violence
3. are empowered to become part of the solution to violence instead of being seen as part of 'the problem.'

Our vision: An end to street violence affecting young people.



The need for our work

Street violence is affecting thousands of young people across the country – weekly headlines detail shocking attacks and many young people live in fear.

- Worldwide, homicide is the 4th leading cause of death for 10-29 year olds (WHO, 2020).
- In Manchester, serious violence has increased by 200% since 2019 (Manchester Evening News, 2022). In London in 2021, 30 young people were killed – the highest on record. (Evening Standard, 2022)
- In the year ending March 2022: 282 people were stabbed to death and the number of victims aged 16 to 17 doubled; Nearly 20,000 convictions or cautions were given for knife offences, 15% were given to people under 17. (ONS, House of Commons Library 2023)

Young people in our training sessions regularly reveal the shocking normality of experiencing violence in their daily lives, and how this deeply affects their feelings of safety and their mental health.

“ A student of ours was present at the stabbing of a 14-year-old. This student took him to [a safe place] where his brother – who had attended a StreetDoctors training session on the last day of the July term – was able to pull out the card he had been given by StreetDoctors and use this to administer first aid. The boy survived. ”

Safeguarding Lead at a school, South London

“ My experience at The Royal London Hospital has been eye opening, I have not had a single shift where there has not been at least one patient being treated for stab wounds. I attended a fatal stabbing of a young man in East London recently, something that despite my awareness of the current rates of violence, I was never going to be ready for. I had never seen grief on that level. ”

Megan StreetDoctors healthcare volunteer, London



Our values



Empowering

We believe knowledge is power, so we share skills with young people, enabling them to make more informed choices.



Collaborative

We believe partnerships are crucial, so we work together with youth organisations, healthcare volunteers and young people to reduce street violence.



Inclusive

We treat people with respect, we value diversity, and we work to ensure equality.



Compassionate

We are considerate and empathetic, and rooted in trauma-informed practice.

“ StreetDoctors has changed my mind. Now I wouldn't think about taking a knife out because I can hurt myself and you just look silly hurting yourself, and you give yourself all these problems, and the guilt of doing it to someone else, because that's someone else's child. ”

Jamal 16, Birmingham, convicted of carrying a knife.

Our mission:
To empower young people through training to keep safe, save lives and be part of the solution to street violence.



Our impact in 2022



4,714
young people
were trained by
our volunteers

73%

of these young
people worried about
or experienced street
violence between
young people in their
area in the past year



582
sessions delivered



78 StepWise
participants

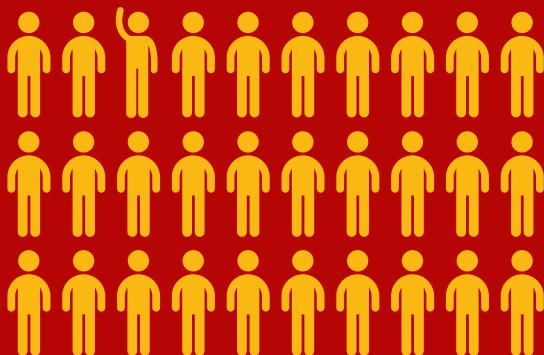
For the academic year 2021/2022, we have:

377
young
healthcare
volunteers

across
18 cities in
the UK

made up of
23 volunteer-
led teams

Over
300 delivery partners
across the UK

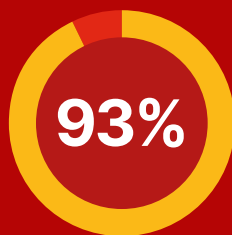


Since 2013 when StreetDoctors
became a charity we have trained over
25,000 young people in
lifesaving skills

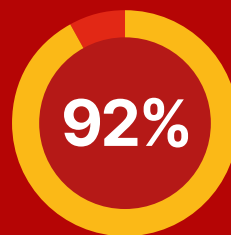
After a StreetDoctors session:



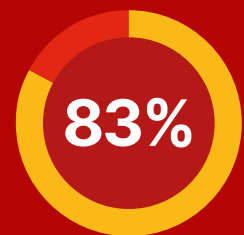
of young people
understand the
consequences
of violence



of young people
know what to do
if someone
is bleeding



of young people
know what to do
if someone is
knocked out



of young people
are willing and able
to act in a medical
emergency

Our new strategic objectives:

Integrity

Impact

Invest



Our Strategic Plan sits alongside a workplan with quantifiable performance indicators being set on a yearly basis.

1. Integrity

Developing our programmes to continue empowering young people

To continue to develop programmes that build young people's knowledge, confidence and willingness to act to reduce the impact of street violence, alongside our personal development programmes that increase their skills and aspirations.

2. Impact

Being there for the young people who need us the most

To reach the young people that need our training the most, by partnering with more youth, education and criminal justice providers. This will increase our impact and ensure our credibility as an influencer and advocate for young people affected by violence.

3. Invest

Building our foundations so we are resilient, compassionate, diverse and inclusive

To be a resilient organisation, efficiently organised and well-funded to continue empowering young people through trauma-informed practice and improving equality, diversity and inclusivity in all we do.

1. Integrity

Developing our programmes to continue empowering young people

What we will achieve

- Ensure all our delivery programmes support our purpose and provide a clear journey for young people affected by street violence, to build their knowledge, skills, confidence and willingness to act, and to pass their learning onto other people.
- Strengthened relationships with our partners to ensure a seamless and effective service to them.
- Establish a regionally-focused hybrid delivery model to provide training opportunities through a collaborative approach with our partners in youth, sports, criminal justice and education.



How we will achieve it

1. Reviewing our current training programmes in co-creation with young people, volunteers and partners to ensure they are effective, engaging, consistent and impactful.
2. Creating new training content in co-design with young people and volunteers, with input as needed from partners and specialists, to ensure an integrated response to young people including specific groups (i.e. those who are homeless, younger age groups, those excluded from school, women and girls).
3. Developing partnerships to increase our delivery reach, including bringing in new cohorts of trainers to support our volunteers (including youth workers and young people with lived experience), multiplier partnerships (where we train organisations to deliver our content) and e-learning projects.
4. Continuing to develop our trauma-informed practice and aligned support resources for our partners, to ensure that together we are compassionate in our understanding of the impact of street violence on young people.

2. Impact

Being there for the young people who need us the most

What we will achieve

- Ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) and learning from lived experience is embedded throughout the organisation and across all our plans and activities.
- Act as a key influencer and advocate on the agenda around young people and street violence.
- Improve our data collection, evaluation and monitoring tools, to better track impacts and outcomes for young people.





How we will achieve it

1. Developing tools to target our delivery in the areas of highest risk of street violence, to young people who need us the most.
2. Platforming diverse voices and perspectives at all levels in our organisation and in all areas of our work to further embed EDI.
3. Proactively seeking out, gathering and amplifying the views of young people to shape our work, as well as to influence public perceptions and policy
4. Embedding an improved evidence-based approach across our organisation to inform all our plans, activities and decision making.

3. Invest

Building our foundations so we are resilient, compassionate, diverse and inclusive

What we will achieve


- Ensure good governance keeps us on track and adds value.
- Ensure a financially sustainable future.
- Develop an engaged and high performing team of staff and volunteers.





How we will achieve it

- 1.** Continuing to develop a skills-based and committed Trustee Board who fully support an effective collective contribution.
- 2.** Increasing our training delivery and income, and developing a robust fundraising strategy.
- 3.** Reviewing our approach to the recruitment and retention of staff and volunteers to ensure diversity across the organisation, and improve our work on equality and inclusivity across all our operations.
- 4.** Growing and developing our regional volunteer teams to deliver our training across the UK and to increase our reach to young people.



For more information, please get in touch:

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