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**Warwickshire RSHE Network: Education Guidance**

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RSHE Lead | Connect for Health

December 2024

Summary of: “The Children, Violence, and Vulnerability 2024 - Youth Endowment Report”

**The *Children, Violence, and Vulnerability 2024—Youth Endowment Published December 2024***

**Summary of Key Findings**

The *Children, Violence, and Vulnerability 2024* report examines how violence is experienced by boys and girls, the prevalence of relationship violence, and the role of schools in teaching healthy relationships.

**Key Findings**

1. **Gendered Experiences of Violence**:
   * **Boys** experience and perpetrate higher rates of physical, robbery, and weapon-related violence.
   * **Girls** report similar rates of **sexual violence** as boys (6% boys vs. 7% girls).
   * Both genders experience violence in **relationships**: 49% of young people in relationships report violent or controlling behaviours.
2. **Relationship Violence and Coercion**:
   * Controlling behaviours (constant messaging, phone monitoring) are most common, affecting 46% of young people.
   * **Younger teens (13-15)** are at significantly higher risk of relationship violence than older teens.
   * Boys (57%) report experiencing higher levels of controlling and violent behaviours in relationships compared to girls (41%).
3. **Gaps in RSHE Delivery**:
   * 76% of students received some form of healthy relationships education, but key topics like **sexual consent** (55%) and **harassment** (43%) have limited reach.
   * Children who **perpetrate sexual violence** are significantly less likely to recall receiving lessons on consent (39%).
4. **Vulnerable Groups at Higher Risk**:
   * Children with **SEN**, those excluded from school, or those supported by social care are at greater risk of relationship violence.
   * Those involved in violence or gangs face particularly severe rates of physical and sexual coercion (76%).

**Key Lessons Learnt**

1. **Early and Consistent Intervention is Critical**:
   * Younger teenagers (13-15) are most vulnerable to relationship violence. Tailored, early-stage lessons focusing on identifying and preventing unhealthy relationship behaviours are essential.
2. **Content Must Be Inclusive and Targeted**:
   * Boys report higher rates of experiencing relationship violence, challenging assumptions. Lessons must include gender-inclusive examples and messaging.
   * Focused support is needed for vulnerable groups, including SEN learners, excluded students, and those with social care involvement.
3. **Address the Online Influence of Harmful Content**:
   * The exposure to misogynistic and violent content on social media is widespread (33%). Lessons must develop **digital literacy**, critical thinking, and awareness of the harm caused by such content.
4. **RSHE Content Needs Better Reach**:
   * While 76% of students received education, key topics like **consent** and **healthy relationships** are missing for significant groups.
   * Young people involved in violence or coercion need **targeted interventions** to address gaps in understanding and behaviour.
5. **Interactive and Safe Learning Environments Work Best**:
   * Feedback highlights that lessons are sometimes **rushed** and **poorly delivered**, reducing their impact. Greater focus on **engagement** and **facilitator confidence** is required.

**Suggestions for the PSHE Curriculum**

1. **Strengthen Early Education** (Year 7-8):
   * Develop foundational lessons on identifying **healthy vs. unhealthy relationships**.
   * Teach early warning signs of **controlling behaviours**, emotional coercion, and boundaries.
2. **Promote Digital Resilience**:
   * Integrate critical thinking skills to help students identify and challenge **harmful online content** (e.g., misogyny, violence glorification).
   * Discuss the impact of social media on behaviours and relationships.
3. **Tailor Lessons for Vulnerable Groups**:
   * Partner with SEN coordinators, pastoral teams, and external agencies to ensure inclusivity and additional support.
   * Use small-group interventions for students at risk of exclusion or social care involvement.
4. **Improve Lesson Engagement**:
   * Use **scenario-based discussions**, peer-led workshops, and role-plays to make lessons relatable and interactive.
   * Provide real-world strategies for **seeking help** and supporting peers in unhealthy relationships.
5. **Focus on Consent and Boundaries**:
   * Expand coverage of sexual consent, coercion, and personal boundaries.
   * Emphasise practical strategies to **leave unhealthy relationships** and seek support.
6. **Monitor and Evaluate RSHE Delivery**:
   * Regularly collect feedback to assess lesson impact and adapt content as needed.
   * Provide teachers with training to confidently facilitate discussions on sensitive topics.

**Final Recommendations**

By delivering consistent, inclusive, and interactive education that addresses early intervention, digital influences, and vulnerable groups, we can play a significant role in reducing violence and promoting healthy, respectful relationships among young people.