

Impact Report



Published March 2025

Safe!

Support for Young People
Affected by Crime

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Introduction

At SAFE!, we believe every child deserves a life free from fear, harm, and exploitation. Yet, for many children, the reality is far from this ideal. Physical and sexual abuse leave scars that go beyond the visible, impacting their emotional well-being, development, and future.

Our mission is to provide these children with the support, care, and resources they need to heal, rebuild, and thrive. We apply the same approach in our support to families who are impacted by children and young people using harmful, explosive, or violent behaviours towards their parents or caregivers.

This report highlights the strides we've made in transforming lives. The impact data comes from the work we achieved during the year from April 2023 to the end of March 2024. From providing safe spaces and emotional support to advocating for systemic improvements and supporting whole families, our efforts are driven by the unwavering belief that every child deserves a chance to reclaim their childhood and their future.

Through the stories, data, and achievements shared here, we aim to demonstrate the profound difference that the staff who work at SAFE! have made—and continue to make—in the lives of these children and their families.



Simon Clements
Chair of Trustees



Chloe Purcell
Chief Executive Officer

About SAFE!

Mission

SAFE! was established in 2008 from a recognition that experiencing a crime can have an enormous impact, and a concern that it can be especially devastating for children and young adults, who may struggle to cope and recover without appropriate support. SAFE! provides open access, inclusive, and free services for young people and families affected by crime and abuse, helping them overcome the effects of what has happened to them and regain their quality of life. SAFE! practitioners offer a range of pragmatic strategies based upon protective behaviours and restorative approaches that are designed to increase confidence, build resilience and improve future safety.

Vision

Through all of the varied services provided under the SAFE! umbrella we are all working towards the common goal that **‘children and young people feel safe, thrive and achieve their potential’**. This ambitious vision motivates us to continue providing quality and meaningful interventions for children and their families across the Thames Valley. Underneath all those services lie the fundamental values that define our approaches.

Values

SAFE!

- is child-centred
- is both independent (non-statutory) and collaborative
- promotes and practices kindness and respect
- is dedicated and passionate
- is preventative and restorative
- both advocates and empowers
- is non-blaming

“

I was greeted with a friendly face and I was able to communicate how I felt with no judgement.

”

Direct Services

Support for Children Victimised by Crime

We work with children aged 5 to 18 who are struggling following an experience of any kind of crime. Our service has a range of support options to meet each individual's needs. This spans digital resources such as our text support service, and in-person support such as our group programmes and our core one-to-one support offers.

SAFE! practitioners meet young people one-to-one and offer up to six or twelve individually tailored support sessions. This support is based on Protective Behaviours and Restorative Approaches. These frameworks support young people in feeling safer and more confident, and helps them develop resilience, so that they can thrive and return to a happy childhood, adolescence and young adulthood. We also run trips and groups during school holidays to bring children with similar experiences together with fun and engaging activities.

Specialist Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Services

Following an experience of sexual harm or domestic abuse, we offer a variety of services. These range from helping a young person to report or liaise with the police, to demystifying the court process, as well as providing support with understanding decision making, and assisting with getting onward support.

Our project workers offer emotional support in one-to-one contexts, and in groups offer pro-social education on healthy relationships and domestic abuse awareness.

Specialist support has included the following services:

- Children's Independent Domestic & Sexual Violence Advocates: 4 across the Thames Valley.
- Enhanced project work support, offering one-to-one and DAY programme groups.
- The SASH Bucks partnership with SAASSBMK – providing holistic support to children impacted by domestic abuse and sexual harm in Buckinghamshire*
- An emerging pilot of specialist support for Slough children.
- SafeSpace – weekly groupwork support for children living in domestic abuse refuges in Oxfordshire, in partnership with A2 Dominion
- *Within the SASH Bucks service, emotional support and advocacy sits alongside a counselling offer and distinct parent support.

Direct Services

Support for Parents and Carers

We recognise that a whole family approach can lead to better outcomes for children, and to support this, SAFE! provides information, advice and guidance to parents and caregivers.

We offer distinct support to parents as a core feature of the Building Respectful Families service, and also through an online caregivers support group open to parents and carers across all services. This six-week course, delivered entirely online, combines peer support with guidance and advice, and strategies for self-care. In addition, parents and carers are offered one to one support from their own practitioner.

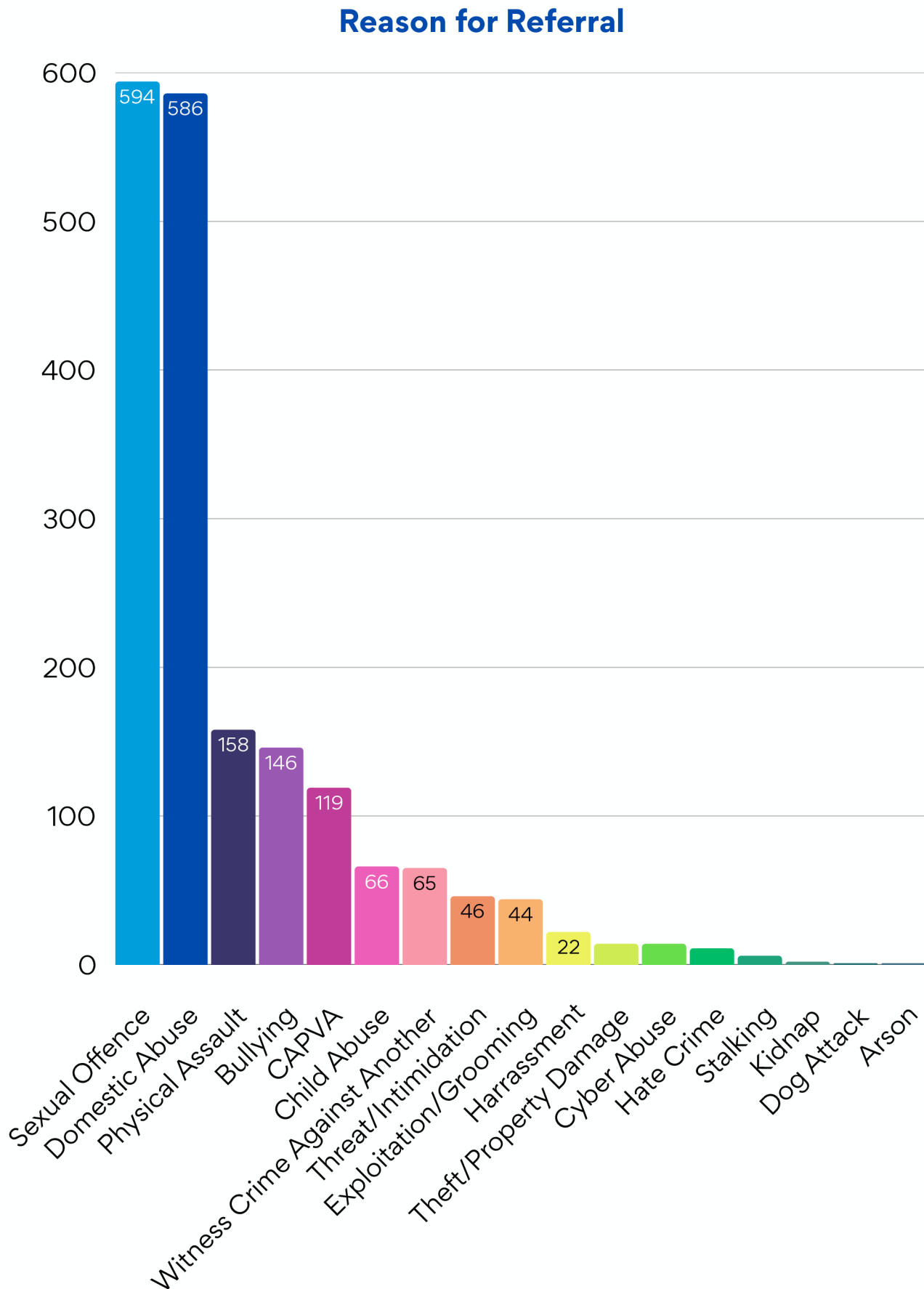
Building Respectful Families

Child and Adolescent on Parent Violence and Abuse (CAPVA) is a term which describes the dynamic where children repeatedly use a range of harmful behaviours towards their parents or caregivers, in an attempt to get their own way, hurt or punish, communicate distress and/or control their environment.*
Understanding CAPVA 2021

Building Respectful Families (BRF) supports families experiencing CAPVA to address the challenges and break harmful behaviour patterns. Working with both parents/carers and children who are willing to make changes, BRF aims to help families communicate their needs and equip them to build stronger relationships. This is achieved through one-to-one support and group work interventions, all of which are underpinned by a neuro-inclusive combination of Protective Behaviours, Restorative and Trauma-Informed approaches.

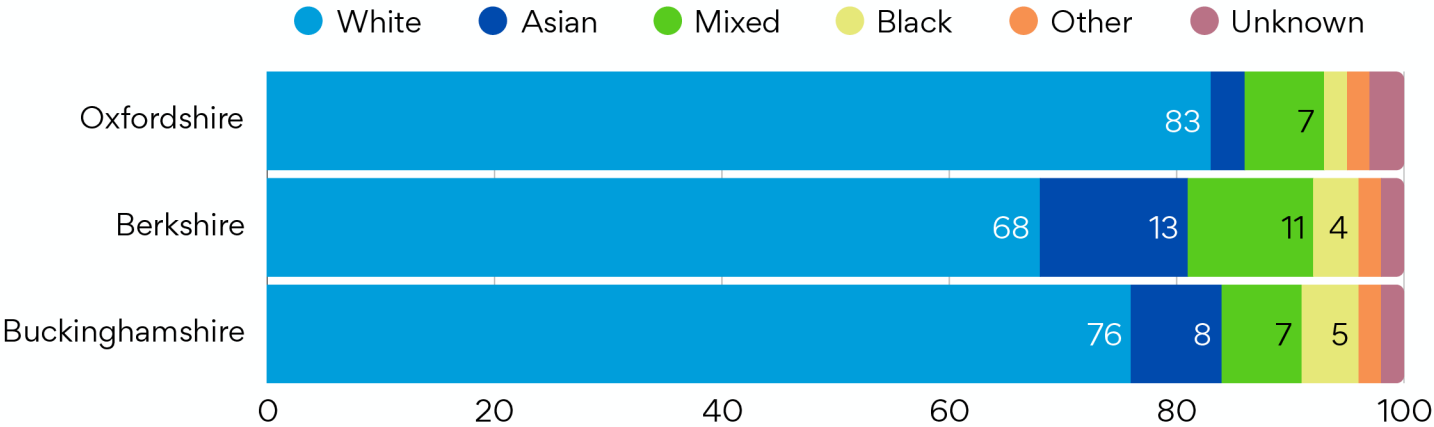
As a specialist service, we also provide consultation with professionals, and disseminate information, advice and guidance to a broader group of parents/carers impacted by CAPVA.

Who We Supported

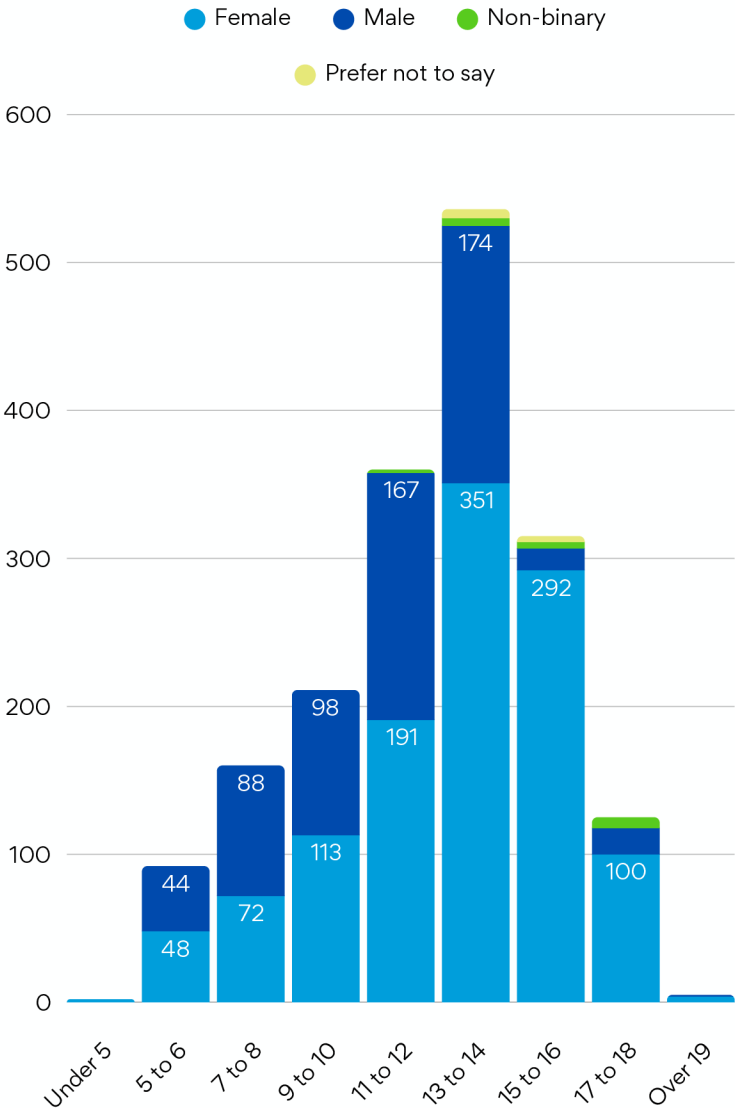


Who We Supported

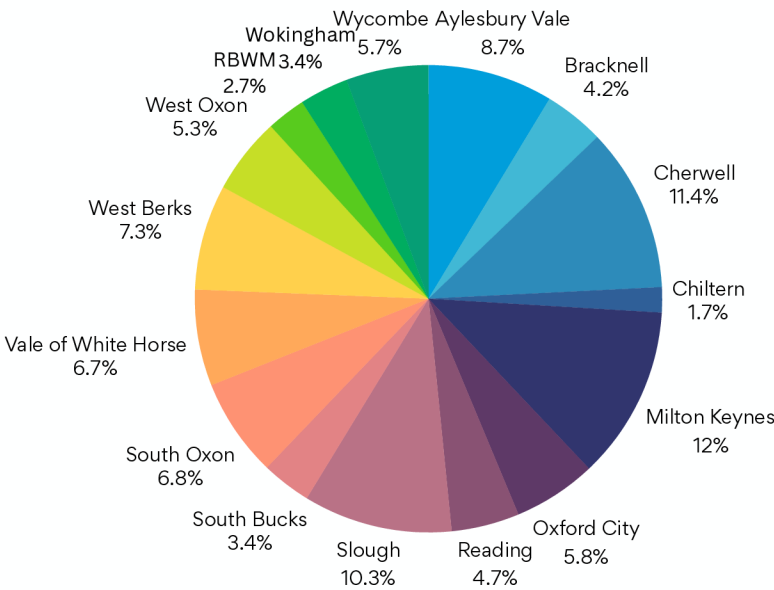
Ethnicity of Referrals per County (%)



Age and Gender of CYP



Location of CYP



Impact Information

Support for Children Victimised by Crime Service

Referrals received: **1014**

CYP supported one-to-one: **913**

98% said that support was helpful.

76% reported an increase in happiness.

64% of less confident children reported an increase in confidence.

70% reported a reduction in anger.

97% saw a positive shift towards a greater feeling of safety at home.

79% of children who received one-to-one sessions completed an evaluation.

“

I wish there was a 10/10 score for this. It has changed my life. It has made me more confident and got me out of the house. It has got me out of that depressed state.

”

Impact Information

Domestic/Sexual Abuse Specialist Services

Children supported by the ChiDSVA service: **280**

Children supported in the SASH Bucks service: **150**

DAY Programme participants: **47**

85% said that ChiDSVA support helped them feel more supported and informed.

78% said that ChiDSVA support helped them better understand their rights.

100% felt that the DAY Programme would help them have better relationships.

78% said the DAY Programme gave them a better recognition of abusive relationships.

“

I feel like its helped me work through step by step my emotions and helped me feel justified in what I feel and how to deal with what I feel.

”

“

A lot of helpful insight into all of the court and police stuff that I wouldn't have got, and being able to talk about it with someone who is specialized and feeling understood as my college counsellors didn't know how to help.

”

Impact Information

Building Respectful Families Service

Families affected by CAPVA who received support: **197**

Children supported one-to-one: **71**

Professional Consultation Sessions: **313**

‘Introduction to CAPVA’ training courses delivered: **6**

Professionals trained to recognise and respond to CAPVA: **82**

74% of parents and carers reported an improvement in their child’s behaviours.

82% of children were able to identify ways they enjoyed quality family time.

76% of parents and carers cited a decrease in physically violent behaviours.

80% of children said they were looking forward to future support, compared to only 20% before.

“The BRF course has been really amazing for me. I’ve changed, I’ve relaxed, and it’s made a shift I needed. I have given myself permission to give boundaries and this is working. Our communication is good and recently my daughter has been calm, chilled, respectful and lovely. I feel uplifted. I really was in a bad place before. I really believe if we had this much earlier, we would never have got to the stage we did. But I’m thankful we have had it now.”

Impact Information

Parent and Carer Support

Parents and carers who received support: **283**

83% of parents who completed an intervention reported that they felt better able to support their child.

82% of parents reported that worries about their children were impacting less on their mental health and wellbeing.

“

I think now I'm closer to my family, they have noticed this and my children will say you're always there to help us which has been a really positive change since I started the group. I feel a lot more confident now in myself and my abilities”

”

“

We are spending more quality time together, and me and my daughter are able to talk now rather than shout at each other. I am also getting out of the house more and walking in nature which is helping my mental health.

”

Case Study

Alex's Story

The Wentworth family were struggling with the behaviours of 10-year-old Alex. In one incident, she had vandalized the family home, broken the TV, and threatened to kill her younger brother and mother with a weapon. On the referral, Mum wrote: “our family is living under duress of when the next explosion is going to happen. We want to find out what is really going inside our daughters’ head and how we can break this cycle of abuse that is affecting the entire family.”

Over a year, the whole family (Alex, her parents and brother) received support from SAFE! For four months, Alex attended one-on-one sessions in the community with her BRF worker. These sessions focused on home life and provided a safe space for reflection, mirroring topics covered with her parents. Alex’s sessions included core BRF concepts like early warning signs, anger iceberg, and the window of tolerance, which helped her to better understand her thoughts, feelings, and behaviour.

Alex’s parents participated in joint and individual sessions with the same BRF worker. These sessions provided a safe space for her parents to discuss family issues and build confidence and insight. Topics included the drama triangle, parenting styles, and communication, reflecting themes in Alex’s sessions.

Through the non-judgmental space established with her BRF worker, Alex felt able to discuss setbacks without fear of blame. This trusted relationship allowed her to open up about her experiences, exploring how to manage situations differently for better outcomes. Alex’s BRF worker helped her rate her relationship with her parents in each session and consider changes over time, recognizing improvements in herself and her parents. She noticed her Mum becoming more flexible, which helped Alex take on more responsibility, reducing arguments and harmful outbursts.

Alex and her parents began describing an increase in positive family time, characterized by less violence and a calmer home. They identified their individual strengths and those of others. Through facilitated restorative dialogue, Alex and her parents expressed previously unspoken thoughts. This was evident in Alex’s reply to her Mum’s restorative letter:

Alex's Story Continued

Mum, I got your letter. It was really nice. Thank you for supporting me. Thank you for saying nice things about me. I love you too... I will try my best to stop getting angry... I want you to know that I really don't like getting angry and I think I would prefer to be left alone in these situations ... I love sharing facts about the Titanic with you and I enjoyed making the model. I will always remember the 'I am's' - you are really pretty as well. Lots of love A xoxo

The family accessed 'post-intervention support,' with parents attending monthly sessions for signposting, advocacy, and ongoing reassurance. These check-ins helped Alex's parents support her transition from primary to secondary school and navigate racial abuse. She has settled well at secondary school, becoming calmer and happier. The physical violence the family experienced for years has significantly reduced. If difficulties arise, the family feels confident in managing setbacks together. Alex's parents express pride in her progress.

At the end of her sessions, Alex felt she had improved and was more thoughtful before speaking to her parents. Her parents observed that Alex could calm down quicker and was more reflective. They felt she had become more aware of her impact on others and could apologize. The support from BRF validated their feelings and gave them greater confidence to manage Alex's behaviours.

“

Sometimes we drive each other bonkers but we don't explode at each other, and I walk away more - I feel better about this, as we both calm down. We are happier as a family. There is less violence and throwing things. It's generally a calmer home environment, less stressed and fearful. We are having more fun with Alex; she is nicer to be around.

”

Case Study

Charlie's Story

5-year-old Charlie and his family were referred into SAFE! after he had disclosed sexual abuse from an adult neighbour. The police investigation was almost complete and a SAFE! ChIDSVA Courtne came to visit the family a few weeks before 5-year-old Charlie was due to give evidence in court. Courtne supported Charlie and his family for over a year until the criminal justice process concluded with a guilty verdict and sentencing.

Courtne took time gaining Charlie's trust, all the while helping the whole family feel supported and understood. Support included giving information and guidance about what would happen through the criminal justice process, answering Charlie's and his parents' questions and allaying worries and concerns. As well as providing advocacy with school and other agencies. Courtne also accompanied the family at key moments: during the Section 28, pre-trial hearing, VRI watching and at sentencing. Charlie also accessed sessions learning about protective behaviours, good touch/bad touch, self-esteem, boundaries, emotional regulation and feeling safe.

Charlie's Mum, Angela, described their experience:

You fly blind. What a horrible system to go through that doesn't really care about the victims, they don't give two hoots, it is all focused on the perpetrator. Throughout the judicial system nobody once asked about Charlie and how he felt. It's an awful system for victims.

It was all about the perpetrator. The police officers were all very nice, but it's not very friendly to children. Nothing was ever put in the way of like, well, actually, how's Charlie dealing with this? It felt like that didn't matter as long as they got their answers.

I wasn't allowed to attend the police interviews or hearings because I was the person he disclosed to. I remember thinking how on Earth am I supposed to support my five-year-old son when he isn't allowed to talk to me?

When Courtne from SAFE! came to visit it was like, OK, someone is listening, someone is looking out for Charlie. To have her there to support us and support Charlie and for people to listen to our concerns, for me, was massive.

Charlie's Story Continued

It actually felt like someone cared and was able to listen to him. It's like a great big hug. That's the only way I can describe it. Like a great big hug. It was just what we needed.

Support was invaluable because we wouldn't have known what to do, what to expect. She took time to explain things to us in ways we understood. I think that that's really important to be able to have people that sit there and talk to us as humans to help us understand the systems of what was going on. Then I suppose in a sense he could relax. He didn't have to worry about it. He wasn't going in there thinking: what am I going into? What space am I going into? Because she had explained all that to him. We had looked at pictures and Courtnie answered all of his questions. That helped his brain understand. Courtnie walked us through the whole process not only for Charlie, but for us as well.

In that moment of crisis and trauma in our lives, you need that big hug to say. "It's all right. We're gonna go through this together." That's what you need. That's what we needed. We needed some people to start listening to us.

“

We cannot thank you enough for the support that Courtnie gave Charlie and ourselves. Courtnie has been fun, engaging, and helpful throughout this horrible time that no one should go through ... We all felt informed along the whole court process, which was very daunting for a just turned 5 year old! No question was too silly, no matter who asked it, and if she didn't know she would find out! Courtnie is a credit to your organisation and the support she provides is above and beyond! Thank you from the bottom of our hearts!

”

Education

Preventative Programmes in Schools

In the past year, with funding from the Home Office's Safer Street Programme, we have been welcomed to schools in Banbury, High Wycombe, Slough and Oxford, offering a series of workshops focused on healthy relationships, consent and gender empowerment. Following guided workshops of psycho-social education, students were invited to develop their own social action project to share their learning across the school. These students went on to create a variety of projects from poster campaigns and choose your own adventure games to videos about consent.

Training and Continuing Professional Development

SAFE! has a range of training offers for professionals across the Thames Valley and beyond. We are commissioned to deliver to whole teams, as well as running open access courses.

- In the past year, we have delivered several CPD accredited **“Introduction to CAPVA”** courses, training delegates to learn how to recognise Child and Adolescent on Parent Violence and Abuse, and respond with greater confidence in their own practice.
- SAFE! has also continued to train professionals in **“Protective Behaviours”** in both online and face-to-face courses. This year, we have trained 44 professionals in a Protective Behaviours approach.
- In December 2024, we hosted over 150 delegates at our conference: **“From Harm to Healing: Improving Responses to Young Victims of Crime”**. Attendees participated in educational workshops and listened to talks from experts in their respective fields.

Placements and Volunteers

SAFE! is passionate about workforce development and has a dedicated Placement and Volunteer Coordinator supporting the development of our placement programme, currently working with social work and criminology students. Over the course of the financial year, we had 6 student Social Workers on placement from Oxford Brookes, Bucks New and Winchester Universities.

We have also been increasing the number of volunteers working in SAFE! This year, we have had 3 volunteers join the organisation supporting in a range of areas from fundraising, social media and parent support.

Voice of the Child

Young Champions

SAFE! has introduced a Young Champions scheme, offering follow-on opportunities for young people to support SAFE! through volunteering and ongoing consultation regarding service development. The Young Champions have supported SAFE! in service development, social media content and planning for a new website in 2025.

Amplifying Voices

SAFE! facilitates consultation with young people, by both holding events with young people who have accessed SAFE! services to inform organisational development and by working with local authorities to organise events around a set theme, such as experience of domestic abuse services. Our ambition is to amplify the voices of young people who have experienced crime and abuse, to ensure that their needs are heard and responded to.

Reports and Campaigns

Following a consultation with young people with experience of the criminal justice system as victims, as well as with those working to support them, we published a report: “Living in Limbo – the Impact of Delays in the Criminal Justice System on Young Victims of Crime”. Throughout the year, we have presented this report, with its findings and recommendations, to advocate locally with agencies of the criminal justice system to make improvements to the unacceptable experiences of young victims. In 2024, we also worked with the Media Trust and an amazing film team to create a narrative film to highlight these experiences and call for change. This incredible film, Limbo, which has recently been shortlisted in the 'Charity and Public Service' Category of the British Arrows Awards, was officially launched at our conference in early December 2024. The campaign and public affairs work on this issue continue into 2025, with a public petition and ongoing advocacy with local and national bodies.

Thank You to Our Partners, Funders and Supporters

SAFE! is built on strong relationships with funders, commissioners and partner agencies. Our thanks go out to all those who have supported the work of SAFE! over the last twelve months. Special thanks go out to the following partners and funders:



THE
NATIONAL
LOTTERY

NHS
England



PYE
TRUST



Quilter



OXFORD
BROOKES
UNIVERSITY

CG Dennis Fire and Safety Service
Doris Field Charitable Trust
Stanton Ballard Charitable Trust

