



respectme
Scotland's Anti-Bullying Service

MAKING A REAL DIFFERENCE

An External Evaluation of *respectme*,
Scotland's Anti-Bullying Service



INTRODUCTION

respectme, Scotland's Anti-Bullying Service, is funded by the Scottish Government and managed in partnership by SAMH (Scottish Association for Mental Health) and LGBT Youth Scotland.



respectme works with all adults who play a role in the lives of children and young people to give them the practical skills and confidence to address bullying behaviour. The service provides free anti-bullying training to adults across Scotland, and works with organisations at a local and strategic level to develop and review anti-bullying policies and practices. respectme also campaigns to raise awareness of bullying and related issues and the impact these can have on individuals, communities and society as a whole.

respectme's management partnership has been instrumental in the development and direction of the service since its launch in 2007. The partnership maintains a commitment to excellence and providing a quality anti-bullying service, which is reflected in its commissioning of an extensive external evaluation into the work of respectme, which measured the impact the service has had in its first four years of operation. The evaluation was carried out by independent evaluators, Pauline Holland and Mary McKenna and was completed in April 2011.

The evaluation was conducted in two phases; the first which looked at the impact and effectiveness of respectme in raising awareness and building partners' capacity to deal with bullying behaviour; and the second which looked at the subsequent impact this had on children and young people.

The following summary report highlights the key findings and outcomes from each phase of the evaluation, and a full copy of findings from both stages can be found on the respectme website: www.respectme.org.uk/Publications



BUILDING RESPECT PHASE ONE

The aim of Phase One, undertaken in 2009/2010, was to build on internal performance monitoring systems within *respectme* to establish processes for continuous improvement and to evaluate data from key stakeholders in relation to areas of work undertaken with *respectme*.

It illustrated the impact of *respectme*'s work in the first three years, using feedback from partner agencies both at a local and national level, and collated views on the effectiveness of *respectme* in raising awareness and building partners' capacity to deal with bullying behaviour.

The work of *respectme* was examined in great detail, looking at the contribution it has made to organisations' policy and practices and the awareness raising and strategic influence it has made in Scottish society.

The outcomes of the evaluation were based on data collected from *respectme*'s internal monitoring systems, a survey of all 32 local authorities and other agencies working with children and young people in key target groups, interviews with key stakeholders and a focus group with key strategic partners.

The feedback was:

“*respectme*'s role was crucial in the development of our policy which is still fairly new. We would have struggled without them. The website is brilliant and the leaflets etc. We were able to write the policy electronically with groups of people whilst being logged in to the website to give examples.”

SURVEY RESPONDENT



“Other parts of the UK are envious about Scotland's anti-bullying service. There is no equivalent in the other 3 nations. There is a stronger training model in Scotland and the others have less of a focus on behaviour management. There is more of an integrated approach to anti-bullying in Scotland.”

SCOTTISH ANTI-BULLYING STEERING GROUP (SABS) FOCUS GROUP

“*respectme* is about a general attitude and so ties in with the four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence, in particular, responsible citizen. It also fits in with aspects of health and wellbeing. It permeates all areas of the curriculum, because if children feel safe and protected from bullies and/or feel able to react appropriately to bullying behaviour then they will enjoy a more comfortable and productive learning environment.” SURVEY RESPONDENT

The evaluation found that Children's rights are embedded into *respectme*'s approach, which is motivated by equalities issues and is aimed at building on models of recovery and resilience in children and young people. It also concluded that *respectme* has been successful in raising awareness and challenging perceptions of bullying across Scotland.

BUILDING RESPECT PHASE ONE

There is substantial evidence that *respectme* laid strong foundations in all of its key objectives in its first three years. It has:

- Established the reputation of the service as being knowledgeable, credible and reliable in delivering Scotland's anti-bullying service.
- Developed opportunities and resources which are attractive and engaging young people, parents and professionals that dynamically disseminate the knowledge and expertise of *respectme*.
- Created new ways of engaging young people in challenging bullying and empowering them to build more respectful behaviour.

***respectme* has been successful in partnership working and influencing change within organisations and local authorities. It has:**

- Enabled partner organisations to build their capacity to develop their anti-bullying policies and develop the knowledge and skills of their staff to deal more effectively with bullying.
- Assisted organisations to see the relevance of the development of policies on anti-bullying within the process of attitudinal and organisational change related to a rights' based approach to working with children.

At a wider societal level in Scotland, *respectme* has:

- Raised awareness of the unacceptability of bullying behaviour
- Provided leadership in promoting practical approaches to creating a culture where children and young people feel respected
- Contributed to the development of the National Anti-Bullying Strategy and developed and delivered key elements of this strategy

Substantial evidence emerged in this phase of the evaluation that *respectme* was meeting its objectives and was making a significant impact within schools and with partner agencies to build capacity, knowledge and skills to deal more effectively with bullying behaviour.

There were indicators that *respectme's* approach was supportive of government policies to help Scotland become a more just, equal and inclusive society where children and young people are encouraged to fulfil their potential and can live free from bullying and harassment.



MAKING A REAL DIFFERENCE

PHASE TWO

Following on from the findings in Phase One the main aims of Phase Two, which was conducted in 2010/2011, were to identify:

- How the work of respectme was impacting on the experiences of children
- How the work of respectme with adults was making a difference in schools and services for children and young people
- Which components of the respectme programme were valued, successful and replicable, and what was needed to sustain this approach
- How the approach of respectme has contributed to organisational change and influenced society

A case study approach was used, which helped to address 'how' and 'why' questions regarding the effectiveness of the respectme approach.

A total of four case studies were selected, which illustrated good practice examples across a range of settings, including: an independent Youth Club located in Argyle; a Residential School in Ayrshire, managed by Quarriers; a drama group in a large secondary school within Glasgow City Council; and a Primary School within Angus Council.

Despite the varying nature of work undertaken with these organisations, across all four case studies there were common elements which led to successful outcomes for children and young people:

- **The active involvement and engagement of children and young people and a shared ownership of how anti-bullying work is being understood and progressed in their school, youth club or community.**

This enabled them to share their learning with others and to demonstrate their new confidence and skills, which was both inspiring for others and transformational for some of the children involved.

From primary school children to teenagers there was feedback about how this helped them to become more aware of the impact of their behaviour on others and to accept more responsibility for their behaviour, leading them to make better choices:

“When I go to hit somebody I think about it first. Before I didn’t think about what I was doing, but now I do think about what I’m doing.”

YOUNG PERSON PARTICIPATING IN CASE STUDY

“How you behave affects what happens to you and the people around you.”

YOUNG PERSON PARTICIPATING IN CASE STUDY

“Change the way you behave. If you turned into a bully you may end up going to prison and you won’t get what you want in life.”

YOUNG PERSON PARTICIPATING IN CASE STUDY

- **The role of adults in providing a safe place for children to discuss their issues and difficulties.**

It helped children and young people to discuss their issues openly in an environment where they felt safe and listened to, and they described how it helped them to feel less isolated and more respected by others. As children and young people developed their communication and conflict resolution skills their confidence increased and they were empowered.

The impact of bullying behaviour on children appeared to be less devastating where there was a timely, consistent and predictable response by adults.

- **The development of consistent responses by adults to bullying behaviour.**

Adults have to agree on definitions of what constitutes bullying behaviour and develop consistent language in how they address inappropriate behaviour. This was considered a significant factor in successfully creating a caring culture which increased children and young people’s confidence that bullying behaviour was being taken seriously.

- **The emergence of a local champion to spearhead the anti-bullying initiative is critical to the overall success.**

The leadership qualities demonstrated by the Head Teachers and Managers clearly inspired and motivated staff, children and young people in the value of the new approach. These leaders had an awareness of their power and influence and provided positive role models to their staff.

RESPECTME'S ROLE AND APPROACH

Findings of the evaluation over two years have cemented *respectme*'s role as a catalyst for change in the arena of anti-bullying work.

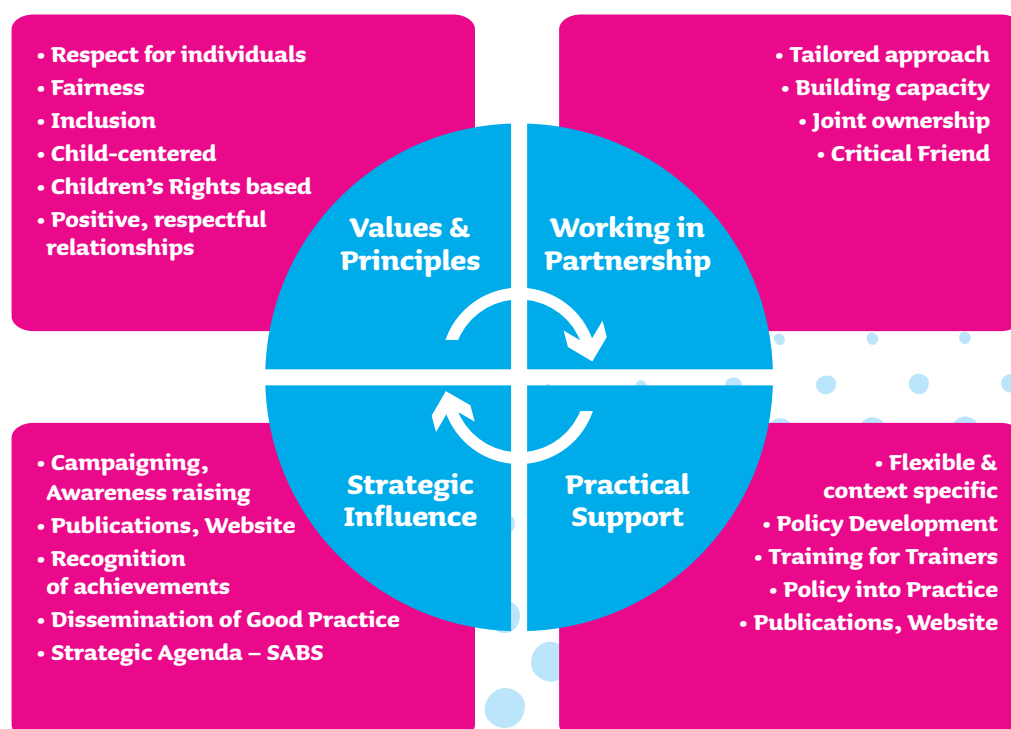
The service works with partners to build on their capacity to change, working from policy development through to practical implementation, adding support and guidance from their wider experience.

The diagram below illustrates four key elements of the approach adopted by *respectme* which have enabled the service to become a catalyst for change: values and principles; working in partnership; practical support; and strategic influence.

“The connections between our vision for a young person minded, rights based approach and the input of tools offered by the *respectme* team combined powerfully as a catalyst for positive change. We have been on a journey at Seafield for the last four years and there is no doubt that *respectme*, along with other key partners, has enabled us to significantly improve young people’s involvement and participation at every level including policy and staff practice”

HEAD OF SERVICE, SEAFIELD SCHOOL

respectme Catalyst for change



RESPECTME'S ROLE AND APPROACH

Values and Principles

During Phase One of the evaluation, respectme devised a set of values and principles that the service works to:

- The rights of children and young people are at the heart of everything we do
- Our values of respect, equality and inclusion underpin every aspect of our work
- We work in partnership to build the capacity of all adults who play a role in the lives of children and young people
- We promote a positive, practical and realistic approach to improving the life experiences of children and young people
- We will influence behaviour, culture and attitude towards bullying behaviour

These values and principles were recognised and regularly commented on by respectme's partners in the case studies – both by the adults and children and young people.

Working in Partnership

The case studies chosen for Phase Two illustrated some of the most positive examples of effective partnerships respectme

has developed. They highlighted the ability of respectme to establish joint ownership of the anti-bullying agenda and to provide a tailored approach, determined by the current needs of these partners. The partners within these four case studies valued having a supportive and critical friend as they worked through the detail of policy development and implementation of their anti-bullying work.

Practical Support

The approach adopted by respectme when working with organisations has always been flexible and context specific. It was clear from all four case studies that respectme offered a tailored approach to develop its work in each of these settings and meet the needs of the individual partners.

Strategic Influence

Central to respectme's emergent approach has been the determination to influence the wider anti-bullying agenda within Scottish society. This strategic approach is evident and clearly illustrated through: Policy development; validating good practice and recognising the achievements of children and young people; informing and influencing the national approach to anti-bullying work in Scotland; campaigning and awareness raising; and disseminating good practice in Scotland.

CONCLUSION

While the case studies in this report were selected because they represent examples of good practice, they also provide evidence of the process of change that can happen when national strategies, local policies, committed managers and caring staff coherently and consistently agree to challenge bullying behaviour and improve the culture in which children and young people grow and develop.

The importance of having an organisation whose purpose is to promote a shared vision, develop policy and expertise, disseminate knowledge and research and which celebrates success is essential to the continued development and support of anti-bullying work in Scotland. This evaluation has demonstrated models of practice, which illustrate the evidence of respectme's role as a catalyst for change.

There is a genuine commitment from respectme's management partnership to build on the findings of this evaluation and to continue to deliver an innovative and creative anti-bullying service that contributes to societal change.

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