



SAFER PLACES:
RESILIENT INSTITUTIONS AND
NEIGHBOURHOODS TOGETHER

SPRINT

LEARNING BRIEF 9

Area-based violence prevention interventions for and with youth

2022



SAFER PLACES:
RESILIENT INSTITUTIONS AND
NEIGHBOURHOODS TOGETHER

SPRINT

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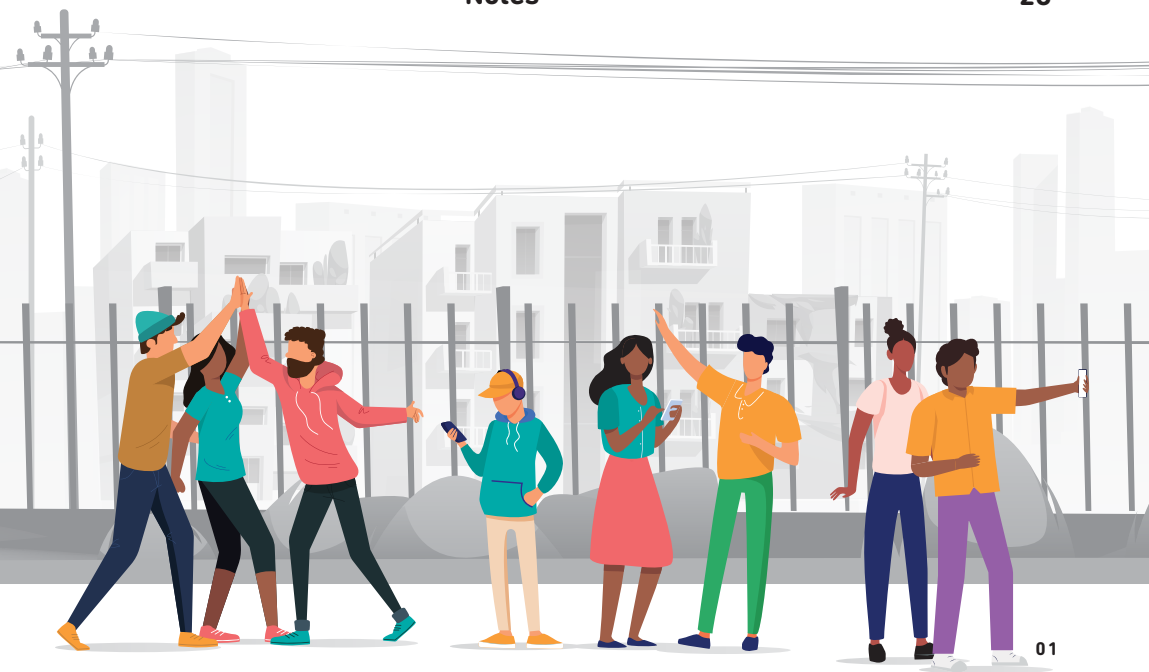
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ABOUT THIS LEARNING BRIEF

Youth in South Africa are caught in a cycle of violence and crime in which they can be victims, perpetrators or both. This learning brief is the result of the Community of Practice learning event “ABVPI for/with youth”, which was hosted by Isandla Institute on 23 June 2022 as part of the Safer Places: Resilient Institutions and Neighbourhoods Together (SPRINT) Project Community of Practice (CoP). The CoP is comprised of civil society organisations and representatives from the different spheres of government. The learning brief draws on the presentation by Masifunde Learner Development and the reflections and experiences shared by the participants, without directly attributing contributions to participants.





Area-based violence prevention interventions (ABVPI)¹ are targeted approaches to bring about improved safety within a specific geographic area. They are designed to reduce crime and violence and address the root causes by using a combination of spatial, social and institutional interventions. ABVPI are a key preventative mechanism in reducing the incidence and impact of violence and crime. The predominant response to crime and violence is to pursue security initiatives, but there is growing evidence of a shift to include more preventative safety measures which focus on underlying risk and protective factors. Risk factors are those factors that increase risk or susceptibility while protective factors are those that encourage healthy and safe outcomes. These factors interplay with one another and can influence violence and crime at the individual, relationship, community or societal level – as seen in the socio-ecological model.



Youth experience and/or witness crime and violence in many different places, including in the home, at school, in places of faith, social venues and on the streets.

LEGACIES OF SPATIAL INEQUALITY

“Social inequality refers to a state in which factors affecting human activities across various fields, such as opportunities, resources, and power, are unfairly distributed (Sen, 1992). Socio-spatial inequality, then, refers to a state in which significant disparities are created because they are not evenly distributed across different spaces, which means that social inequalities are manifested in spatial patterns. It

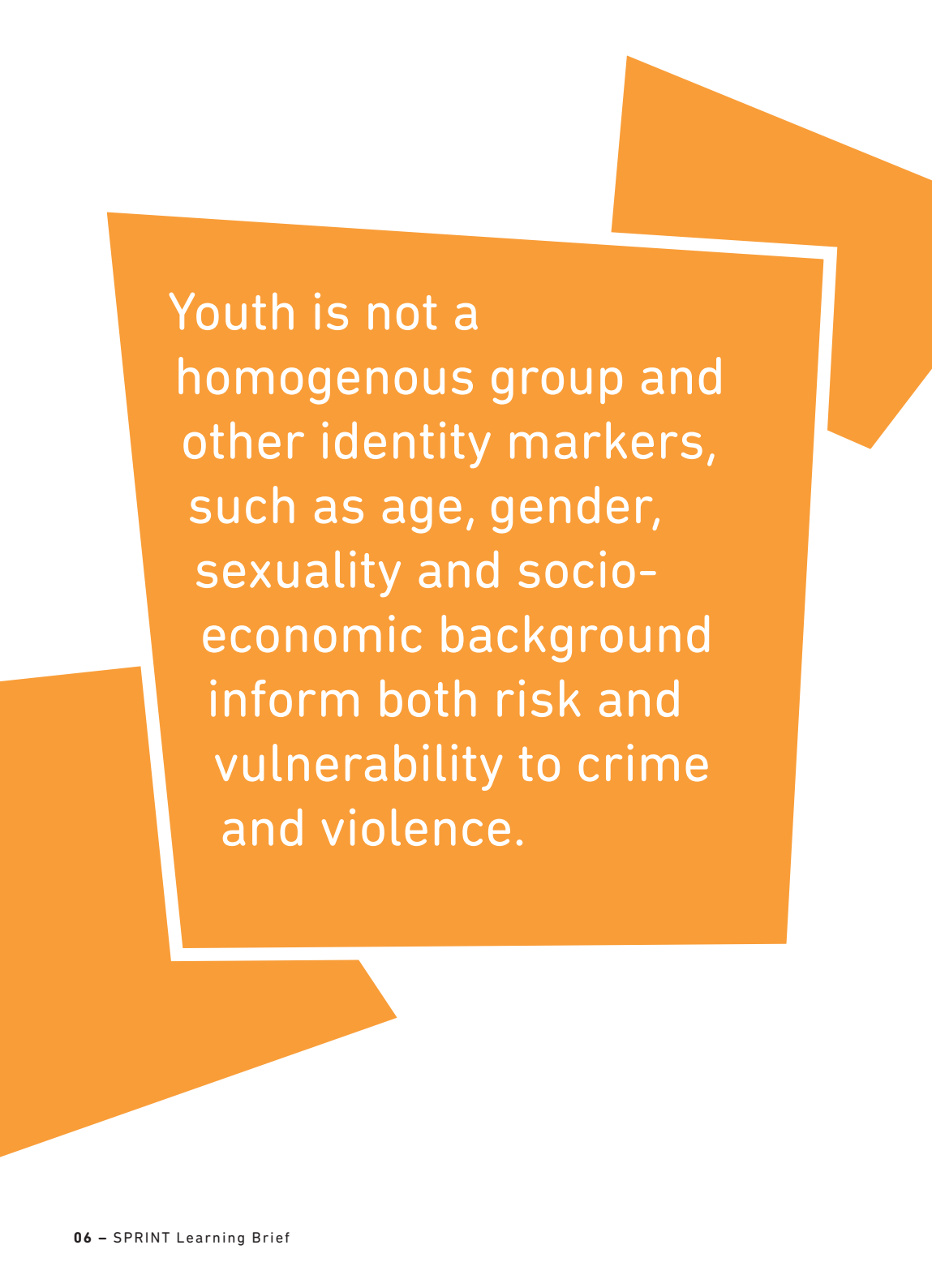
proposes that socio-spatial inequalities can be identified by measuring spatial stratification.”

In South Africa, the legacy of apartheid planning and ongoing inequality mean that many living in South Africa are unable to access quality services including social support, education and learning opportunities, health facilities and basic services.²

INTRODUCTION

Youth experience and/or witness crime and violence in many different places, including in the home, at school, in places of faith, social venues and on the streets. Youth are particularly vulnerable as both victims and perpetrators and have been found to be victim of and perpetuate all types of violence, including bullying, assault, substance abuse, self-harm, sexual assault, murder and suicide.³ Additionally, spaces are experienced differently by different groups of youth. A place of refuge for some groups can be a space of violence for others, a complex dichotomy that is important to acknowledge when designing and implementing interventions.

Youth in South Africa is not a homogenous group and while they may share some characteristics, they do not necessarily face the same challenges. It is therefore important to differentiate between different age groups and consider how factors such as gender, disability, socio-economic background and living conditions create additional layers of vulnerability, risk, resilience and opportunity. Nonetheless, there are some common challenges, including the lack of authority figures and guidance systems and economic pressures like scarcity, poverty and unemployment. The complexity of different groups of youth's experiences of violence and crime means that a holistic and integrated approach to preventative interventions that address root causes is needed. Multiple interventions that target different risks and protective factors across young people's lives will reinforce one another to build a comprehensive system of violence and crime prevention. Two pivotal components of such a system are creating safer spaces for different groups of youth to live, work and play in and empowering and enabling them to be included in processes in a manner that respects and institutionalises their involvement. The latter enables a youth led approach.

The background features several overlapping, irregular orange shapes that resemble torn paper or abstract architectural elements. The central focus is a large orange rectangle with a white border, which contains the main text.

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YOUTH, CRIME AND VIOLENCE

Youth are particularly vulnerable to becoming victims or perpetrators of violence and crime compared to other social groups. There are many reasons that could underpin their vulnerability, including their propensity to take risks, lack of maturity and independence, and susceptibility to peer influence.⁴

Another risk factor is youth unemployment. While youth (aged 15-34 years) make up about a third of South Africa's population⁵, unemployment is disproportionately high among youth: in the first quarter of 2022 the unemployment rate was 63.9% for those aged 15-24 and 42.1% for those aged 25 -35 years. This is much higher than the national average at 34.5%.⁶ Different groups of youth who have very different lived experiences and realities based on factors such as their age, gender, socio-economic background and physical abilities are affected differently, though. Research suggests that young men aged 15-25 years make up the majority of both victims and perpetrators of urban violence and crime in most countries^{7 8}, while gender-based violence is mostly affecting young women and LGBTQIA+ youth. Similarly, a study conducted in Edinburg testing the relationship between youth violence, gender and poverty found that boys were more likely to engage in violence than girls. It was further found that poverty at both the household and neighbourhood level seemed to exacerbate violence.⁹ This sentiment is echoed by Rob White and Chris Cunneen (2016) who note that the tendency of some youth to engage in criminal activity is an outcome of social and economic inequalities.¹⁰ As such, it is important to acknowledge that 'youth' is not a homogenous group and that other identity markers, such as age, gender, sexuality and socio-economic background, need to be understood as informing both risk and vulnerability to crime and violence.

The Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown regulations have had a particularly devastating effect on education, especially in public schools. For almost two years, public schooling was severely disrupted by school closures and lockdown restrictions, with pupils only returning to school on

a fulltime basis in February 2022. While many private schools were able to manage social distancing requirements, thereby allowing pupils to fully return to school well before February 2022, in public schools this was not possible and children were only able to attend school on a roster basis (e.g. two days a week). Furthermore, in public schools access to digital learning was limited, contributing to an educational divide with peers attending schools where distance learning was possible. This meant that only those with the economic means were able to continue schooling while others who did not have access to the needed devices and internet connections were left behind, indicating how socio-economic background affects the presence of risk and vulnerability. Reduced access to schooling does not only affect educational outcomes (and further learning and economic opportunities); it can also result in isolation from their peers and greater exposure to risk factors to crime and violence.

Social isolation, poor schooling, bleak economic and employment prospects and financial stress can all contribute to being involved in anti-social activities, such as crime. Moreover, exposure to violence can itself be a risk factor to perpetuating violence and crime: a study by the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention found that youth who have previously been victims of violence are six times more likely to commit a crime than their peer.¹¹


In addition, youth who are exposed to violence at home are more susceptible to victimisation of violent crime, such as robberies and assaults. Lezanne Leoschut posits: "The family is the primary socialising agent where children are taught about acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Children who are continuously exposed to violence within the home, as is the case with the young people surveyed in this study, come to perceive violence as an appropriate means of conflict resolution and problem-solving technique".¹² Some young people may also feel the need to prove themselves as being strong and tough in the community and may lack experience in making smart decisions to prioritise their safety – or that of others. They may be easily influenced and susceptible to delinquency by their peers.¹³ Other factors such as an impulsive personality trait, poor parental supervision, poor school attendance and alcohol and drug abuse all contribute to youth risk to crime and violence.¹⁴

Some youth may feel powerless or trapped in a continuous

cycle of dangerous or destructive contexts, particularly if they are not exposed to alternatives through interventions. This vulnerability is particularly the case when there are no perceived consequences for the violence and crime that they witness, experience or enact. These factors make it more complex to distinguish between victims/survivors and perpetrators of crime and violence. It is so important to work with the community to create safe and healthy social and economic opportunities for youth help to steer them away from unhealthy relationships or anti-social activities.

One of the common articulations of unhealthy relationships is youth involvement with gangs. Gangs offer both financial and emotional support to many groups of youth who have limited alternatives.¹⁵ In many instances, gangs have significant power in communities and often this is often used to pressure young people to join gangs. Contextual issues that allow gangs to thrive include economic hardships where there are limited opportunities and families in need as well as family breakdown and a lack of positive social control.¹⁶

In addition to individual characteristics and propensities, the quality of relationships (in the home, with peers and partners), the presence/absence of role models, economic prospects and social development opportunities, one's living environment is also a contributing factor to vulnerability to violence and crime. In particular, the quality of the built environment can create an environment of risk. Limited street lighting, a lack of community surveillance or "eyes on the street" and unmanaged public spaces can provide opportunities for crime to thrive. However, this is also experienced differently by different groups of youth, based on their gender, age, sexuality and physical ability. Furthermore, the availability (or absence) of positive places such as sports facilities, arts and cultural hubs and other community social spaces that youth spend their free time in can influence their level of risk. Where such facilities and programmes are lacking, youth may create alternative (and anti-social) opportunities for peer engagement, such as drinking, drugs or gang involvement. It is therefore important to review the way in which neighbourhoods, streets, public spaces and buildings are planned and designed to ensure the multiple needs and interests of different groups of youth are adequately catered for and their specific vulnerability to violence and crime is reduced.

The background features several abstract, overlapping green geometric shapes. A large, irregular green polygon is the central focus, with a smaller, more regular green triangle positioned above it. To the left, another green shape extends from the bottom edge, partially overlapping the main polygon. The overall composition is modern and minimalist, using a monochromatic green color scheme against a white background.

Understanding the lived experiences, vulnerabilities and factors that contribute to – or could alleviate – risk, is key in developing successful interventions to building safer spaces for and with youth.

BUILDING SAFER SPACES FOR AND WITH YOUTH

Youth experience – and sometimes perpetuate – violence and crime in schools, in their homes, in recreational spaces and in the spaces between. Because different groups of youth are affected differently, it is critical that those different realities of (un)safety and fear are understood and responded to. Safety audits provide a valuable mechanism to build that understanding and provide the basis for developing appropriate, context-specific and targeted interventions that support violence prevention.¹⁷ Local safety audits should involve a wide array of stakeholders including the local community members, local business owners, civil society organisations and other relevant stakeholders. However, youth are often excluded from these conversations as officials tend to work with established organisations, who often do not include any or all different groups of youth representatives. This can be countered by seeking out youth-led initiatives and actively trying to empower and enable such initiatives.

Because different groups of youth experience things differently, it is important to include youth from different socio-economic backgrounds and identities in these safety audits. Understanding their lived experiences, vulnerabilities and factors that contribute to – or could alleviate – their risk, is key in developing successful interventions to building safer spaces for and with youth. Another benefit of involving various groups of youth in these processes and conversations is that it enables and capacitates them to be agents of change who can lead initiatives.

Masifunde Learner Development (referred to as Masifunde) developed the Changemaker Programme that includes a participatory safety audit where youth develop a safety map of safe and unsafe spaces within their particular area. These are then used to engage conversations about why those spaces are categorised as such. If possible, Masifunde will then work with the relevant authorities, such as schools or the Department of Education, to report incidences of violence. An analysis of the safety audits

shows that youth, especially young girls, do not feel safe when walking to and from school and public transport especially when passing through open fields or past taverns. Youth also do not feel safe in public transport, especially if they are the only person who is present. In addition, youth shared that they do not feel safe speaking about bullying and violence in their homes and so parenting support and programmes are used to encourage and capacitate parents to start and facilitate difficult conversations with their children.

Additionally, youth shared that they only feel safe in areas they are familiar with. They also shared that poor infrastructure – including a lack of lighting, no fences or vandalised property – increases the chances that those spaces will be used for anti-social behaviour subsequently increasing the risk of violence. These reflections show why area-based approaches to violence and crime are so important in prevention efforts and in building youth resilience. Addressing vulnerability and breaking the cycle of violence and crime is about simultaneously building resilience of individuals and communities while improving the contexts in which they live, work and play.

Youth-led approach

“A youth-led approach positions young people as agents of change and is characterised by youth ownership and full decision-making responsibility. It places young people in the leading role in both the inception and implementation of interventions that respond to their needs or the needs of their communities, using methods and tools based on their interests and attributes. Youth-led organisations or programmes are run by young people, have members and/or volunteers who are young and engage in matters from young people’s perspectives.” (The inclusive violence and crime prevention programme. 2021. Prevention Dialogues: Re-imagining Safer Communities in South Africa.)



WORKING WITH CHANGEMAKERS

Masifunde Learner Development (referred to as Masifunde), a non-government organisation (NGO) founded in 2004, works with learners from 45 schools across the Nelson Mandela Bay Metro (NMB) in the Eastern Cape. One of their flagship programmes is The Masifunde Changemaker Network which aims to capacitate and build resilience amongst 180 learners from 45 high schools from across NMB. The programme has been so successful that it has been replicated


in Gauteng and the Western Cape as well as in Germany and Israel with plans to spread it to other provinces in South Africa.

Building changemakers is about enabling youth to be drivers of change so that they can create and lead the changes they want to see without waiting for external factors. Masifunde focuses as much as possible on primary prevention but recognise that many youth have already experienced/witnessed some form of violence or crime, thus the interventions include both primary and secondary interventions. Social assistance is made available for beneficiaries of the Changemaker Network Programme by professional social workers. The programme is holistic and integrated to address the cyclical nature of violence and crime in which youth are both survivors and perpetrators. Different components of the changemaker programme are delivered through outreach programmes, campaigns and workshops and include:

- Academic support within and outside of schools from grade 3 to school leavers
- Life skills training to strengthen personality and increase resilience. Topics of discussion include gender based violence, mental health issues and bullying.
- Extracurricular activities that focus on strength and talents to increase self confidence
- Social assistance through which youth have access to social support systems and social workers

One of the key components of ensuring success in the programme is to work in collaboration with partners including other CSOs and local government. To foster these partnerships there needs to be a joint vision, ownership and alignment created by involvement in planning and goal setting. It is also important to be flexible and adaptable in communication to find the method that works for different partners and to be respectful of people's time and decisions. Across all their work, including in the Changemakers Network, Masifunde sees how spatial factors affect violence and crime prevention.

Youth experience violence and crime in schools, in their homes, in recreational spaces and in the spaces between. One of the components of the changemaker programme is participatory safety audits where youth develop a safety map of safe and unsafe spaces. These are then used to engage conversations about why those spaces are categorised as such. If possible, Masifunde will then work with the relevant authorities, such as schools or the Department of Education, to report incidences of violence.



One of the critical components of working with and for youth in ABVPI is fostering youth empowerment and resilience so that they can be part of processes that affect them and the spaces they occupy.

BUILDING YOUTH RESILIENCE: REDUCING RISK AND VULNERABILITY

Working with youth to build resilience and break the cycle of victim and perpetrator of violence and crime requires working to reduce the incidence of violence and crime and/or build individual and collective resilience and healthy protective factors. Some examples of interventions include youth groups which offer safe peer education and support. These groups can be a space to share. In addition, the collective meeting can create a safe physical space for youth to spend their time. Ideally, multiple interventions target different risks and protective factors across young people's lives that reinforce one another to build a comprehensive system of violence and crime prevention.

WORKING WITH YOUTH TO BUILD INDIVIDUAL RESILIENCE

One of the critical components of working with and for youth in ABVPI is fostering youth empowerment and resilience so that they can be part of processes that affect them and the spaces they occupy. Youth need to be included in the planning and consultation process and their involvement needs to be respected and institutionalised so that they are part of decisions and actions that influence their community, schools and environment. This is particularly important in ABVPI as partnership and inclusion are at the heart of community safety. Central to enabling and growing this is building and fostering empowerment and active citizenship amongst

the youth. Empowered, active citizens are better enabled to manage vulnerabilities and stressors and able to recover or break harmful cycles. Additionally, youth who have important insights and vision, feel respected, heard and have a sense of where to report issues or receive guidance and support can be strong allies in an intervention and become drivers of change.

While not explicitly focused on youth, an example of this is the Development Action Group (DAG) Active Citizenship Training Programme, which capacitates community leaders and includes aspects such as value-based leadership, how to engage local government, how local government systems work and the most effective ways to get the change we want to see.

HOW DO WE SUPPORT AND BUILD YOUTH RESILIENCE?

- Parental guidance programmes
 - Implementing age appropriate interventions from a young age
- Bringing together scattered youth groups
- Creating safe spaces where youth want to hang out
- Implement value based programmes
- Fostering technology skills
- Drug and substance abuse prevention and support programmes
- Create and foster healthy communication mechanisms and channels
- Activating safe spaces so that they are used by the youth and to keep out unwanted influences
- Encourage and enable trust building through respect and reliability
- Build transversal partnerships by understanding that we come from and want to work with different systems
- Involving youth in the processes that affect their wellbeing -such as safety audits





Some important questions when working with youth

- How do we access youth other than schools?
 - Where do youth who want help go?
 - How do we come to understand communication channels we, non-youth, are excluded from?
-

It can be difficult to include youth in the consultative processes necessary in ABVPI and the resulting programmes. In some instances, this requires adapting or amending mechanisms for engagement and interventions: “Effective programming engages with complex influences shaping their attitudes, decisions and behaviours; resonates with their lifestyles, identities and life stages; reaches them in spaces they already use; creates positive associations with [services]; and sees [youth] as potential agents for positive change rather than viewing them as “the problem”.”¹⁸ Building on this, the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention suggests we examine interventions across the family unit, school, network of peers and community. The socio-ecological model is a useful tool for studying how converging risks and protective factors interplay across individuals, relationships, community and society in the lives of youth.¹⁹ It can also be used to design, adapt and assess interventions. It is essential to work with the whole community to include youth.

WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES TO INCLUDE YOUTH

A community-centred approach that puts people first is an essential component of ABVPI.²⁰ This entails bringing together all those who live in and use a space to discuss and co-produce ways to shape that space. This is essential because those who use the space will have unique insights into the challenges that they face. Additionally, “when residents are drawn into the process, when their voices are heard and when their skills and creativity are utilised, active citizenship is grown”.²¹ Active citizenship increases ownership, activation and ultimately maintenance and management of interventions and spaces. When designing ABVPI, youth are an important group to include, regardless of whether they are a direct target, but importantly when the interventions will directly affect them and spaces that they occupy. The inclusion of youth in design and decision

making processes is something that should be agreed to in the framing of the interventions.

When we look at community or urban upgrading, we tend to focus on working with established organisations as the management process seems easier to navigate. However, these structures may not necessarily include the voices of youth. In fact, even in structures where youth voices are expected, effort should still be made to empower and include youth. There are many different ways that we can enable youth inclusion. This could be by meeting youth where they are or by creating new systems for them to come together – such as establishing youth clubs. It can also be through introducing new activities for and with the youth, such as workshops to co-design shared spaces or share information through safety mapping exercises.

Gatekeeping of information inhibits youth participation, especially when those youth do not know how to be included in policy decisions. Thus, including them in these processes should be around explaining what the responsibilities of structures are and how decisions are made, rather than simply telling youth where to be and when. Rather than demoting them to a collective to be instructed, this allows for engagement and respects the dignity and autonomy of youth participants.

For example, at a park upgrade project in Hillbrow by the City of Johannesburg part of the design and upgrade of the park looked at how to activate the space for different groups, including youth. They held a series of workshops with youth in the area and asked them to play in the space and mark out the best designs on the ground. This was then used to create the safety mapping moving forward. For older youth, they had engagements about what type of activity they wanted to see in the park (such as netball or soccer) and, where possible, those requests were included in the design. This inclusive process resulted in increased ownership and, ultimately, a more sustainable project. The sense of ownership meant that it was less likely for other individuals to come into the space and use it for unintended functions (e.g. as a crime hotspot).

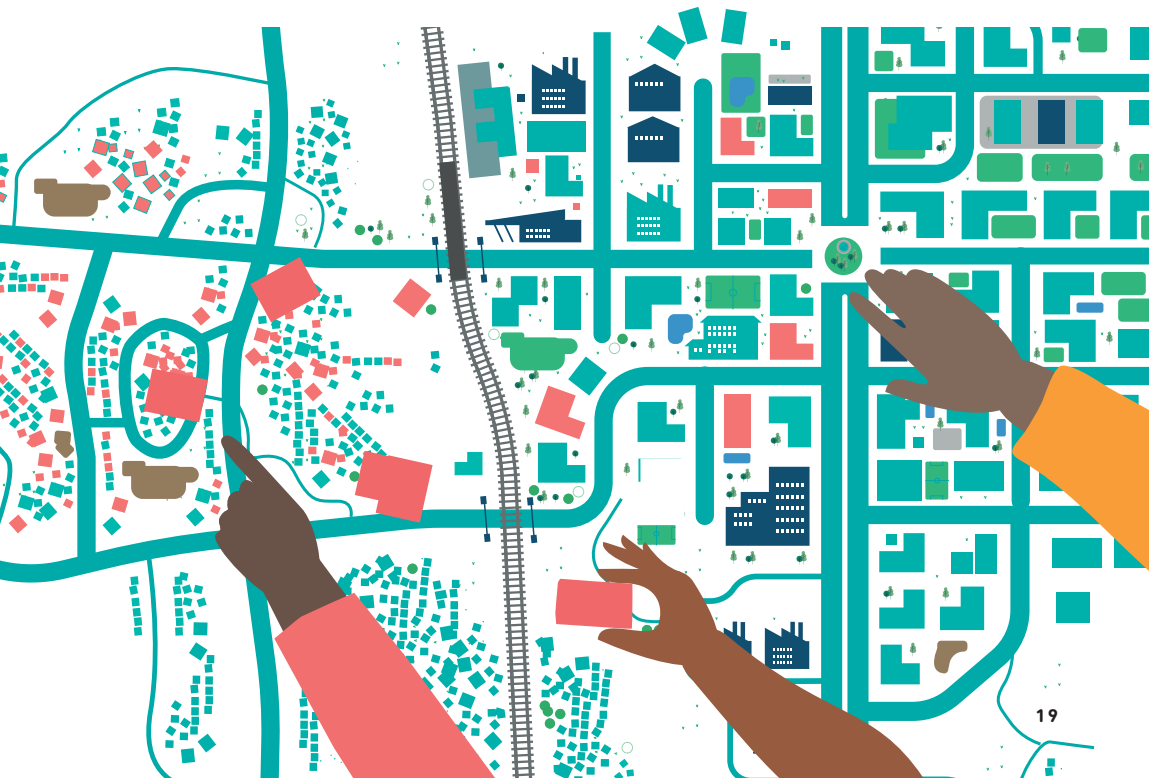
Many feel youth have resilience, energy and a desire to be 'part of the solution'. As with any inclusive process, this role may need to be intentional and iterative as we understand



more of the context and dynamics (or as they change).

Given the prominence of unemployment and low- or mis-skilled youth, job creation that is aligned to ABVPI is a great opportunity to involve youth and meet one of their critical needs. Examples of this type of work include Tourist Safety Ambassadors, the Extended Public Works Programme (EPWP) or Neighbourhood Watches. This also creates an opportunity to upskill youth or to link them and their aspirations with relevant providers. Sol Plaatje Municipality hope to establish a safety ambassador project involving 156 youth in the municipality. The ambassadors will act as both peacekeeping officers and security guards to help protect informal trading centres and to enable alignment of traders in the CBD with the relevant rules and vision for trading in the municipality.

Another critical component is capacitating youth to be involved by using relevant and relatable methods and tools as well as fostering constant and transparent communication. In some instances, youth will create or take over initiatives and drive processes, rather than waiting for a third party to lead the process. This is more likely when the process is enabling and capacitating.



TOWARDS GOOD PRACTICE

The SPRINT project has identified eight key ingredients for successful ABVPI. These ingredients provide a useful tool for initiating good practice in working for and with youth in ABVPI.

1 Adopt a community-centred approach that puts people first

- Commit to the inclusion of youth and, where appropriate, a youth focus. Since 'youth' is not a homogenous group it is critical to acknowledge these differences and include young people from different age groups, socio-economic background, gender and physical abilities.
- Use outreach tools and participation methodologies that are particularly appealing to, and effective with, youth, such as digital tools and platforms, school campaigns, focus groups, etc.

2 Assemble the various stakeholders and partners who will be crucial to the intervention

- Identify and include youth organisations and other local civil society organisations working with/on issues affecting youth
- Meet different groups of youth in places and/or platforms where they meet up
- Make sure different youth interests are represented

3 Use the critical emerging information to develop a joint vision for the intervention

- Create an understanding of youth vulnerability and risk to crime and violence and the underlying factors
- Ensure the voices, experiences and aspirations of different youth are included in the vision and resulting plan

4 Assign roles and responsibilities within the group

- Encourage and enable youth to take up roles and responsibilities
- Identify youth to be champions who communicate with peers and inspire change
- Develop and implement accountability mechanisms to relevant youth structures
- Ensure youth set and adhere to realistic timelines and expectations to increase trust building through respect and reliability

5 Have an evidence-based, community-informed approach

- Collect and use local data on youth, disaggregated by age groups, gender, socio-economic background, education, employment and other relevant factors
- Speak to/have focus groups with different youth groups
- Conduct a community safety audit to create a common understanding of how different groups of youth experience or perceive violence, crime and safety in their neighbourhood. This can be achieved by including youth in the audit or having a specific targeted 'youth safety audit'.
- Include different groups of youth in all aspects of the process, including analysis, design, implementation and monitoring to allow for refinement and course-correcting

6 Prioritise the issues of activation, maintenance and management throughout the project life

- Develop and implement projects for and with youth, making sure that key risk factors and protective factors for different groups of youth are responded to (e.g. leadership programmes for girls and young women, masculinity programmes or cooking classes for young men)
- Invest in the maintenance and management of spaces that different groups of youth use, including recreational spaces such as parks, sports facilities or halls
- Create opportunities for youth to be involved in managing and maintaining spaces and buildings

7 Develop a budget and allocate sufficient resources


- Allocate sufficient resources (time, capacity and funding) for targeted engagements with different groups of youth and in youth focused interventions

8 Have a flexible and adaptive monitoring, evaluation and learning system

- Build the ability to assess the effectiveness of interventions for/with youth or to interrogate information – such as through youth-driven/-focused safety audits
- Use the emerging information to develop and implement interventions that bring about change to the lives of different groups of youth
- Share knowledge about violence prevention for/with youth by hosting learning events, such as the brown bag sessions, learning exchanges, workshops and face-to-face engagements and the development of learning materials such as toolkits and guidelines or policy briefs



Invest in the maintenance and management of spaces that different groups of youth use, including recreational spaces such as parks, sports facilities or halls

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KEY LESSONS

The following six lessons on ABVPI for/with youth can be drawn:

- 1:** Youth as a group are particularly vulnerable to crime and violence in South Africa as they experience a higher number of risk factors at individual, relational, community and societal level, which may include lack of maturity and independence, lack of positive role models and parental guidance, peer pressure, poor schooling and a high unemployment rate.
- 2:** Youth is not a homogenous group and different groups of young people experience different levels of risk and vulnerability based on factors such as their age, gender, socio-economic background and physical abilities.
- 3:** Socio-spatial inequalities, the built environment and the quality of the neighbourhood are contributing factors to the vulnerability of the youth who occupy them. The way that environment is built and designed, how it is activated and managed and, consequently, the availability of positive spaces that keep youth actively and positively engaged, all matter in preventing crime and violence.
- 4:** For neighbourhoods to become, and encompass, safer spaces for youth and for the community at large, the different lived experiences of different groups of youth need to be brought to light. This is important for all projects regardless of whether youth are the direct target, but critical when it directly affects them and the spaces they occupy. This may mean adapting mechanisms for engagement to be effective in reaching different groups of youth. Their participation should be institutionalised and respected.

5: One of the key ways to make interventions contextually relevant is to undertake a local safety audit, which should actively seek to include different groups of youth, who are often excluded from these processes, to unearth specific factors of risk and vulnerability (relevant to different groups of youth) and to design context appropriate and effective interventions.

6: Involving different groups of youth in processes such as community safety audits is not only important to ensure context specific data and interventions; it is also part of fostering youth empowerment, channelling youth resilience and capacitating them to be active agents of change.

Local safety audits should actively seek to include different groups of youth to unearth specific factors of risk and vulnerability.

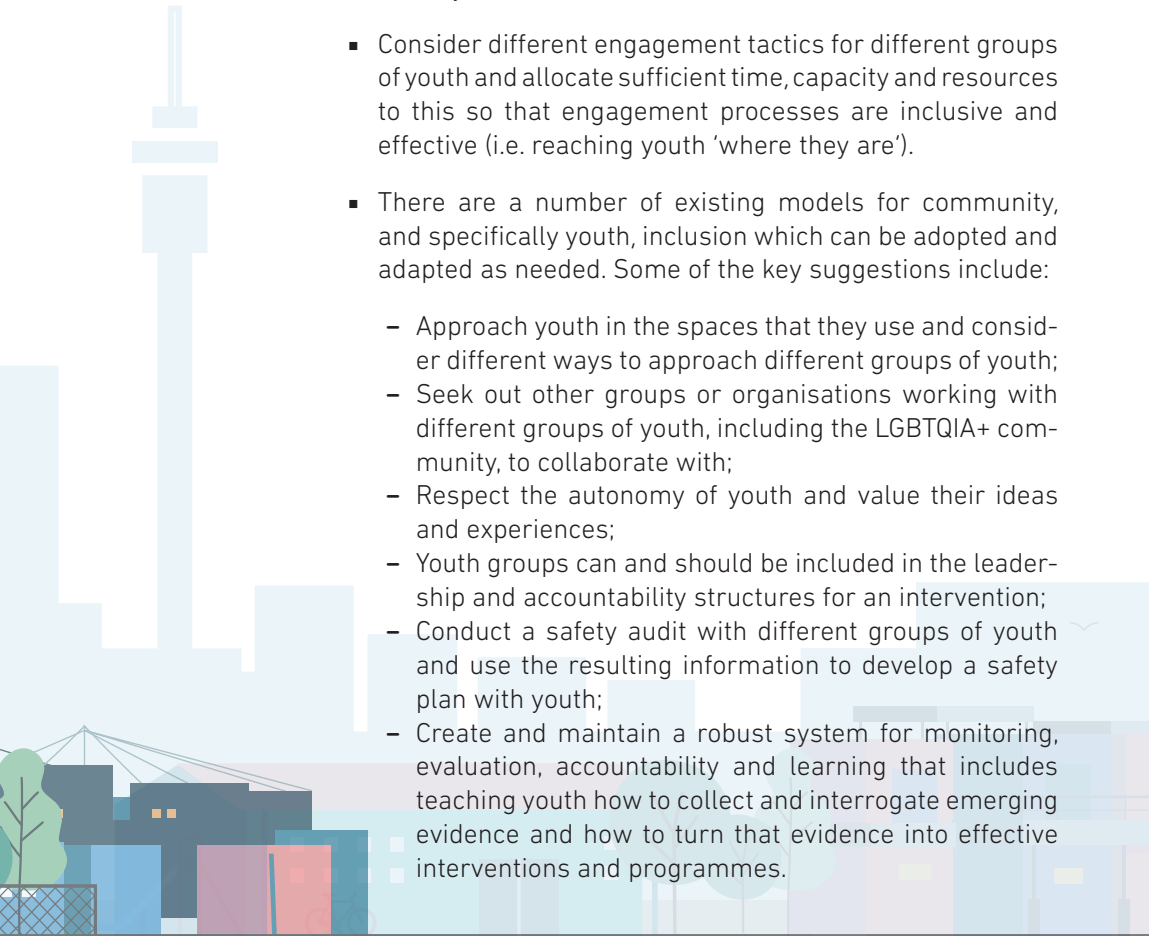


LOCAL
SAFETY
AUDIT

KEY STARTING POINTS

To encourage youth participation in ABVPI, the following can be helpful:

- Commit to a concerted effort to include youth in the process. Part of this is discussing that youth is not a homogenous group but rather has nuances based on age, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, etc.
- Consider different engagement tactics for different groups of youth and allocate sufficient time, capacity and resources to this so that engagement processes are inclusive and effective (i.e. reaching youth 'where they are').
- There are a number of existing models for community, and specifically youth, inclusion which can be adopted and adapted as needed. Some of the key suggestions include:
 - Approach youth in the spaces that they use and consider different ways to approach different groups of youth;
 - Seek out other groups or organisations working with different groups of youth, including the LGBTQIA+ community, to collaborate with;
 - Respect the autonomy of youth and value their ideas and experiences;
 - Youth groups can and should be included in the leadership and accountability structures for an intervention;
 - Conduct a safety audit with different groups of youth and use the resulting information to develop a safety plan with youth;
 - Create and maintain a robust system for monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning that includes teaching youth how to collect and interrogate emerging evidence and how to turn that evidence into effective interventions and programmes.



NOTES

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The primary objective of the SPRINT Project is to institutionalise area-based violence prevention intervention (ABVPI) approaches in public policy, programmes and practices in order to upscale them and have a sustainable impact.



SAFER PLACES:
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SPRINT

An initiative of the South African -
German Development Cooperation:



REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



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